

[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

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Aj: ...the Islamic Movement and the Islamic Liberation Movement, God's willing will not be in the enemy's favor. I don't want to go through the same experience as that of previous liberation movements either in Sudan, Egypt, Algeria or here and that, and then come people like Arafat and snatch these fruits. We need to go back to how to deal with this new order and...UI. We would be going backwards, as if our struggle has started anew with the events. I'm sorry if I'm re-discussing the issue of the general weakness a second time, but our approach should be that we shouldn't lose confidence in ourselves and consider that events must be the ones directing us. We are the ones who need to direct the events. "Do not worry and do not be sorrowful and you are the higher ones if you are believers" [*Quran quote*]. This is our direction. Therefore, God's willing, we move based on this platform and our confidence in ourselves is big and, God's willing, we will have the ability..., I believe brother Gawad when he said we have the ability, God's willing, or - at least - abilities to might resist this agreement. Of course, I spoke a lot about the feeling of despair and what ramifications it has on the American front. We don't want to ...UI America from Palestine. What is truly happening is that we should differentiate..., in reality, the whole cause is overlapping together. Despair which brother Abdel Salam spoke about and which he felt inside Palestine is the same despair felt within the Islamic communities first of all. I mean, see how we think. We reach across to the Arab communities which support Fatah and stuff and we forget the Islamic community which

has been a very strong proponent for us as far as material support is concerned. This is the community which started to be stricken with despair. Then, we must pay attention to the media aspect and here is the media paper we ought to pay attention to. The stress on the attempt to instill hope in the hearts and..., I mean, removing despair from of people' hearts. Another issue we ought to find a solution for in America is that there is no doubt that this despair, expectations and hesitation will affect financial resources. I don't know..., I felt it during my presence or dealing with the Fund. I began to feel it directly but the Fund might have felt it more than IAP and stuff like that..., that now people really started to ask: Why do you want money for? We don't have money to withdraw now and you have billions and we hear about the budgets: I disagree with some of the brothers who said that we will tell people that it [money] will be spent in a like manner as what happened in Egypt. Israel and America will guarantee that these monies reach people so that people will kneel. Because the only way, our brothers, for them to make sure their experiment with that Arafat succeed in that regards - the control issue - is to make sure that money reaches people. Therefore, be absolutely certain that even the observers during the distribution will be Jews and Americans. The companies which will do the investment are Americans because the instance the money distribution fails, Arafat's existence in Palestine fails. We have to pay attention to this issue carefully, God's willing. Another issue, our brothers, I want to go back to is the issue of the lukewarm positions which started to surface by some of the Islamists. I just discussed this issue with the brothers in a broad manner. Our brothers, this will make us lose our credibility on the front. What I'm afraid of is that, again, we reach out to the communities and to win people on the outside and forget the balance we already had and lose it. We try to take vague positions so that we could say, "It is Ok. Our stand is this and that", so our people will tell you that you started to walk in the same direction. What happened? They will form [certain] directions. On the contrary, the polarization issue which exists on the front, which happened in the past in the [Palestinian Liberation] Organization is happening in the Islamic Movement. Therefore, a lot of people from our end will take the direction of..., of Jihad and this Sheik who is New York and stuff. At the end, it will appear that we took a very indecisive stand. Therefore, we must..., my brothers, just as our sister Samah acquired her beauty and her fine wedding, God's willing, through her credibility On the Palestinian street... [Laughter]...

UM1: [Laughs] She married from the street?

Aj: No, in her father's house. How did she get her credibility? Through her presence...UI, through her position. So, my brothers, if we didn't prove our credibility today before tomorrow regarding the position we will lose a lot and this will be considered postponement of the struggle.

Sh: Abdel Jabbar.

Aj: Yes.

Sh: Make it short so that...UI. [Laughter].

Aj: Ok, but I know...UI.

UM1 It is an unavoidable conflict, he told you. It must happen.

