

Full text of al-Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahiri's audio message

My dear Muslim brothers! May peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you! A massacre of Muslims is being carried out these days, and the Muslim world is totally oblivious to it. The western media is colluding with the killers to belittle its significance and hide the facts.

This is the bloodbath taking place in Bangladesh, without the Muslims paying the least attention to it.

Bangladesh is the victim of the conspiracy in which the agents of India, the corrupt leadership of the Pakistan army, and treacherous power hungry politicians of Bangladesh and Pakistan, who are always prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of fulfilling their ambitions and desires, were all equal participants.

However, the real victim was the Muslim Ummah in the subcontinent generally, and in Pakistan and Bangladesh specifically.

The crimes that are being committed in Bangladesh today against the core beliefs of Islam, the Prophet of Islam (pbuh), and the Muslim Ummah are only the fruits of the rotten seeds sown by these criminals.

Their purpose was not independence from Pakistan, stopping the aggression against the people of Bangladesh, or getting rid of military rule in Pakistan. None of these was the real objectives, even if these criminals took cover behind these slogans, parroted these lines, and propagated these out of their malevolence or stupidity, or due to both. None of this was the real purpose.

The real purpose was weakening the Muslim Ummah in the subcontinent. It was to rip the Muslim Ummah apart into pieces, and lead it to death by getting it entangled in mutual strife, regional conflicts and wars.

Above all, their purpose was to attack the real capital of this Ummah, and the secret of its strength: the Islamic faith.

What is taking place today in Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and Afghanistan is only a prelude to the execution of this evil plan, and the aforementioned criminals are the tools of the enemies of Islam in this vile conspiracy.

Those who massacred the Muslims in Bangladesh only yesterday are the same people who are massacring the Muslims in Pakistan today. Similarly, those who allied with India against Pakistan by claiming that they sought to defend the honour and sanctities of Bengalis are the same people who are attacking the sanctities, beliefs, honour, lives and properties of Bengalis today.

They claimed that they created Pakistan more than 60 years ago to defend Islam and Muslims in the subcontinent. Today we have a Pakistan that has no Shariah, no independence and no honour. Its government, army, intelligence, police and judiciary act as mercenaries hired to defend the interests of the crusader onslaught in South Asia.

Similarly, they claimed that they created Bangladesh more than 40 years ago to protect the independence, glory, honour and freedom of its people. But today we see Bangladesh turning into a huge prison in which the sanctities, honour, dignity and sacred places of Muslims are violated. Their lives are put at stake, and they are tortured in defence of the crusader onslaught, which is fighting Islam politically, militarily and ideologically.

Bangladesh, which they claimed to have won from Pakistan so that it may get its freedom, is being turned into a subjugated surrogate of India. These anti-Islamic policies that assail Islamic beliefs, symbols and the noble Prophet of Islam (pbuh), are only a manifestation of complete subjugation to India.

The events in Bangladesh enjoy the blessings of both India and America, since their interests in fighting Islam overlap, and this is why their bilateral relations are becoming stronger day by day.

This is the bitter truth that we must be aware of, so that we can take the first step on the road to freeing ourselves from this misfortune, humiliation and subservience to foreign powers.

My dear Muslim brothers, thousands of people are being killed in the streets of Bangladesh without any guilt, except that they have come out to protest against the collusion of the anti-Islam secular government with a bunch of transgressing secularists who are heaping insults and vulgar abuses on Islam and the Prophet of Islam (pbuh).

Hundreds of callers to the religion and scholars are also facing hardships, manhunts, imprisonment, trials, death sentences and life imprisonments without any guilt except that they have taken a stand against the agents of this crusader onslaught, who are being used as tools by the leading criminals of the western world to distort the image of Islam and poke fun at this religion, its prophet and beliefs.

"My Muslim brothers in Bangladesh, I invite you to confront this crusader onslaught against Islam, which is being orchestrated by the leading criminals in the subcontinent and the West against Islam, the Prophet of Islam and the Islamic creed, so that they may turn you into slaves of a despotic and disbelieving system."

