

**Periodic Review Board:  
Subsequent Full Review Hearing, ISN 682 Ghassan Abdallah Ghazi Al Sharbi**

*Hearing Summary:*

The 20 August 2019 Periodic Review Board (PRB) Subsequent Full Review hearing for ISN 682 Ghassan Abdallah Ghazi Al Sharbi convened before one member of the public, who represented Judicial Watch, Inc. The PRB was delayed from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM by a failure of power to courthouse facility 1, requiring transfer of the detainee to courthouse facility 2 (resembling the 9/11 courtroom).

ISN 682 elected to attend his subsequent full review. He appeared to be in good health, with a swarthy complexion, dark hair worn tight to his scalp, and a greying beard approximately 2.5' long. He leaned his elbows on the table in front of him and his forearms appeared to have toned muscles with no unsteadiness. He had no papers on the table and waived translation of the proceedings.

The government reported the detainee was a flight school student who had associated with the 9/11 hijackers, potentially assisted in planning "Homeland" attacks, and potentially assisting in the Padilla plot to explode a dirty bomb. ISN 682's personal representative reported that he had attended five meetings in preparation for the PRB, but he had announced in May that he would no longer be participating in meetings until he was provided with four particular high-profile attorneys to represent him pro bono. The personal representative indicated that one of the attorneys is from a firm representing victim family members and rejects requests to represent detainees, but he pledged to continue asking. In addition, the detainee has been making demands that the personal representative gives his narrative directly to the U.S. news media, despite being made aware that the media are invited to the PRBs.

*Observations:*

ISN 682 was one of the few detainees who refused all preparation meetings for his initial PRB, though he did voluntarily attend that hearing. He appears to be repeating this practice with all PRB hearings he attends. He also leaned his elbows on the table in front of him and clasped his hands in an aggressive and pugilistic posture.

From 2002 to 2019, Al Sharbi has maintained a consistent narrative with varying levels of vitriol:

- During interviews with FBI agents in 2002 and 2003, Al Sharbi characterized himself as being in the wrong place at the wrong time and captured merely because the U.S. could not capture Bin Laden, and indicated that the U.S. would have no Middle Eastern policy problems if it stopped supporting dictators in the Middle East. He evaded answering questions about whether he was a combatant or about the morality of the 9/11 hijackers, though he stated that the U.S. was getting what it deserved with the 9/11 attacks because of foreign policy and that the U.S. allowed religious infidelity and immorality.<sup>1</sup>
- During his Combatant Status Review Tribunal in November or December of 2004, Al Sharbi called no witnesses in his defense, in an oral statement declared himself a combatant, listed offenses he attributed to the U.S. regarding homosexuality, the support of democracy, religious infidelity, and the emplacement and then betrayal of Saddam Hussein, and declared the people fighting as part of the coalition to be traitors.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Case 1:05-cv-02348-EGS document #71, the Government's Unclassified Factual Return, available on PACER.

<sup>2</sup> Case 1:05-cv-02348-EGS document #55, available on PACER.

- During his first appearance at a military commission proceeding on 27APR2006,<sup>3</sup> Al Sharbi elected to bias judgment against himself by wearing prison clothing (PDF pages 13-14), refused all military and civilian representation (PDF pages 16-17, 29), declared himself to have proudly taken up arms and “did all I did” against the U.S. (PDF pages 20-22, 26-27), used the proceeding to espouse his viewpoint (PDF page 24), explained both his expectation and his intent to remain at GTMO for the foreseeable future (PDF pages 25-26), and indicated methodologies by which he intended to continue fighting the U.S. (PDF page 31), potentially three days after a telephone call or visit with his father<sup>4</sup>.
- As part of his *habeas corpus* proceeding in 2009, ISN 682 filed a letter<sup>5</sup> attempting to dismiss all attorneys representing him, including “lawyer Robert Rachlin authorized by my father.”
- During his first PRB, ISN 682 refused to meet with the personal representative assigned to him, refused to write a statement, and refused to discuss a future outside of GTMO (though the Board praised his “candor,” indicating he likely admitted to or took pride in his prior actions again).
- Shortly prior to his second PRB, ISN 682 interacted with a representative of the news media who published an article<sup>6</sup> wherein ISN 682 opined that “American liberal attorneys [...] wanted to use me for their own causes,” and that “Conflict between the United States and the Muslim world can be resolved or eliminated quite simply: if the United States stops supporting dictatorships in Muslim countries.”

While the detainee’s demands for lawyers superficially seem like a change of attitude, they follow the same narrative elements. Having four attorneys would put ISN 682 on par with the 9/11 and *Cole* detainees who have large teams of lawyers to represent them in a capital case, indicating he is still proud of his actions and is demanding that the U.S. hold him as similarly impactful as KSM, Hawsawi, Bin Attash, Al Shihb, Baluchi, or Nashiri. The request for specific attorneys who have rejected the opportunity to represent him and the rejection of attorneys who have offered<sup>7</sup> indicates that he has no serious aspirations for transfer through the U.S. legal system or the PRB process. The request for an attorney from a firm representing 9/11 victim family members maintains the detainee’s narrative that he is only in captivity because the U.S. was unable to capture Bin Laden or other instigators of 9/11, casting himself as a victim of persecution due to the events of 9/11. The request for an attorney from a public relations firm and for PRS’ cooperation with projecting his narrative to the media (having successfully communicated with a reporter from *The Intercept*), while at the same time refusing to allow PRS to post his PRB written submission, is problematic. ISN 682 appears more interested in building and using his celebrity as a GTMO detainee to project a narrative and potentially release classified information as he has threatened to do in the past, than in attaining any form of transfer or release.

The Periodic Review Board is unlikely to authorize this detainee for transfer.

---

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.mc.mil/Portals/0/pdfs/alSharbiMCO1/d20060609RoT\\_alSharbi\\_v1.pdf](https://www.mc.mil/Portals/0/pdfs/alSharbiMCO1/d20060609RoT_alSharbi_v1.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.mc.mil/Portals/0/pdfs/alSharbiMCO1/d20060609RoT\\_alSharbi\\_v2.pdf](https://www.mc.mil/Portals/0/pdfs/alSharbiMCO1/d20060609RoT_alSharbi_v2.pdf) PDF pages 124, 128, and 131-133.

<sup>5</sup> Case 1:05-cv-02348-EGS document #88, available on PACER.

<sup>6</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/17/guantanamo-bay-prisoners-al-sharbi/>

<sup>7</sup> Per case 1:05-cv-02348-EGS, including the attorney vetted by his father as late as 2016, and the attorney David Remes during 2019, who has represented detainees that have been successfully transferred through the PRB process.