

[UM] Unidentified Male.
[UI] Unintelligible.
[NFI] Not Further Identified.
(LNU) Last name unknown.
[Italics] Translator's comments.
... Incomplete sentence.

Sh = Shukri Abu Baker
Om = Omar Ahmad
Gh = Ghassan Elashi
Ss = Sheik Sharif
Ga = Gawad (LNU)
Ab = Abdel Salam (LNU)
Ak = Akram (LNU)
Au = Abou Usama (NFI)
As = Abdel Halim Al Ashqar (Aboul Hasan)
Aa = Abou Ahmad (NFI)
Aj = Abdel Jabbar
Ab2 = Abou Basem (NFI)

Audio file: MTGB 19931002 6.WAV

[Group still in break the first 20 minutes of this recording].

Om: Are there any remarks? Did we benefit from it? Were the discussion points out of place? Quick remarks for a couple of minutes for anyone who has a remark so that we could end the subject.

As: I feel that the discussion was dominated by the political aspect. I feel that no meeting can be isolated from the pressures which are usually discussed in any topic, even if it is an academic one. I imagine that this is very normal, that the presented papers were not given their due right in discussions.

UM1: Which presented papers...UI?

As: I'm talking about the...UI. It didn't get its due right in discussion. That's it.

Ak: I just hope that we really leave this meeting with something different from the previous meetings, with very specific ideas and methods to achieve them.

Om: ...UI do you feel that we will get out with something, or do you feel that...?

Ak: ...it was a good beginning, but the...UI could be better. I mean, two hours for the discussion. We could listen to an idea and discuss it but, we need to get out with specific formulated ideas...

Om: I believe that this session will be the first session to give us something [*specific*] as it is concentrated on the charity work...UI. Go ahead.

Ak: In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Prayers and peace be upon the best of the messengers, on all of his family and companions. I imagine that the second session..., the discussion topic will be about charity work and its future in light of the changes. There will be four papers to be presented and we will then open the door for discussion. So, I hope that all papers are presented first then we will open the door for discussion to all the papers. We can begin with those in charge of the charity organizations in America and Canada. We begin with Sheik Abu Basem...UI.

Ab2: Thanks be to God, the Lord of the two worlds. Prayers and peace be upon the best of the messengers, our master Mohamed, and upon all of his family and companions. This paper has six points which were discussed in the meeting of Al Quds Committee for Human Services. I mean, before we learned about this meeting, we had a meeting in...UI. The goal of the meeting is to discuss the situation or the current situation or the changes which occurred in Palestine...UI. I have some suggestions which...UI charitable work for Palestine...UI. The first point is that it might be suitable for the charitable organizations working on the Palestinian field such as Al Quds Fund, The Holy Land [*Foundation*] and others to be open to other areas in the charitable work. We suggest that this new areas reach Palestinian camps in Lebanon and Jordan, for instance, and other areas. Lebanon didn't get its fair share of media attention in Canada at least. On the other hand, starting investment projects on the inside. The second point is as follows; as the media attention will focus on Gaza in the near future, specially that Gaza will become the political capital in the short term first and before the [*West*] Bank. It is our duty then to focus our media campaign on the [*West*] Bank, its problems and what economic crises it suffers from. These days, talk has been going around in regards to Gaza only as the situation in the [*West*] Bank cannot get any better, as if the situation in the [*West*] Bank cannot get any better. We probably know that it is better than Gaza. The third point is that one of the biggest factors for the success of media campaigns is bringing guests from inside the occupied territories. Media campaigns [*I mean*] are the ones which serve the cause in the charitable and the political fronts. Friday sermons must be arranged in the mosques and Islamic centers as it is known that the largest Muslim congregations is during the Friday prayers. We suggest that these guests should be invited here on stages. For instance, you

