

DECLARATION OF AHMED AL DARBI

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I certify that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge:

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Ahmed Mohammed Ahmed Al Darbi.
2. I am a Saudi national who has been imprisoned at the U.S. Naval Station at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba ("Guantánamo") for nearly six years. The U.S. military has assigned me Internment Serial Number ("ISN") 768 at Guantánamo.
3. In June 2002, I traveled by air from Dubai, United Arab Emirates to Baku, Azerbaijan. While I was at customs in the Baku airport, waiting to be processed for entry, I was taken into custody by local Azerbaijani authorities. I did not know why Azerbaijani authorities apprehended me and I had no reason to know that they would. I was held in Azerbaijani custody for about two months.
4. In August 2002, the Azerbaijani authorities turned me over to U.S. agents. These agents [REDACTED]. They then blindfolded me, wrapped their arms around my neck in a way that strangled me, and cursed at me. [REDACTED], and somebody else kept saying "fuck you" in my ear. I was terrified and feared for my life, because I did not know who had seized me, which government's custody I was in, or where they were taking me. They did not tell me where we were going.
5. I was eventually taken to a place that I now know was Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan ("Bagram"). I was imprisoned at Bagram for about eight months. At Bagram, my detainee number was 264.
6. In late-March 2003, I was transferred to Guantánamo.

BAGRAM

Treatment and interrogations during the first two weeks at Bagram

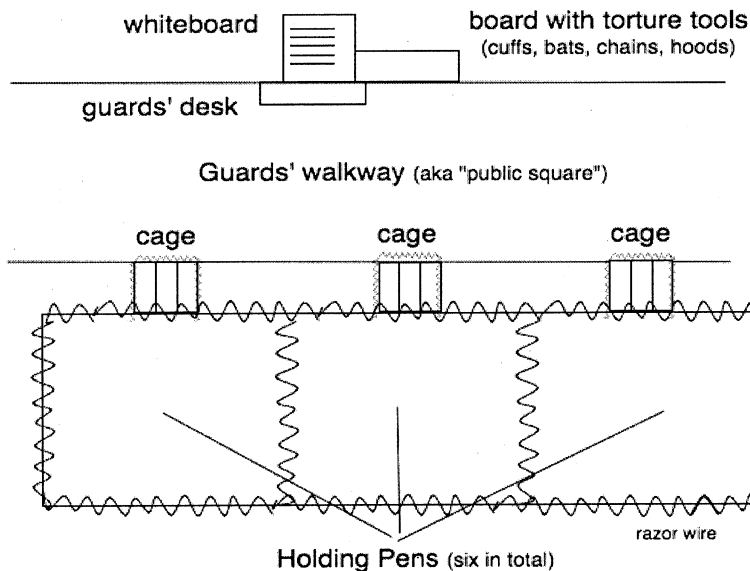
7. During about the first two weeks at Bagram, I was kept in complete isolation, and I did not even know I was in Afghanistan.
8. U.S. agents began interrogating me on my second day at Bagram. These interrogations took place in a room different from the isolation cell where I was held the rest of the time.

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9. While I was questioned, I was kept for many hours in painful positions. For example, I would be forced to kneel with my hands cuffed above my head, often through the night, so that I was not allowed to sleep. This position caused very sharp pain in my knee-caps. If my hands began to fall or I tried to stretch to relieve the pain in my back while I knelt, the interrogators kicked me in the back.
10. Sometimes I was also forced to lean against a wall with my forehead pressing against the wall and my hands shackled behind my back, but with my feet away from the wall. In this position, all my weight rested on my forehead. I had to hold this position for hours. This hurt my head and neck. It was impossible to sleep in this position.
11. I was often hooded during these interrogations. The hood they used had a sort of rope or drawstring that they would pull tight around my neck. The darkness, combined with little sleep, would leave me disoriented.
12. During these interrogations, they would ask me repeatedly about Usama Bin Laden and his whereabouts. Of course, I knew nothing about this.
13. When I was not being interrogated in an interrogation room, I was put in an isolation cell where the temperature was high and the light was kept brightly lit most of the time. Often they also would blast loud music into my cell.
14. During these first two weeks, I hardly slept at all. I was purposely kept awake much of the time, and it seemed that every time I started to fall asleep, they would hit me to keep me awake. Also, during that period, I was not allowed to pray.
15. I was not allowed to use a normal restroom during this time. Instead, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. The only thing that helped this problem was that I often did not eat much. I was not given much food at the time and the food they did give me was inedible, so I didn't have very much in my stomach. Due to the constant strain and stress this situation placed on me, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].
16. The U.S. military guards and interrogators also took many photographs of me that humiliated me. [REDACTED] and take off my hood so that I could see what was going on, and so that I would be recognizable. There would be several U.S. agents, male and female, standing around when these photographs were taken.