Aj: My brother, so that I won't speak much, there is another issue which is the issue of Jerusalem. I know that in the paper..., in the presented papers it must be mentioned. We want to..., we expect much from non-Muslims and, as an example, I will refer to the creed part once more. This, our brothers, puts us or causes us a great loss. According to the Quran and to the sayings of God's prophet, peace be upon him, our conflict is the issue of Jerusalem. It is a religious and, therefore, we must stress it with the Islamic communities before anything else. As it was said [*in the Bible*] "I was only sent to the lost sheep of the children of Israel". Bring back your sheep first and then seek other people's sheep, God's willing. Of course, the last point is against...

Sh: ... those who have sheep.

Aj: [Laughs]. Yes. What do we really want from America? This the same issue as the issue of the sheep. Do we want..., brother Omar,...what do we need? Do we need 25 or 75%? We must really answer this question once and for all. The general strategy. Because, do we really expect that America one day will be standing behind the Palestinians' cause just like it is standing behind the Jews' cause? There is something in this equation we must answer: American-Jews, and they're with them. How about if there were Muslims and Americans, Muslims and Jews and Muslims and Muslims. May God reward you well.

Sh: Er..., Abou Mohamed then Abou Ahmad and then... Do you want more [*time to speak*]?

Ak: Just a question.

Sh: Go ahead...UI.

Ak: In reality, I have quick points so that the brothers...UI. Any difficult decision will cost a price. That's why the brothers sometimes avoid difficult decisions and lean towards a somewhat easy decision and which does not cost a price. We always speak about that the...UI rights and that we achieved some strategies which are...UI. Truly, this is not

correct. Now, when the brothers said that we need to have ten factions. We were driven to believe that the ten factions will be the true alternative to the Palestinians. But, experience showed that it is..., it didn't reveal that. The second part is that when there was an opinion to form the Palestine's Scholars Association. By God, my brothers, before I met the brothers in the inside, I imagined that it would have been the leadership running everything in the inside. But, my brothers, it became an ordinary paper [*i.e. organization*] which is no different than any other papers [*i.e. organizations*] affiliated with any other party. What is the brand of the alternative leadership which our brother Abou Mohamed spoke about? Truly, something was announced in the inside last week, something which is called the alternative leadership, it is called the Islamic National Leadership for the Palestinian Liberation Organization and it was distributed in the central cities in the inside and it was signed by three factions: The Islamic Movement and the Left, the Popular Front and others. But, what position does it have on the front? It is an attempt. I'm with the notion that you should make an offer and an initiative but, practically, it is not our method to present strategies and base on them a lot of activism. Now, the issue of Yemen. It is a good and an excellent thing. But, I'm afraid that the Yemen thing will end up like any other preceding experiment. Therefore, presenting any strategy or any hope we have..., we shouldn't rely on them much unless they have the practical program which you really have in place; 1 plus 1 equals 2. But, my brother, for you to just present hopes, I believe would cost us a high price. Therefore, I hope that we have some sort of clarity regarding any strategy we present, to really have a specification of the methods and the goals. A final point; I really hope that work here on this land [*i.e. The U.S.*] is 75% for here and even less than 25% for over there because if...UI over here and the infrastructure was done in a really good way, God's willing, it will be an alternative. But, our problem since we were here a long time ago is that we didn't organize [*our affairs*]. I mean, it is like the crow who tried to mimic the way a man walks. When..., when it couldn't copy it and it tried to go back to the way it used to walk, it had forgotten it. He didn't get this one or that one right. Praise be to God, we're not like that but, I hope we don't reach this level. It is my opinion that our infrastructure here must take a realistic dimension. I mean, some Islamists, unfortunately, have been here for twenty years and they don't know how to speak English. Some people here in this country don't know their ways around here. I'm speaking in general terms. I'm with the idea that we ought to build ourselves here but we shouldn't forget the one clear thing in our relationship with the inside; that is money. I mean, if this issue goes smoothly, God's willing things will... [*group laughter and small talk. UI*].

Sh: Ok, Abou Ahmad then brother Gawad. Abou Ahmad, go ahead, my brother.