could bring guests from the [West] Bank in the short term since media will be focused on it. Six months later, a group should come from Gaza to explain the situation over there. There is a remark which is that media talks a lot about global material assistance which will pour into Gaza and we pray that this will be true if it leads to improving the economic situation. But it is still very important to bring guests from Gaza to explain to Muslims the effect this assistance have and to whom they are given. Also, media campaigns need to be general and not in specific centers or relating to specific activities. There are a lot of activities which garner no media coverage and these activities are usually conducted by the various Islamic communities. They get no media coverage...UI about the cause of Palestine at all. People there must be ready for questions and answers and...UI. We ask God the Almighty that there is a program to cover these programs at the Islamic organizations in...UI. The fourth point and it was covered before but I must mention it; on the political arena it is important to study the statements and the announcements issued by both the Israelis and the Palestinians, record them and work to utilize them in the right time instead of waiting for successive events which are met by us with an emotional and an ineffective reaction. As for the fifth point, it is finding new ways in addressing people, in debating them and resorting to quiet and objective analysis along with the sentimental religious method. It is worth mentioning that the most important factor in this matter is finding the right person to speak and we hope that we chose the most suitable person to speak in these issues. It is noted that too many places - as I said before - do not have any media material or any information about Palestine. Despite of that, people are thirsty for information...UI and, as of now, the front in Canada is now thirsty and people ask questions. Organizations or mosques are the ones which contact people to give them information or to take the lead in providing media material to mosques and Islamic centers in Canada. As for the sixth point, it is hoped that special attention is given to the League's conference this year as it is expected that many Palestinians will attend it which live in Detroit and the surrounding areas where the conference will be held. I would like to speak about the make-up of the Muslim community in Canada, taking just a minute and then the Palestinian community. As for the Palestinian community in Canada, it doesn't have any effectiveness in doing charity work with us. We tried everything but they're not either with this or that person. They don't support the Organization or Islamic activism. They have ostensibly dropped all Palestinian activism. No matter how we tried with them, they're busy with their daily lives and only a few of them inquire about those on the inside. Our support within the Islamic community and the most giving groups are the Indian and the Pakistani communities. We ask the brothers at the [Islamic] Association [for Palestine] to focus on this matter because they are really the fundamental core for work, at least in Canada. As for the Arab communities either from Lebanon, Palestine..., I mean Lebanon, Egypt and other non-Palestinian countries began to be convinced with the notion that the Palestinian have reached a solution. This is what many of them say. You Palestinians have reached a

solution with the Jews. What do you want from us? This is in contradiction to an Indian or a Pakistani person. He [*a non-Palestinian Arab*] rejects and denounces..., I mean a person from the public rejects this activism, but they need awareness. Awareness should come from the angle of Al Aqsa mosque and the holy places, that is. There are some issues regarding the legal situation which are different in Canada from America. They could be used in Canada, for instance, if the organization..., the...UI organization was successful in obtaining the registration. Thanks be to God, we are about to obtain the registration soon, God's willing. If we manage to get all the sums of money which are raised over there, they will be used in charity projects, a dollar for a dollar or a dollar for two dollars. This means that if you raise 50 you will get 50, if you raise 70, you could get up to 100,000. This means that, if you raise 50,000, you could get up to 100,000 or 150,000. What is meant by that is that media material needed in the Canadian front ought to be made available. After attending the first session, I realize that there are many areas where...UI to serve the Palestinian community and stuff like that. I pray to God the Almighty that we address the Palestinian community without neglecting the Islamic community as a whole. May God reward you well.

Ak: May God reward you well. Now, we will open the stage to brother Shukri for about 15 minutes to talk to us about his vision for charity work in America. If there are some points which...UI. What do we expect to happen to charity work in the coming stage. After that, we will take suggestions about [*charity*] work.

