

## **Al-Zawahiri videotape saying US defeat a question of time**

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[Please note: Images may have been removed from this document. Page numbers have been added.]

On Thursday 9 September 2004, the Arabic TV station *al-Jazeera* broadcast excerpts of a previously unknown videotape with what appeared to be Ayman al-Zawahiri. The person appearing on the videotape was seated next to a Kalashnikov gun and wore a white turban and glasses. He looked very similar to al-Zawahiri as he had appeared in previous videotapes. Officials from the CIA later said they believed the tape to be authentic.

The statement ridiculed US forces in Afghanistan and Iraq and said their defeat was just a question of time. The text of the statement contained no specific dates, but it made reference to the Iraqi transitional government (which came into being on 29 June 2004) and to the Darfur crisis, indicating that it had been made recently. It was the first videotaped message released from the al-Qaida leadership since 10 September 2003 (see above).

The following is an edited version of excerpts translated by *BBC*:

“East and south Afghanistan have become an open arena for the *mujahidin*. The enemy are limited to their capitals. The Americans are hiding in their trenches and refuse to come out to face the *mujahidin*, as the *mujahidin* shell and fire on them, and cut roads off around them. Their defence is only to bomb by air, wasting US money as they kick up dust. As for the situation in Kabul, the Americans and the peacekeeping forces suffer from the *mujahidin's* shelling and expect the martyrdom operations at any time, with God's help.

As for Muslim Iraq, the *mujahidin* in it have turned America's plan upside down after the interim government's weakness became clear. America's defeat in Iraq and Afghanistan has become a matter of time, God willing. The Americans in both countries are between two fires; if they continue, they will bleed until death, and if they withdraw, they will lose everything.”