Aa: First of all, I have a small comment on what our brother Akram said. He mentioned the leadership and there might have been a dialogue between you and him around the issue of

sovereignty. I believe that...UI leadership is uniting people and the masses around a specific idea. It is not paying salaries or... Their vision of leadership is that it is a salary or a pension but it is really an idea and uniting people on it. It is also leading them by ideology and goal. The second thing regarding the relationship..., we're speaking about past experiences. Really, our brother Aboul Hasan should have elaborated a lot on the three points he mentioned at the end of his presentation. They are: the legality of the work..., of course I realize that each point is separate. The legality of the work, an institutional relationship; a relationship between one institution and another between America and the inside and the...UI of this relationship. Now, I imagine that there was a previous experience and, hopefully, it is being discussed. I don't know if there has been an evaluation of this previous experiment in the relationship and what disadvantages it brought. This is on the one side. There must a study of the previous experience and its previous shape in order to be evaluated and studied and - based on that - there should be a correction for the relationship. The other thing is organizing this relationship between the institutions. I mean, we agreed that until now I feel that the relationships between the institutions, I don't feel that there is a certain system controlling these institutions together or a clear relationship between them. You get this feeling despite its importance as the institutions are our moving arm between our people. I mean, what shows on the ground from America in the occupied territories is our institutions. They're the criterion of our service to the people and the one thing by which we could judge how much we're serving the inside through America's front. So, we didn't speak about this relationship, really. I mean, we mentioned it as a point and I didn't feel that this point, this relationship, was discussed during the brothers' discussion, this relationship between America's institutions and the inside's institutions in particular, specially that we're speaking about the ramifications. I mean, the new political situation really has a lot of challenges and the future shape of this relationship is what? Really, our institutions inside are now threatened to be either closed or absorbed through banks and institutions of the proposed administrative self-autonomy, either in the educational field, the health field or the social field. Now, if this thing materializes, what is the nature of our relationship with these institutions? What is our look to these institutions? America might be the main front for the conflict with these institutions. Are we still going to support them or are we not going to support them? What is our vision for the future of this relationship in light of the political situation which will develop and form in the near future and not the far future.

Sh: May God reward you well, my brother. Brother Yousif.

Yo: In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The first issue is the issue of America, which is the issue brother Omar and some of the brothers spoke about. In my mind, it is...UI the Jews as Muslims. I believe that too much is spent on it is a waste of time more than anything. It is another thing to put money and effort because it is an issue

which will take large sums of money from us on the long run and it will require you to take part with them and all that stuff. There are a lot of issues which might entail Sharia violations while you attempt to achieve what the Jews achieved. All the Jews have one religion and all infidels have one religion, regardless. I mean, they all agree on slaughtering Muslims. So, it is an issue we must really think about a lot. If out of this talk we wanted to build our community and stuff like that to reach high positions, there is no problem with that. As for adopting a line of thought like that, just like we discussed in our area, in the [Islamic] Center and elsewhere, which is focusing on America and leave the [Middle] East, or to make it 70% and 30% over there, in my opinion, this is an issue which we shouldn't give a lot to. In the long run, it is not in or favor. They're people who keep fighting you. How are they going to get you places? It is a logical issue. The other issue is the issue of opposing the agreement and working to derail it. There is an aspect which we found that it had a big effect in our area at least and in the communities surrounding us; it is the Sharia aspect, the Sharia's say in the issue. The issue is not only political, economic, practical or an issue which people live daily and the derailment [of the agreement], but presenting the issue from a Sharia angle so that we could really convince Muslims and Palestinians with the Sharia aspect of the issue. I imagine that this could be one of the solutions at a later time. It is an idea to be examined.

Sh: May God reward you well. Our brothers, we will listen to brother Gawad, but we would like to let the brothers know that we have not exceeded our time limit. I mean, I believe we started at 10:20 and this session is entitled to three hours. We began late and we have to make up this time in something else. I mean, during lunch or rest or whatever but, we will reach the 3 hours, God's willing, in ten minutes. So, brother Gawad and Aboul Hasan will finish.

Ga: In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. First of all, I apologize...

Sh: ...UI ten minutes you'll have a chance to comment on what he said.

Om: You will have ten minutes to summarize what has been said.

As: What have you chosen me?