Sh: Thanks be to God and prayers are upon God's prophet. I see that...UI. I believe that there is a...UI for charity work...UI. I mean, I have an idea...UI. Anyway, Anyway... In the name of God. I divided the topic to four sections. First, ...UI which is the worst case scenario that could happen as a result of the process. The second item is the effect of the above on the donor...UI. The third item is the nature of the new address to the donor. Finally, broad lines or we could call it new strategies which can be applied to all the charity organizations. The new status will lead to relative calmness in Gaza in the upcoming days during which most or all the elements of confrontation which we used to see in the past will disappear. Local and international effort will focus on finding monetary cover to revive the self-rule project. On the other hand, I expect that there will be an escalation in the West Bank because the occupation will come with its...UI and we might hear in the upcoming days about uncomfortable humanitarian cases there. Local and international media will do its best to convince the Palestinian people and the world that the relationship between Palestine and Israel is no longer an occupation relationship, but rather a marriage of civilizations relationship and the media will act as if the occupation is gone. This is what I expect. Even the official Palestinian address of the self-rule will try to stress the positive aspects of the experience and to hide the negative aspects, some of which might be covering up many of the Israeli practices against the citizens. The one

who reads a newspaper, the Pakistani brother or the brother who donates to you will not hear much about the problems of the occupation and the tragedies of the occupation. He will hear about...UI, that everything is going fine. There is no doubt that the international and the Palestinian address will focus on removing psychological barriers between the Israeli and the Palestinian societies. ...UI that Jewish...UI network convene its meeting next week, next month. This organization combines all the Jewish or the Zionist organizations and its ultimate goal is to serve Israel, to have a good relationship or network. It will meet in New York next month and the agenda is studying the possibility of providing assistance to the Palestinians, to serve the Palestinian people as a reward for peace and to contribute to building the Palestinian society. See how much effect this will have. This is my vision. This is my hypothesis for the situation that could develop. The effect on the donor? I believe that donors are in two kinds as we agreed that there are some who read. A donor will be forced to watch and wait ...UI he might keep the minimum obligation if he sponsors an orphan - I don't think that he will terminate the sponsorship - but he will think afterwards whether he should or shouldn't pay more than that. As the media focus here is to revive the economic situation in Gaza and elsewhere, this will bring about some sort of psychological rest to them and there will be no need - thank God - as things started to get better. Therefore, I could direct a portion of my effort to...UI and others. I expect that there will be a dramatic change, a decline in the contributions collected in America from now and for a year, at least until the picture is clear. I believe that there will be a dramatic decline and a general weakness of morale with a lot of people or new convictions that the Palestinians are no longer in need. Therefore, I caution the charitable organizations not to get involved now with secondary charitable issues such as Bosnia, Somalia and India, for instance, because this will constitute an additional signal for the donor that there is no real need inside Palestine anymore. So, we have to pay attention not to engage on side issues. This is regarding getting money from the same donor. I believe I could give you a correct judgement after the end of the year about the media trend which is taking effect on the donors, but I do expect that there will be a decline. We collected 2,070,000 before but I doubt that we will be able to collect 2 millions [later]. The nature of the new address, our address as organizations, I mean. In the past, the whole address was about dealing with the suffering resulting from the occupation. That was mostly. The nature of...UI long-term philanthropy. They think "Here is a wounded person. Let me rescue him. That is better than building a school". You want to feed the hungry people, people whose home were demolished and stuff like that. In the upcoming phase, it will be very difficult to continue this same address. There might be crises in the West Bank from which you benefit, for instance. But, generally speaking, I believed that you will not be able to continue in this address and speak openly about occupation, the issues of the occupation and its nature. Therefore, our suggestions are as follows in order for the organization to continue marching with the same speed or to grow. First, to focus on the importance of building or