The system which they want to impose on you seeks to enslave mankind, steal the resources and divide it into segments with its hellish and brutal apparatus. I invite you to adhere to the laws of Islam, its rulings and ethics. Live up to the Shariah, and bring up your sons and daughters on its firm adherence.

I invite you to gather around the true scholars of Islam, support them and protect them. I invite you to back them and support them and guard them. And I invite you to launch a massive public uprising in defence of Islam against their enemies of Islam. I invite the leading scholars of Bangladesh to fulfill the role that Islam has given them. The Glorious Lord says: "(And remember) when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) to make it (the news of the coming of Prophet Muhammad and the religious knowledge) known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it." (3:187) and He says: "Verily, We did not send down the (Torah) (to Musa [Moses]), therein was guidance and light, by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah's Will, judged the views. And the rabbis and the priests (too judged the Jews by the Torah after those Prophets), for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and they were witnesses thereto. Therefore, fear not men, but fear Me and sell not My Verses for a miserable price. And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the disbelievers." (5:44)

I invite you to firmly hold on to the principle of the supreme authority of the Shariah, and its primacy over man-made constitutions and laws, so that it governs the will of the masses, rather than being governed by their will, or by any other authority. I invite you to lead the masses in a vast and inclusive popular uprising (intifada) whose tide does not receive, nor its dynamism subsides, until the Shariah of Islam governs the land of Islam, instead of being governed over; until it becomes the authority, instead of being subjected to 'authority'; and until it leads the way, instead of being led. I invite you to expose the deception of the democratic system in front of the masses. Unveil the deceit of this system used by the West to exploit Muslims. If this system brings in a government that can please the Western world, the West encourages and supports it; and if it brings a government that even slightly opposes the West or the enemies of Islam, then the tanks, artillery, bombs, and bullets of the slaves of the West lie in wait for such a government and Egypt is only a fresh example of this, besides Algeria in the '90s.

Respected scholars! I invite you to instil in this Ummah the lover of martyrdom for the sake of Allah the Exalted and its defence of its religion, the sanctity of its Prophet, and its sacred places.

You must teach the Ummah that death in the way of Allah is better than life in His obedience and that the price of resisting oppressions is cheaper than the price of submitting to oppression. You must teach your Ummah that the one who wants freedom must pay its price, and the price of freedom is death.

I invite you to encourage the Ummah to act upon this saying of the Noble Prophet (peace be upon him): "The leader of the martyrs is Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib and the person who stands up to a tyrant ruler, enjoins good and forbids him from evil, and is killed by him (for doing so)."

O' scholars of Islam in Bangladesh! You must fight an ideological and propagational work against the secularists and atheists to expose the shallowness of their beliefs and ideals. You must highlight in front of the masses their failures, scandals and the blind alley they are leading this country into. At the same time, you must also elucidate the merits of the Shariah. You must shed light on the justice, freedom, glory, honour, chastity, and protection of ethics, values and human dignity which the Shariah calls for.

O' scholars of Islam! You are the leadership of the Ummah. If you remain upright, the Ummah will remain upright. If you remain steadfast, the Ummah will remain steadfast. If you remain firm, the Ummah will remain firm. So fear Allah

regarding the trust on your shoulders and the responsibility about which you will be questioned. Beware of Islam being harmed because of any weakness on your part!

O' scholars of Islam! Unite on a common agenda under the banner of Islam! Unite the Ummah in your support to confront the alliance of India, the West, secularists and atheists! Unite against them before they turn you into slaves of the master and deprive you of your faith, honour, independence, and freedom. Unite your word on the Word of Unity. Your brothers in Qaidatul Jihad have issued 'A document on the Support of Islam', in which they have invited the Ummah to unity. I present this to you so that you may reflect on it and benefit from it.