Sh: Ok, my brother. It is supposed to...

As: ...UI. [Laughs].

Sh: Abou Mohamed...UI.

Om: ...UI. I'm trying to see what he wrote down.

Sh: I'm paying attention, paying attention. What is written, my brother, is that you suggested in the last session that I take the minutes and draft them and say: Guys, we agreed that the fundamental issues which were presented and this and that. My opinion is to draft a general conclusion. Yes, we agree on this principle. There is no need for that one, so that by the last session on Sunday we will have the conclusions of everything that was said. If we summarize now, we will reach a practical result. A practical result [*will be reached*] after I review the minutes and see the..., adjust it and agree on the general ideas which was presented and discussed. Also, during our lunch and rest and stuff, the door for discussion will remain open either during this session or any other session. The brothers who still have ideas, let them give them to me so that they could be drafted and presented to the rest of the brothers and we try to reach general consent on these issues.

UM1: These issues should be debated and...UI for 15 minutes...UI.

Sh: Go ahead.

Ga: To begin with, excuse me, the point I am about to present to you will be confirmed by a message from our brothers inside to all of you; if financial support for them does not continue, our institutions will really stop in addition to the issues discussed. This piece of information is for example...

Om: No, of course...UI.

Ga: Ok, they say that Hamas and the Movement..., the Movement will flourish..., the Movement will flourish under self-rule just like all the other institutions of the...

Sh: They're being smart...

Ga: ...and that their families will get the same thing other families got. When they hear this, their opposition [*to the peace agreement*] will practically dim. This is what they're saying...UI.

Sh: So, they will give [*assistance*] to all the people except those who don't have money...

Om: It is happening now. It is happening now.

[*Small group talk. UI*].

Ga: In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Really, the brothers brought up the

derailment issue. What I understood was that are stating a clear and a...UI goal in order to gain control of the whole world. Of course, this is...UI, maybe because we didn't discuss it and the issue wasn't clear. You said that we ought to have studies of the choices available to you. How to deal [*with various parties*], that this is an inevitable battle and, therefore, postponing the start [*of the battle*] is a problem. This was the debate. The debate in the beginning was about the...UI postponement. Just a second. The shape of this start might be a problem. It is not one shape...UI is one of the shapes of the process. It will go through several stages and not one stage. It means that we will go through several tests which took days, weeks or months, which is first 4 months. There are several limited tests to see...UI. There are some unclear issues even on the inside, really, and they need to be tested on the ground. There are things which the inside knows about and wrote to...UI saying that "If you have this do that. If you don't have this don't do that" (NFI), I mean, the words were very specific and...UI, that every confrontation operation, every derailment operation or stuff like that needs...UI. It is not meant to be like "Go derail and then wait in the streets" and stuff like that. All of these are problems, really. I'm saying that so everything is clear. I mean, all options are...UI.

UM1: ...UI activism here in America.

Ga: No, no. I'm talking about...

UM1: We need to know what to do...

Ga: No, the brothers told me more than once... They insisted...UI. Derailment means...

UM1: No, of course. What is our position here in America?

Ga: I'm saying that because I feel that the atmosphere is favorable for...UI.

Om: We expect that after Arafat departs, I mean.... [*Laughter*].

Ga: Yes,...UI, I believe that the issue has to do with the details. I mean, there are studies and...UI. What the available political possibilities? Our ability to...UI, this is also another issue. Are there material, financial and human resources on the ground which are capable of managing the confrontation and the derailment? It is also a debatable issue. It might succeed and it might fail...UI. This a planning issue. Failure doesn't mean that the issue wrong. The method is correct but the daily performance..., the daily management of the operation was unable to comprehend the idea...UI. This must be considered and a line of retrieval when we think so that we don't fail as well. I shouldn't be saying "I want to derail [*the agreement*]. I want to derail" and then we fail in derailing [*the agreement*]. We will



then have a lot of despair. These are attempts and a push & shove between right and wrong. This is one. Two, is that the entire world is now against us. There is a fact which was mentioned by more than one brother, not here only but in more than one place. Why do we say..., [why] this mentality? Do you know a journalist named Orabi...UI. This is part of the problem which we keep falling in now. Who is against us now? Only two people and no one else and the rest of the world will stand with us. Be comforted. Only Yasser Arafat and Israel are against us. We don't want to deal with Arafat. We have no other alternatives for the confrontation. ...UI. We make the issue bigger for ourselves while we are eager to confront it. They're bigger than us from the media aspect, that's true but, the reality of the battle on the ground is that.

