

**Online Question and Answer Session with Abu Zubayr Adel al-Abab, Shariah Official for
Member of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) - 18 April 2011**

In the name of Allah the Merciful. Praise be to Allah, prayer and peace be upon Muhammad, the honest the seal of the Prophets and Messengers. May Allah reward the best on your quest. Please excuse us for any interruptions in this speech (due to possible technical difficulties), but we are here to answer your questions and tell you what you need to know. I am afraid that there will not be enough time to answer all of you.

I am happy to have this opportunity and it is a source of joy that our brothers are eager to hear about us and to know our news. We rejoice at such meetings, and feel the presence of brothers and supporters for the implementation of *Shariah*.

Please write your questions and I will answer them and perhaps your questions might be about our situation so that we can respond to the lies the news and the media say about the *mujahideen*.

First Question: What is the general situation of the *mujahideen* in Yemen and the status of the supporters of *Shariah* Youth Movement (Shabab Ansar al-*Shariah*)?

For the general situation of the *mujahideen* in Yemen, praise be to Allah, the situation is very good and the *mujahideen* in Yemen are known as part of al-Qaeda. The name *Ansar al-Shariah* is what we use to introduce ourselves in areas where we work to tell people about our work and goals, and that we are on the path of Allah. Today, our situation in Sa'ada¹ is very good as we exist in large numbers, but we also face the (Houthi) Shia here and this threatens the existence of the Sunnis and the *mujahideen*. However, the large numbers of Shia has encouraged many Sunnis to join us to resist the Houthis who follow Iran's Twelver Shiism. But, as I told you, the

¹ Northern Yemeni province

presence of these Shia is what makes the Sunni people join the *mujahideen*, and the situation of the *mujahideen* in al-Jouf² is also good praise be to Allah, but there are also many Shia there.

The situation is good in the Obeida³ and we are many and are growing in Ma'arib, and in Shabwa⁴ we are openly in control, with some military and government points now in our hands. In the parts of Abyan⁵ where the *mujahideen* are in control, they run people's lives in accordance with *Shariah* law, while also inviting others to the implementation of *Shariah*. Here, we have moved our work from the elitist work to the populist, and took control of many areas.

Today, we control Ja'ar⁶ and call on the concept of monotheism while trying to meet the demands of the people. The largest problem that we face here are the lack of public services such as sewage and water, and we are trying to find solutions. We hope that when the people see us meet their demands, they will accept the methodology of the *mujahideen* and accept the implementation of *Shariah*.

As for Aden⁷, the *mujahideen* are increasing in number, and it is the forefront of the Army of Aden-Abyan.⁸ While the regime is retreating, the *mujahideen* are moving forward.

Within Sana'a we have cells that are arranging to work according to the power of the regime in the area, and thus their work is not only to fight the battles, but also to progress our interests through proselytising and lecturing in mosques, festivals and markets. Here, we hope to show people the principles of monotheism and simplify our message for the masses, offering *Shariah* as the solution to their problems. Thus, we organise presentations for them in the marketplace using projectors and other broadcasting tools.

² North-Eastern province and a Houthi stronghold

³ Region in Ma'arib province, northeast Yemen

⁴ South-Eastern province

⁵ Southern province

⁶ Capital of Abyan province

⁷ South-Western province

⁸ Islamist group originally made up of veterans from the Afghan jihad

Hence, praise be to Allah, today *mujahideen* are everywhere and their supporters are increasing in number. If that indicates anything, it points to the grace of Allah, and shows that we are about to achieve what was ordained the Sunna. As Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal reported in his collection of Hadith and also reported by al-Nessai'i:

There will come out from within Aden and Abyan twelve thousand supporting Allah and His Messenger. These men are the best of men to come, from now until they emerge

Second Question: Do the *mujahideen* control vast areas in Yemen, and do you expect to extend the geographical area within your control in Yemen?

Praise be to Allah, we have a lot of control in Yemen, but our presence is not open or fully visible because we lack the administrative staff and financial resources that would make us able to provide services to the people. Actually, when people hear that we are in an area close to them, they come to us demanding that we take control their area in order to provide security and the *Shariah*, but they are afraid of the (American) bombing that may follow due to our presence. Therefore, our presence varies according to the fears of the people, but we thank Allah that we control large areas in Yemen, and that we are extending out geographical reach thanks to Allah Almighty.

People are desperate because of the bitter reality in Yemen. The secular opposition, which is called *al-Leqaa al-Moshtarak* [The Common Meeting], is a secular group that is composed of the Brotherhood, Nasserists, Baathists, the Shia political party al-Haq as well as the Houthis and other secularists. This opposition uses secularism to confront the secular regime. There are also other Islamic Sunni schools belonging to the Salafi school but, regardless of their sincerity, they all have negative attitudes, except for the *jihad* school which is the only school in Yemen that has called for monotheism and advocated and fought for it. The rest of the Islamic schools are either with the regime or part of the secular opposition.

