

**Periodic Review Board:
Subsequent Full Review, ISN 708 Ismail Ali Faraj Ali Bakush**

Events:

On March 22, 2022, two observers representing non-governmental organizations attended the Secretariat's Periodic Review Board Subsequent Full Review hearing for ISN 708, Ismail Ali Faraj Ali Bakush. The observers represented:

- Judicial Watch, Inc.
- Indiana University

Ismail Ali Faraj Ali Bakush (“Bakush”) attended the hearing with a translator and his personal representative. He spent the public portion of the hearing visibly poring over his papers and following along with the provided outline. He did not look at the camera or, when visible, members of the Board.

The government described Bakush as a Libyan Islamic Fighting Group explosives expert who had consulted with Al Qaeda. Though the detainee denies all connections to Al Qaeda and having had any expertise with explosives, both have been confirmed by multiple sources indicating Bakush had some sort of operational function with Al Qaeda.

The personal representative reported that the detainee has attended all her meetings. Bakush has expressed to her his desire to live in an Arabic-speaking country and take up shopkeeping to support a wife and family he hopes to have. The personal representative assessed him as mature and resilient, responding to disappointment with questions and self-control. She considered him open about his past and related his willingness to attend rehabilitation programs as a condition of his transfer.

Observations:

The detainee appeared to be a little overweight and aging, as both his hair and beard were streaked with grey. He exhibited several signs of nervousness or shyness. Though he refused to look at the Board during the public session, he did share a glance with his personal representative, who seemed to be encouraging or affirming him as the Board worked to transition to the closed session. Bakush did not attend the previous two hearings, and his attendance at this session was more likely prompted by a change in external politics than a change in perspective.

Unlike other personal representatives, Bakush’s did not discuss his education prior to or during GTMO, so the feasibility of the detainee supporting himself and a future family as a shopkeeper is uncertain. The running of a shop in an Arabic-speaking country would potentially present him with many opportunities to recidivate, as any representative of a terrorist group could do business with him in the guise of a customer, and many objects that go into building explosives are legitimate to order for sale in a shop. In previous years, the Board would not have considered this a valid plan and would not have authorized his transfer from GTMO. However, over the past year there have been several detainees authorized for transfer with even more questionable plans concerning their future means of support.

It is unlikely that the Board will retain this detainee under law-of-war detention.