UM1: And militarily.

Ga: What?

UM1: And Israel's military is stronger than us.

Ga: Militarily, Israel will not be able to take...UI. Five or six years.

Om: We...UI, I mean.

Ga: What?

Om: We couldn't destroy it.

Ga: Oh, did we...UI. Ok, the issue of having a Palestinian, Global political resolution to continue the struggle..., of course there is a Palestinian unanimity on it, our brothers, so that you're in the picture. There is no one who says otherwise on the entire Palestinian front, even the Fatah people say that. The...UI. Our position should be logical to begin with. It will good if anyone who has ideas or papers to take to the brothers. I am with brother Abou Mohamed when he mentioned very important things which I forget to say at the beginning and that always the tough decisions are... Do you want something for free? You want to enter and win the elections, lead the people...UI, collect money and be everything...UI, liberate Palestine, do this and that, you want to do all that without...UI! It is impossible, of course. How can I provide one million martyrs? We didn't even offer all of our people during the entire struggle..., only 1/4 million [*died*]. Did you know that or not?

UM1: The entire Palestinian people is 4 millions [*people*].

Ga: It provided 1/4 million [*martyrs*] only, my brother. It only provided 1/4 million. If 1 million [*martyrs*] were provided, it is not too much for the liberation of the land. As for the issue of the ten factions, I don't want to say any more about it. I believe that the goal should be exactly as Abou Mohamed said, so that you're in the picture.

As: Could you...UI, in general.

Ga: This is the impression..., the impression from far away but, planning for it was at a better level than we expected. Raising the flag of Palestine was only the...UI, that's it...UI. It did not have any other goal, neither returning people or establishing the Sharia [*in Palestine*]. Its goal was...UI. Ok, I will really summarize the idea in my head regarding during the discussion. The issue of America should be as follows: America...UI, the most important thing is how to support the position of the Movement over there. First, to understand it and then condition its application in light with the atmosphere in the country [*The U.S.*]. This is really a problem and I hope brother Abou Mohamed...UI. How are positions going to be? How are you going to deal with it? You shouldn't adopt it [*the position*] as it is. You shouldn't adopt it and the matter is over. No. You should adopt it to serve it. But how, how to practice it? All the details could be...UI. The second thing is the financial support and I stress to you that this is a big problem and not a small problem. This is my personal opinion and my expectations. From now, its justifications..., why do you collect people's money? And why do you really take the money from people and where does it go. This is what I feel now...UI. The third issue is...UI in a clear and tangible way and..., the political approach, your political position, the general convictions of the cause, what are they?...UI if a list you're adopting has now succeeded which includes the rights of the refugees, the historical right in Palestine, the independent state, the rights to land...UI but, generally speaking, you will lose several tools which used to be in your hands...UI. All of that is adaptation to the issue. This will bring by a conflict between two things at the same time...UI [*phone rings*], two, the issue should be examined from the global, Arab, Islamic and even the American aspects as well. The last point..., [*Phone rings interruption*]...

Sh: Continue..., continue.

Ga: The last issue regarding the ramifications..., excuse me, the issue before last. Relationship with the inside. I am with Aboul Hasan... [*knocks on the door*]...

Sh: My brother...UI. What is going on? There is no time. We will have ten minutes to talk. Go ahead, my brother. We are not going to stop.