These blunders among the parties are what made people come to the *mujahideen* and demand their presence. This is because the *mujahideen* brought security that people could see.

However, people are concerned that if the [Saleh] regime was toppled and we take control, no one will pay their salaries. But, we tell them that they must adhere to Allah and remind them: ‘and in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised’ [Koran 51:22]. We also try to find them alternatives such as investment and encourage agriculture and encourage the payment of *zakat* (charitable donations) and create jobs to break the obstacles against the implementation of *Shariah*, to help them avoid following our enemies.

But the bitter reality through which the Yemen is living is the presence of the followers of the 12th Imam [Twelver Shia], who are trying to eradicate the Sunnis. This makes us remember the stories of Ibn Alqami or Ibn Al-Tusi, or what was written about them by Ibn Kathir in *The Beginning and the End*, or what they have done in Iraq and what [former head of al-Qaeda in Iraq] Sheikh Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, may Allah have mercy on him, has told us about. The Shia have committed many crimes wherever they have been, such as in Iraq. We fear that they are doing in Yemen what they have done to Iraq, as they want to achieve their Shia triangle. They want to control Hadramout⁹ to meet their brethren in Bahrain these *magi* (wizards), but we, Allah willing, we will defeat them. Ibn Sallam said: ‘you will invade the Arabian Peninsula and Allah will make you victorious and then you invade Persia and Allah will make you victorious.’

There is no doubt that victory is coming. We are patient and tell our brothers here to hang on. We know about these epics that will come and Yemen will suffer these epics in the future and there will be a larger struggle.

I also forgot to tell you about one movement which is the Mobility (Harrak) which works here in Yemen but it lacks supporters. It is associated abroad with the Socialist Parties. But, as I said, a lot of people have chosen to implement *Shariah* and to join us.

Third question: What is your *Shariah* policy in the areas you control and do you implement *Hudood* [*Shariah* laws pertaining specifically to prohibited sex such as adultery as well as theft] in these areas?

⁹ South-Eastern province

Generally speaking, *Shariah* policy for us is always driven by applying the Koran and Sunnah and the legacy of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and also the long-standing *Shariah* expertise here in many parts of Yemen. We have in Yemen experts that were associated with *Jemaah Islamiyah*¹⁰ and Islamic Jihad, and others who have had experience in Afghanistan with the Taliban, as well as in Iraq and Somalia. Actually, our policy is similar to the policy of the brothers in Somalia [al-Shabaab and other related Islamist groups] which is to teach people slowly. We make people love *Shariah* while also reminding them of the power we have to implement it. However we try to tell them that *Shariah* is the law of solidarity; it is the law of security, safety and joy in the world and it is their path to Heaven. The *Hudood* are their way to have security and safety.

Three days ago, here in Ja'ar, the supporters of *Shariah* caught a thief stealing while drunk, and I met him the next day. I asked him whether he was drunk, he said 'yes'. I said did you know that drinking alcohol is prohibited, and he also said 'yes'. I said did you know that your punishment would be whipping, he said: 'yes, but cleanse me please'. May Allah reward him. We whipped him forty lashes and that was the first implementation of *Hudood* here. So we catch some people and chase others, we apply *Hudood* as much as we can whenever we have the ability.

Before taking control of the region, for a month and a half we made preachers show the people in mosques what the *Hudood* were, and how it pertained to the application of *Shariah* law. We told them that the *Hudood* of Allah were distorted by the pens of the secularists, socialists and rational thinkers. We have to call people for the message of Allah, Allah is the ruler and those who are with Allah, Allah is with them. We are trying to make people love *Shariah* law so that they ask for it to be implemented. We can gradually approach the people bit by bit, because we are in a state of war. As you should know, in the time of war there are three sayings about *Hudood*: one about non implementation; one about full implementation and the third view is according to the interests of the Emir in his region. That means that the Emir sometimes implements the *Hudood*, and sometimes does not, depending on the circumstances. The third view is what we apply here in order to build ourselves and to build a strong army and build security and, once established, we can spread *Shariah* everywhere. We also need money, and

¹⁰ It is unclear which specific *Jemaah Islamiyah* he is referring to, as there are a number around the world

when we are established, we will implement the *Hudood* throughout the country.

But there are things that we do not keep silent when we see them, such as insulting the Almighty Allah, which we never forgive. We chase whoever does this, and if he does not repent, we kill him. There are things we cannot overlook, we cannot let people insult their creator and this is a thing that everyone knows to be prohibited.

Fourth Question: What is the public reaction of ordinary Muslims towards the implementation of *Shariah* and the change from the law of the tyrant to Allah's *Shariah*?

People are very happy with this, and they ask us: 'where have you been all this time?' They never thought of us as such moral people with these ethics. They always thought that the al-Qaeda organisation was evil because of the distortions they have been hearing about us. Whenever we meet people today, they rejoice at our existence and we talk to them about the *Shariah* and that if it is applied, Allah will send rain with welfare to earth: 'And [Allah revealed] that if they had remained straight on the way, we would have given them abundant provision' [Koran 72:16].