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17. After approximately the first two weeks, I was taken out of isolation. I was moved to a cage attached to a holding pen for other prisoners. This was a small cage surrounded by fencing and razor wire. The cages doubled as a passageway for the guards between the general holding pens and a public area or walkway in front of the cages. From what I remember, there were six holding pens in total, and each one connected to a cage that was used to isolate and suspend detainees by the arms. There were signs outside the holding pens displaying the names New York, Pennsylvania and Nairobi, which I understood to be the sites of different terrorist attacks after one of the guards, in a state of agitation and rage, once shouted at me "your brothers did this!" as he pushed me from behind.
18. I was hooded or goggled for much of this time. I recall that there was a whiteboard outside of the cage, where the numbers assigned to me and other detainees were recorded in red, green and blue. Next to the numbers were symbols indicating what techniques were to be used on us. Next to the whiteboard was another board, where they hung baseball bats, chains, cuffs, hoods, and other instruments guards would use on the prisoners at Bagram. Below is a sketch of how I remember the area:



19. Much of the time I was in this cage, U.S. military personnel shackled my hands above my head to the upper part of the cage's door, so that I would swing with the gate as it opened and shut. Sometimes, military personnel would cuff my hands to the gate outstretched in different directions so that my back would be twisted, almost horizontal. This was very painful. Frequently, U.S. personnel beat me while I was hanging in the cage.

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20. Occasionally, the guards would unlock the cuffs and tell me I could sleep. To me it felt like they only allowed me to sleep once or twice a week, but I do not know for certain. I do know that I was very sleep-deprived at this time. After what felt like a short time of sleep to me, the guards would wake me abruptly by rushing in as a group, shouting loudly, and they would then hang me from the top of the cage's gate by my wrists again.
21. I had to insist to be allowed to use the restroom. The guards and interrogators would not always release me, and I often could not relieve myself because of how long I had gone without relieving myself, which cause me sharp pains. When I was allowed to use the restroom, I had to remain completely shackled.

Interrogations during the next three months at Bagram

22. After the first two weeks, approximately, for about the next three months at Bagram, the interrogations that began on my second day at Bagram continued and became more abusive. U.S. personnel would play blaring music, shine bright lights in my eyes, kick me, and drag me around the room. Some kneed me in the chest, stomach and genitals and threw me against the wall. I was often thrown to the ground and then pulled around the room by my handcuffs.
23. Other times a sand bag or hood was placed over my head and tightened around my neck, and then they would grab my head and shake it violently while swearing at me and they would also pour water over my head while my head was covered. Also, I was sometimes forced to hold a chair over my head for a long period of time during interrogations.
24. On several occasions, the U.S. agents sprayed water on my face and then blew a powder that I think was pepper onto me. The water absorbed the powder and it burned my skin and made my nose run. At other times hairs were ripped from my chest and my head by the U.S. agents. Other times agents blew cigarette smoke in my face and they would also throw their cigarette butts at me along with the full contents of the trash can.
25. Sometimes, during interrogations, U.S. personnel would throw me to the ground and make me lie on my stomach, with my arms outstretched above my head. I remember that a U.S. military guard or interrogator by the name of Damien Corsetti was often present during my interrogations. Corsetti was a big, heavy man and he had a tattoo of the Virgin Mary on his left arm. He sometimes stepped on my handcuffs while I was lying on the floor with my arms above my head. This caused my handcuffs to tighten painfully around my wrists. These particular handcuffs were not of the "double-lock" sort that could not be tightened past a given point.
26. There are a few incidents that occurred only once but that I remember very well because they were so shocking to me. During one interrogation, a U.S. agent that I recall was Corsetti kneeled on my chest. Corsetti was a big, heavy

man. He put his knees on my chest and pressed down on me with all his weight. I couldn't breathe, and he stayed on me for so long that I thought I was going to die. Another guard or interrogator pulled him off me because I stopped breathing.