My Muslim brothers in Bangladesh! The victory of the Islamic Emirates is near in Afghanistan, with the Help and Power of Allah. This victory will be a victory of Islam and its supporters and the defeat of enemies of Islam, including the leading international criminals, their allies, and local proxies in the Islamic East with Allah's permission. Therefore, direct your efforts for the victory of this blessed Islamic Emirates with everything in your capacity from wealth, manpower, advice, thought, and calling people to support it. Be firm and remain patient, for the victory promised by Allah is near. "And Moses said, O my people! If you have believed in Allah then put your trust in Him, if you have indeed surrendered (unto Him)! They said: In Allah we put trust. Our Lord! Oh, make us not a lure for the wrongdoing folk. And, of Your mercy, save us from the folk that disbelieve. And We inspired Moses and his brother, (saying): Appoint houses for your people in Egypt and make your houses oratories, and establish worship. And give good news to the believers. And Moses said: our Lord! Lo! You have given Pharaoh and his chiefs splendour and riches in the life of the world, Our Lord! That they may lead men astray from Your way. Our Lord, destroy their riches and harden their hearts so that they believe not till they see the painful doom. He said: Your prayer is heard. Do keep to the straight path and follow not the road of those who have no knowledge." (5:84:89)

Our Muslim Ummah! The events in Bangladesh are clear proof of the collusion of the Western media, as well as media in the Islamic world, with the political leadership in the West, India, and the enemies of Islam generally. Thousands of people were massacred in the streets of Bangladesh, yet no-one mobilised for their plight. Instead, the media, passed over the incident in a very causal manner. The government issued a statement saying that the death toll was only around hundred. So thousands are killed, and more continue to die, in Bangladesh, but the West is unmoved. India even expressed its pleasure over the tragedy. America and India continue to provide the corrupt Bangladeshi government with even more aid. Similarly, when more than 5,000 people are killed in Egypt, and their bodies are burned in the streets, America calls for calm and reconciliation. But millions of Muslims are killed in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, Kashmir, the Philippines, Gujarat, Ahmadabad, and Somalia, the whole world is unmoved.

When the people of Afghanistan, Mali, and Somali demand freedom from foreign occupation and secular rulers and decide to implement Shariah, imposing economic sanctions becomes a 'necessity'. They are then met with a full-fledged military onslaught, in which the leading international criminals and their local surrogates take part. Their villages and homes are reduced to ruins. Their women and children are killed. In short, they are unable to establish the Shariah because their 'terrorists' and 'enemies of freedom'. But when Salman Rusdie, Taslima Nasrin and Ali Rajib Haider insult Islam, the Prophet of Islam (pbuh), and the beliefs of Islam, they are treated as heroes who must be defended, honoured, and given awards. They even get warm receptions in the White House or 10 Downing Street! Why? Because they are icons of freedom who are defended by the West and the enemies of Islam. As for the Muslim prisoners in Guantanamo and the secret prisons of CIA, they do not deserve freedom. They must be tortured, deprived of their rights and imprisoned without any sentence by a court for long periods determined by the American government on its own. This is because they are not 'humans' in the first place for America to give them any 'human rights'. They are not subject to those conventions by which America is bound in its treatment of the rest of humanity. This is the logic of power and arrogance. This is not about human rights; it is about the rights of the man who opposes Islam. It is about his rights when he is aggressing against a Muslim.

This is the arrogant attitude of the West that the great Imam and Reviver, Shaykh Osama bin Laden (may Allah have mercy on him), fully understood. He confronted them with the logic that they understand. He confronted them with the language that convinces them: the logic of power in the face of oppression and tyranny. In the eyes of the West, freedom means that you must be their slaves. It means you must be like a parrot that repeats what the West tells it to say. Freedom means that you must beg the West for its affinity and satisfaction. But if you invite people to the Unity of Allah; if you invite them to Islam, jihad, enjoining good, forbidding evil and establishing the rule of the Shariah, you are a 'terrorist'.