We talk to them about these things, and they rejoice. With them, we find a great opportunity to implement *Shariah*, but the fear of the effects on everyday living and loss of salary is still there. Hence we tell them that Allah is the provider and he will not leave them and will not give up on them. People are with us in the issue of implementation of *Shariah* but they are afraid for their livelihoods.

There are many messages I must convey to you, but I would like to tell you that my brother tells me that I have only three minutes to leave the place for security matters.

I have a message to the Muslim scholars and to them I say: enough is enough. O Muslim scholars enough all what happened because of you [referring to the establishment Sheikhs who have supported Arab regimes], and today these events are taking place around the planet because the Almighty is ordering change against the tyrants. We are now willing to forgive you for what

has already happened, all what happened because of you; from sabotage and distortion and alteration of the concepts of Allah. Enough, now stand up and align with yourselves with us. Here are the Shia are coming together and are united. We, the Sunni Muslim scholars, must unite and join hands and show people the path of monotheism and show the Muslim nation that we can offer security and safety, and advise them when to fight and when not to fight, and teach them the doctrine of loyalty and disavowal.

The obligation of time [referring to a *farida*, or religious duty, to act now and take advantage of the uprisings in the Arab world], O Muslim scholars, we must call for the arbitration and implementation of *Shariah*. Who opposes the law of Allah and who does not want arbitration of Allah? Who is raising suspicions against the arbitration of *Shariah*? Enough and I want you, O Muslim scholars, to issue a fatwa of the obligation of time, along with a fatwa to the implementation of *Shariah* to resolve many problems related to people's livelihoods and land of people and how to expel the infidels from our lands.

We have here in Ja'ar full plans for projects we want to achieve for the people such as water, sewage and cleaning, and we want to make contracts with investors so as to arrange these affairs. These projects are ready, and the regime has failed in carrying out these services. Now we have toppled the regime here and we are waiting for your investments. Today money is the lifeblood of *jihad*, we have to buy many things from the weapons and ammunition, as well as preparing religious lectures, media production and many other things. We need money to push the enemy out and show our message to the people.

Today in Ja'ar, just one hour ago, the brothers in the media department were lecturing people about *zakat* and how to collect it but they need media experts to help them. Today we have a radio station in Ja'ar with a broadcast radius of 60 km, but we do not have the media crew to run this radio station. So that we need media professionals and media specialists, technicians and internet experts as well to help us in media work.

Finally, my sheikh, please send a message to traders, and journalists and the common Muslims

Here, it is very important that I summarise my messages to traders. Allah is in the money. The money that we use to buy weapons and enter Aden. During our recent expansion around the country, it was a lack of money that stopped us from entering Aden, Allah knows we were only a few days away from taking power there. But it will fall, first Zanzibar and then Aden. Many people come to us from within Yemen and from outside - but those from within Yemen are more - and they ask us to arm them, but we tell them wait until we announce the call to *jihad*. However, this call has already gone out for those who have the money to buy arms. Today light and individual weapons are very important; we have to purchase them for the Sunni *mujahideen*. The Shia are arming their men and as you have heard in the media, the police captured Shia fighters and they found with them 16 thousand weapons including handguns. This is not an easy matter, and they want to carry out assassinations inside the cities of Sana'a and Aden. About one week ago, they kidnapped 15 women from Sana'a from Tagheer Square - these Shia are playing with the honor and dignity of the Sunnis.

O Muslims, O Sunni traders, Allah is in your money. Allah is in the money you pay for your brothers in any place they are whether in the Arabian Peninsula or in the Islamic Maghreb, Somalia or Afghanistan, direct your money to Muslim countries and invest there. We need you today; you need to follow Uthman ibn Affan, who spent his wealth to equip the army of *Usra*. We need more like Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf - may Allah bless them all - to Omar ibn al-Khattab to Abu Bakr, we need the Muslim billionaires today, such as these companions of the Prophet were.¹¹ Military fronts need to eat. If you only give your *zakat* to *jihad* and the *mujahideen*, we will succeed to pursue our Path to Allah and *jihad*, may Allah bless you and bless your money.

I call on all Muslims to understand the issues relating to *jihad* and the *mujahideen* fighters from our sources. Do not pay attention or take your information from the sources of the enemy and their media. Unfortunately, even Islamic non-jihadi schools listen to this media and the lies they say about us. The media is deliberately making distortion when it comes to us, Allah knows better.

¹¹ These men, apart from Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf, are the *Rashidun*, or Rightly Guided Caliphs, who immediately succeeded Mohammed



O Muslims, We ask you to pray for your brothers the *mujahideen*, whether wounded or prisoners, and I ask Allah Almighty and I pray to bless us and bless you and the whole nation and may Allah reward you and us with the best. We hope that you can make use of what we have said today.

We apologise for the questions of brothers that we did not answer today and we apologise for the lack of time and some security issues and Allah be with all of you.