27. Another time, about a month after my transfer to Bagram, I was suspended in the cage, and a guard or interrogator called me [REDACTED]. There was a U.S. military guard in the cage who pressed his finger hard into the soft flesh under my jaw. I started to choke, and afterwards the area swelled badly.

28. There are other things that happened to me during these interrogations that I do not wish to describe in a document that might become public. I do not want my family to know the details about what happened to me. [REDACTED]

29. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. The U.S. agents also threatened to send me to Israeli, Egyptian, or Afghan jails for torture and rape.

30. [REDACTED]

31. [REDACTED]

32. [REDACTED]

33. [REDACTED]

34. [REDACTED]

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35. These are only some of the humiliating things that were done to me. I was frightened, and there were times I wished I would die. I felt that anything could happen to me and that everything was out of control. During this time the interrogators took my "confessions," pressuring me into making false statements about myself and others.
36. The military guards and interrogators would show me pictures of people, and told me I must identify them and confess things about them. After they tortured me, I would say what they wanted me to say. I was fed detailed statements and names of individuals to whom I was to attribute certain activities.
37. The military guards and interrogators told me that I had to repeat these same statements to other interrogators, and threatened to continue abusing me—or to make it even worse—if I did not cooperate. I found out that these "other interrogators" were FBI interrogators, because they identified themselves. After I had been interrogated and tortured by the military guards and interrogators, they would let the FBI interrogators into the room. The FBI interrogators would interrogate me without the military guards and interrogators. They would ask for the same details that I had discussed with the military interrogators and guards. I tried to repeat the same statements, because I was afraid of the threats made by the military guards and interrogators. I never signed anything at Bagram.
38. I remember that I usually spoke to the same three FBI interrogators. They identified themselves as "Tom," "Jerry," and there was third one whose name I cannot remember, but those were not their real names anyway. Tom was tall, Jerry was short; both were young, white males.
39. I do not think the FBI interrogators were present during the interrogations by the U.S. military interrogators or guards, or when the torture was happening. Also, I do not think the military guards and interrogators were present during the interrogations by the FBI. But the military interrogators continued to abuse me during the time I was being interrogated by the FBI—even though I did what the military guards and interrogators told me to do and tried to repeat statements the military guards and interrogators had fed me to the FBI.
40. Eventually, the FBI interrogators stopped questioning me. I was then moved to the communal holding pen with the other prisoners.

Hard labor at Bagram

41. I also was forced to perform degrading, hard labor at Bagram, in full view of the other detainees and the guards.
42. Many mornings I had to replace the full port-a-potty buckets with empty buckets. I had to do this in front of everybody. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. Once, when I complained that I could

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not change the port-a-potty while shackled, a guard punched me in the side, and kept hitting me even after I was on the floor. Other U.S. military personnel came over and one of them choked me while the other punched me in the kidneys and ribs.

43. Often I was forced to sweep the floor in the public, walkway area. Once, I was forced to scrub the entire floor using only a toothbrush. [REDACTED]

44. I was also forced to carry boxes filled with water bottles while my hands were cuffed together. I could carry two boxes but the guards often tried to make me carry as many as four, and would hit me when I struggled. This labor caused me sciatic pain and back pain for several years.

Witnessing the abuse of Dilawar

45. When I was in the communal holding pen, an Afghan prisoner by the name of Dilawar was shackled in a hanging position in the cage adjacent to my pen. I remember that this was the same cage where I had been suspended.
46. I recall that Dilawar had been hanging hooded for about two days and was screaming and moaning. A U.S. guard told Dilawar that he would release him if he would clean the floor. I spoke a little Pashto and some English, so the guard ordered me to translate this instruction for Dilawar. I was then ordered to clean the floor with him. After we were done, the guard chained Dilawar to the top of the cage once more. Dilawar started screaming again.
47. Then the next shift of guards came on. They ordered Dilawar to stop screaming. They then brought a shorter chain and used it to suspend him wholly off the floor by his wrists. Dilawar moved his body only slightly and that is when the guards began beating him.
48. At first two guards were beating Dilawar, kneeling him in the legs and punching him in the chest as he was suspended in the cage. They then moved him to the walkway area, outside the cage, and several guards beat him. By this point, Dilawar had stopped moving or crying. I witnessed this entire event.
49. Dilawar was then moved somewhere out of my sight. Days later, I heard Dilawar had died. This made me fearful that I would meet the same fate.