The only way to solve the problem that you pose is by bombing, killing, going to war with you. It is not your right to rule by your Shariah, even if the overwhelming majority of your people support you. This is because democracy is a one-

way highway that lands you in a position where you can serve the West. But if you try to use democracy to oppose the interest of the West, you are a terrorist. The reality of democracy which its advocates hide, is that it is the despotism of the whims of the majority. In democracy, truth is subject to the likes, desires, and decisions of the majority. The whims of the majority becomes the law; a system of life that must be obeyed. This stems from a very dangerous principle: sovereignty (according to the proponents of democracy) belongs to the people instead of Allah.

The reality of democracy is that it knows no religion, values or principles. Everything is right as long as it gets the majority of votes. It was a democratic Britain that occupied Muslim lands, killed millions, and robbed its resources for centuries. It was a democratic Britain that promised Palestine to the Jews. It was also a democratic Britain that handed over Palestine to the Zionists before withdrawing from Palestine. Similarly, it was a democratic America that dropped two nuclear bombs on Japan. It was democratic America that destroyed Vietnam and killed five million people. And it is still a democratic America that steals the petroleum resources of Muslims and occupies their lands. It was America that killed five million children in Iraq, and millions more in its crusader attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq. Let us not forget that it was a democratic America that brought up Israel, armed and financed it, and gave guarantees of its defence. It was also a democratic America that violated all the conventions on treatment of prisoners of war and prohibition of torture in its crusader wars against Muslims. Today the Israel that kills Palestinians, takes away their homes and lands is also democratic, and if anyone resists this oppression and defends himself, he is labelled a terrorist by the West. It is democratic India that thousands of Muslims in Kashmir, Gujarat, Ahmadabad, and Assam. All of these crimes take place with active or passive consent of the majority, and therefore such crimes become legal and fully justified under the democratic system. Therefore, democracy is a Deen (System of life) that opposes the Islamic Deen because obedience in Islam is for the Shariah of Allah, whereas obedience in democracy is for the whims of the majority. In Islam, sovereignty belongs to Allah, in democracy to the people. Allah, the Glorious, says: "The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allah. He has commanded that you worship none but Him, that is the (true) straight religion, but most know not." (12:40)

Therefore, it is not possible to establish an Islamic system through a democratic process, just as it is not possible to establish an Islamic system by adopting Christian beliefs. Is it logical to tell someone to become a Christian to get a prohibition on wine and fornication? Similarly, it is not acceptable for someone to come and tell you that you should give up the principle of the rule of the Shariah and sovereignty of Allah and surrender to the rule of the majority and sovereignty of the people to get to the stage where you can implement the teachings of Islam.

My oppressed and subjugated Ummah! What is happening in Bangladesh is not too distant from the events in Burma. With every passing massacre, the enemies of Islam provide even more economic aid to its government on the pretext of 'improvement in the human rights situation in Burma'. Yes, they mean the rights of the criminal human in his aggression against the oppressed, subjugated and downtrodden Muslim; the rights that a man who is at a war with Islam deserves when he commits aggression against a Muslim. This is the reality of the deception of human rights. They think they can convince us about human rights, while our blood flows and our sanctities are violated! It is worth mentioning that the so-called opposition activists Saan Suu Kyi, who was awarded a Nobel prize for what was termed as 'her defence of human rights in Burma', was also given a warm reception in the White House, has taken a negative stance on the massacres of Muslims in her country. The silence on the issue of Burma enjoys American blessings.