Ga: As for the relationship with the inside..., I know that the issue of activism calls for continuity, it must be built and with...UI, it needs to be detailed and cannot be dealt with

in general talk. The last one which I believe is the problem is the redefinition of the correct role for the Palestinian activism in America. In front of you, I suggest several things in this field alone...UI. I see that there are several options..., the problem is that there isn't one options but several options. The first option is to make here in service to the Movement over there, responding to it and...UI. The service. The...UI, media, political, human [*aspects*], all aspects. The second option says, no, strengthen the community here and support the Movement in the future. I will say a remark which is that the Movement is currently going through its most difficult times. I mean, any desertion or retreat in the support it used to get a day before the agreement will lead to the weakening of the position of the Movement. So, my view is that...UI. The situation does not bear that. The position of ...UI and Abou Ammar is enough. It is a shameful position, this is the General Command. It is a shameful thing, to be honest. Unfortunate. And the one person who agreed with him is the most aware of our cause. See the catastrophe!...UI, because he is the one person who is most aware [*of our cause*].

Om: What do you mean...[*Laughter*].

Ga: ...UI. So, frankly, the situation will be like that, we have to marry both directions....

Om: We will not permit accusations against the brothers' honor.

Ga: I'm not accusing. I'm...UI. To marry the two directions is the ideal solution in my opinion but keeping in mind to make it in different sections. This will also solve the problem and the debate which is arising. [*Having*] different sections in different countries. Not necessarily [*having*] different institutions. One institution but the work sections should be completely different, in my opinion. ...UI the communities, each one concerned with one aspect, political activism, make global relationships for the Movement..., for example, as I explained. Total specialization...UI, this is my opinion and God knows best. Therefore, I see that America constitutes five fundamental axes for the Movement. First, to remain a secure place for the Movement. ...UI.

Sh: ...UI.

Ga: This point won't work. I see that it should remain a secure place because it is..., also Europe as well just like America. We should be keen on that. Two, potentials from the community - specially those who speak the language and stuff like that - the Movement needs them to invest in them...UI. We have to pay attention to this advanced mentality, this civilized [*mentality*], the one which understands how the world works and stuff like that. It is hard to lose these potentials. If I take two or three youths from here and make one responsible for political activism over there, one for media activism over there, this

and that, this would give an a strong push forward to activism. In addition to our need for them. This is two. Three, to make this front a pressure element on the Palestinian political leadership over there. Why? In order to shape the public opinion, the enlightened class, doctors, the rich, the well-to-do, those who live in the West, those who know the Western nations, etc. The American front, in whatever term you agree on or for people to use, will give a backing to the position of the Movement. Consequently, this will serve the Movement greatly...UI. Four, providing services. This includes humanitarian [services] for which I gave an example earlier, the potentials here, either visiting or residing [in the U.S.]... We don't them to be just from...UI. No, I want to have someone here in America, born in America and who doesn't speak Arabic. I will give him an Arabic course to learn and to get educated, I want to make him a certain potential and I want to send him over there to work in the field. As an American, when he sees the autonomy in Palestine...UI, or in Jordan, as an example or as a another front, we find that the mentality...UI. I can develop my work through it. Second, venues for investment. I think it is enough to have...UI coming from the [Middle] East. The East is not the only source now. There are other sources we should seek. Three, the media and political aspect, of course, which is propagating the position of the Movement and justifying it always. We probably spoke about that a little while ago and said that we might have some problems with that. Four, the relationships of the open-door policy relating to the political powers, the American and the Western [powers], UN in particular, to have representatives and stuff like that. This needs work and its own program. The fifth direction is to our work in the IAP and the group which is here for Palestine should take leadership of the Palestinian political current in America, to make you as the leader who expresses the current. this is a quick review before the...UI. God knows best.

Sh: May God give you strength. May God bless our brother good and bless you. Now, God's willing, we will have approximately ten minutes..., from 10:30...er, 1:30 there will be a break and a rest. Abou Mohamed, have we appointed the prayers time? We...er, allow me, my brothers. Allow me. From 5 o'clock until 7 o' clock, there will be prayers and lunch. We will pray together then go to lunch or the other way around. Let's take a ten-minute break. Those who want to drink coffee and... [Group breaks and simultaneous talk. UI]... at 1:30. It is 1:30 now... Fifteen minutes, our brothers, fifteen minutes. We should be back here at 1:40, God's willing. We will start then. Akram..., Akram... [Group talk until end of recording. UI].

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