GUANTÁNAMO

50. On or about March 23, 2003, I was moved to Guantánamo. Once there, I was kept in solitary confinement for two months. I was held in Camp Delta, Camp 2, Oscar Block.

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- 51. Painfully loud music was often played in my cell. Sometimes they played a repetitive song composed of what sounded like a cat's meow. It was very hard to sleep because the cells were chilled to extremely cold temperatures, and there was extremely bright lighting and also the loud music.
- 52. Sometimes, U.S. personnel would throw my Koran to the ground, and they would scatter gruesome photos of bloodied and mutilated bodies on the ground.

Interrogations at Guantánamo

- 53. I remember that I was interrogated every day for what seemed like five to six hours, and sometimes also at night, from the middle of the night until dawn. The interrogation rooms stank of urine.
- 54. During the interrogations, they did not let me go to the restroom to relieve myself, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].
- 55. The interrogations at Guantánamo were conducted mostly by the FBI interrogators. Tom, the FBI interrogator who had questioned me at Bagram, was the first who interrogated me in Guantánamo, as I recall. I remember that he told me that if I did not stick with my Bagram confessions, I would not "escape Bagram." I was told that if I did not cooperate, I would be sentenced to death and executed, or that I would be tortured, raped, and sexually abused in either Camp X-Ray at Guantánamo, or sent back to Bagram or to other countries.
- 56. Shortly after I arrived at Guantánamo, Tom asked me to sign a written statement but I refused to sign the statement.
- 57. In or about April or May 2003, while I was still in solitary confinement, the FBI interrogators again told me to sign a written statement. Tom told me that prison authorities could send me to Camp X-Ray where horrible things could happen to me or send me to another country, such as Egypt or Israel, where people would make me sign the statement. I was scared that the abuse I suffered at Bagram would be renewed at Guantánamo or elsewhere, or that I might be sent back to Bagram.
- 58. The interrogators at Bagram and Guantánamo fed me particular details in my statements and forced me to identify individuals based on photographs or to ascribe to those individuals certain conduct. Although I never signed any written statements, I made numerous false statements to the interrogators at Bagram and Guantánamo because of the abuse and coercion I suffered.

CONTINUING EFFECTS OF TORTURE

59. To this day, I frequently feel anxious, depressed and worried. I feel not quite right, not quite like myself. I have recurring nightmares of the U.S. guards and interrogators from Bagram chasing me. Whenever anybody wakes me, I wake up screaming in shock and panic. I have headaches. I feel that I am emotionally unstable, and I know that I go through personality changes and mood swings, which were not typical for me before I came into U.S. custody. Sometimes I lose physical control [REDACTED].
60. I feel that I need mental health counseling, but I do not feel comfortable talking with the mental health or medical personnel here at Guantánamo. They have been complicit in the torture: I have seen and heard that they put patients in garments that leave them practically nude, that they forcibly medicate patients, and that they prescribe addictive drugs to patients so that interrogators can manipulate those men during interrogations. I would prefer an independent mental health expert identified by my attorney and defense counsel, Ramzi Kassem.

RETURNING TO SAUDI ARABIA

61. If I am released, I would like to go home to Saudi Arabia and move on with my life. I want to put this chapter behind me, find work, and take care of my wife and two children. My daughter is nine years old now and my son is seven. I have never met my son. I have already missed many years of their lives. Also, my parents are elderly and I have heard that my father is sick. I would like to join my brothers and sisters in taking care of them in their old days.
62. Of course, I am willing to participate in the Saudi reintegration program for repatriated detainees and abide by its rules and conditions upon my return home.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Guantánamo Bay, Cuba

Executed on this 1 day of July, 2009



Ahmed Mohammed Ahmed Al Darbi