In fact, America has been describing Burma as making significant progress on the road to democracy and human rights - rights that picked and defined by America: the rights of the Israelis in killing the Palestinian; the rights of the Americans in bombing Iraq, Afghanistan, and Yemen; and the rights of the French in bombing and occupying Mali. America is participating in the massacre of Muslims with its criminal silence and behind-the-door support for these killings. In fact, had it not been for the support of America and the West for those who insulted the Prophet (pbuh), their minions would not have dared to go to this extent in Bangladesh. We should compare the crocodile tears shed by the West over the treatment of minorities in Sudan and Indonesia and its blind and deaf attitude towards what is taking place with Muslims in Bangladesh, Burma, the Philippines, India, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Mali, Palestine, and Egypt. It is then that we get to understand that 'human rights' are the rights of their man, and not the rights of our man. The events in Bangladesh and Burma are not too distant from the oppression and killings of Muslims in Kashmir or the racial cleansing in Assam, Gujarat and Ahmadabad either.

So is the timing of all these massacres of Muslims in South and East Asia a mere coincidence, or is it a conspiracy in which the forces opposing Islam in the West, Delhi, and Beijing are all collaborators? Moreover, if we link these events with what is taking place in the tribal areas of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Yemen, Somali, Mali, and what happened lately in Egypt, what is the conclusion that we can derive?

My Muslim brothers in all over the world! We must make a serious effort to bring an end to these oppressions on Muslims in Bangladesh, India, Burma and Sri Lanka with everything within our capacity. It is a duty of the callers to religion, writers, journalists, and opinion makers who have a zeal for this religion to highlight this injustice and expose it before the people so that there is public pressure on the governments of these countries to stop their crimes against Muslims. Similarly, people engaged in charitable activities, wealthy Muslims, and traders who support Muslim causes must extend their support to the Muslims of Burma and fulfil all their needs. As for our brothers and our people in Kashmir, Gujarat, Assam, and Ahmadabad who are living under the dark shade of Hindu occupation, I would like to say that perhaps the crimes that you have witnessed, and that are still taking place before your eyes, expose the extent of deception and falsity of the nationalist democratic way, which calls for your participation, side by side with the Hindus, in a national democratic system that brings together Hindus and Muslims. Perhaps you would have realised by now that this system brings Muslims and Hindus together, only to present the Muslims as an easy prey to the Hindus.

My respected Muslim brothers and our people living under the dark shade of this detestable Hindu occupation! We must firmly hold on to the creed of loyalty to the believers and disassociation with the disbelievers (Wala wal Bara), we must remember the saying of Allah, the Glorious: "O you who believe! Take not My enemies and your enemies (i.e. disbelievers and polytheists, etc.) as friends, showing affection towards them while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the truth (i.e. Islamic Monotheism, Quran, and Muhammad), and have driven out the Messenger (Muhammad) and yourselves (from your homeland) because you believe in Allah, your Lord! If you have come forth to strive in My Cause and to seek My Good Pleasure, (then take not these disbelievers and polytheists, etc., as your friends). You show friendship to them in secret, while I am All-Aware of what you conceal and what you reveal. And whosoever of you (Muslims) does that, then indeed he has gone (far) astray, (away) from the Straight Path. Should they gain the upper hand over you, they would behave to you as enemies, and stretch forth their hands and their tongues against you with evil, and they desire that you should disbelieve." (60:1-2) And He says: "Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity, it is only as regards those who fought against you on account of religion, and have driven you out of your homes, and helped to drive you out, that Allah forbids you to befriend them. And whosoever will befriend them, then such are the wrongdoers." (60:8-9)

We must act upon this saying of Allah, the Exalted; "And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect and raise for us from You one who will help. Those who believe, fight in the cause of Allah and those who disbelieve fighting the cause of taghout (Satan, etc.). So fight you against the friends of Satan, ever feeble indeed is the plot of Satan." (4:75-76)

In the end, I would like to remind the oppressive and criminal government of India that every crime has a punishment. The one who sows thorns never reaps flowers, the oppressed will get their rights back even if it takes some time. Verily, Allah, the Glorious, has stated the truth: "Those who do wrong will come to know by what a (great) reverse they will be overturned!" (26:227)

And our last payer is that all praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds and may peace and blessings be upon our master, Muhammad, his family, and Companions.