making an orientation for the donor's mentality. This needs education and information. Bringing up a generation which is able to remain steadfast on the land. The issue of holding onto the land and its importance. Engaging in projects relating to Jerusalem as a grand common grounds for all Muslims. This is a long-term issue. To him, Jerusalem whether it is the house of Caliphate, a part of an independent state or under occupation, to him...UI and he likes to invest in Jerusalem. Stressing the suffering in the Palestinians camps in Palestine and outside it. The camps program which is excluded in the agreement process..., the suffering still exists and we could benefit from the suffering in the camps from the angle of approaching the Palestinian cause from this angle at least. Inside Palestine and in all the camps all over the world. The third item is focusing on the humanitarian needs which are not much affected by the political changes to start with. An example is the orphan sponsorship program. It has no relationship with the changes...UI. Ok? The Needy or the Handicap Child Fund, The Student Fund, anti-poverty projects, these are projects which will remain even if there is a [*Palestinian*] state in place, how much more for a people without a leadership. The...UI always negates the religious sentiment at the donors. There is a religious sentiment at the donor. I tell him, come on, you will give your Zakat out anyway, give me your Zakat and I will send it to Palestine. He will give it anyway. It won't make a difference to him. Sacrifices, establishing endowments projects and drinking fountains and carrying out the legitimate will project. It is a long-term plan, that's fine. Now, if three or four people wrote their wills, we could get half a million dollars. It is a long-term but it is a legitimate will which he will carry out whether with you or with somebody else. Focusing on the importance of supporting the Islamic organizations in the upcoming stage. I will speak about a specific population which is the Islamic population. See, if we don't support the Islamic organizations, other organizations will come to destroy and crush them. The Islamic University, the...UI university. This is a very private address. I cannot place an ad in the newspapers saying "Save the Islamic institutions". Starting a dialogue with the American public to contribute to the new phase of rebuilding in Gaza and Jericho. This is an important issue...UI What happened happened, why should I rely on self-rule. No, come here. I go to the American public and tell him, that is excellent, good. We are going to build Gaza and we are going to build Jericho. I want you to help me. That is because I will be in a position of competition with the other Palestinian organizations which work with ...UI and which work with the American public. They will now have impetus, strong media and they will have strong credibility and legitimacy. we will find ourselves competing with the Americans. Why should I portray myself as...UI, saying that I'm an Islamist, only an Islamist and don't want..., don't want the Americans. No, I will open a new dialogue with the Americans and benefit from...UI and let them go to Jericho and Gaza. Yes, it is not wrong. Seven, start a dialogue with the U.S. and international charitable organizations, UN organizations and embarking on new joint projects in Palestine. Please note that if there is one advantage of this Palestinian-Israeli agreement to me, it is that your address

to American public about the Palestinian cause will be easier. The psychological barrier between the Americans and the Palestinian people has begun to erode or disappear. I can benefit from this point by...UI. But, I cannot approach them through my strict Islamic address. I can't tell him I demand the 48 borders. No way, no way on earth. Ok? No, I approach it through humanitarian suffering, refugees rights and issues which the Americans will agree with you on. An example of that is the UN organizations and the institutions which give grants and we could do various projects. Finally, the broad lines which you could call them "Strategies". One, the ...UI address should steer totally clear from any tension towards the issue of the self-rule. I believe that I as a charity organization should not give an opinion or a political judgement at all. I have no relationship with that. I'm not a political institution. I want to..., there is a new reality I'm dealing with now. It is not my job to attack the self-rule. This is my view...UI. Amicable relationship must be maintained with all parties inside Palestine. This goes without saying, my brothers. We must not put any factional or partisan influence on the Foundation in America as it is the charitable arm of this or that. No. I say that this is wrong and we must act out of a charitable stand. We must act as an American organization which is registered in America and which cares for the interests of the Palestinian people. It doesn't cater to the interests of a specific party. Our relationship with everyone must be good, regardless.

Gh: Including the Islamists, of course.

Sh: The Islamists..., of course... [group laughter and UI talk]. No, there is no problem, my brother. In the past, we gave the Islamists \$100,000 and we gave others 5,000. Just because they're...UI. We should never ever be agents of others but we should maintain a balance. Taking time before spending money during this time. What do I mean by "Taking time before spending money"? The Foundation must stay on its legal track as far as charitable projects are concerned without going after a sentiment which could harm the Foundation legally or which consume its budget with an objective reason. We must be careful. I know that there is a crisis now. I know that there is suffocation now. But, you are an organization and you must care about your interests, the long-term and the continuity. It doesn't help me if a party asks me to send \$100,000 and we send it to them and...UI. Our goal to follow must be objective, studied, every project ought to be documented, documented and studied and I can confront people with it without trying to conceal anything from them. This is very important as a time might come and you...UI which makes you deviate from the legal track in order to satisfy a certain issue an then.

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