



AQIM Disavows Responsibility for Lives of Austrian Hostages

April 7, 2008

Al-Qaida's Committee in the Islamic Maghreb: "The Mujahideen Disavow Responsibility for the Fate of the Austrian Civilian Hostages." Dated: April 7, 2008



[This document is the translation of an official Arabic-language communiqué obtained by NEFA investigators and translated into English by ceifit LTD on behalf of the NEFA TerrorWatch subscription service. This translation is provided for educational and informational purposes only. For more information on Al-Qaida's Committee in the Islamic Maghreb and its involvement in recent terror attacks, see the NEFA report "Two Decades of Jihad in Algeria: the GIA, GSPC, and Al-Qaida": <http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/nefagspc0507.pdf>.]

"...For the third time, the deadline of the ultimatum given to Austria by the mujahideen over its civilian hostages has expired, but Austria continues to act recklessly with a total lack of respect for the lives of its kidnapped civilians. Although the mujahideen showed a great deal of flexibility in their legal demands, and although they [the Austrians] have had precious opportunities to save the lives of the civilian hostages, it [Austria] chose to use deceitful propaganda releases in order to spread purported conditions which intend to weaken the mujahideen. In light of this deception, in order to help educate public opinion, and in order to honor our public responsibilities, we are clarifying the following facts:"

"1.) During the most recent negotiations, the mujahideen relented on their initial conditions, which Austria claimed were beyond its abilities. So, the mujahideen have issued new demands: you [Austria] should release the Muslim brother and his wife who are experiencing terrible and malicious torments in Guantanamo-Austria. Also, they should renounce their symbolic military participation in Afghanistan, manifested by the presence of four officers... Any intelligent person should be able to perceive that these new conditions are reasonable and are at the core of what Austria is able to do. However, Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, the spokesman of the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is refusing [to acknowledge the new demands] and has lied in his statements to a Bulgarian newspaper—in which he claimed that the mujahideen were still holding fast to their initial demands, and had even added new ones. These lies were an attempt to escape responsibility by his country, which has been repeatedly arguing that the initial demands [of the mujahideen] were not reasonable and were beyond the range of its capabilities! So, here are new demands from the mujahideen that are within its capabilities, and they will reveal to the whole world the extent of this country's credibility in its fraudulent concerns for saving the lives of its civilians."



"2.) The demand to free our two fellow Muslims [held] in Austria is not necessarily proof of a connection between us and any other jihad organization—as Austria has claimed in its charges against the two—but rather is based upon moral and legal premises which comprise part of our

goals. [This is] manifested in fellowship among Muslims and the oppressed in the defense of their honor and stolen rights... For the sake of calling for justice, unity, and freedom, we are sacrificing ourselves and our most precious valuables in order to wipe out the oppression confronting every Muslim equally, all over the world, even if there are nations that divide us... and even if we disagree about the method and the objectives... We are saying to the Austrian government: we know the extent of lies these two prisoners suffered during their arrest, and we have become aware that you are responsible for the miscarriage of the Muslim woman's baby while still an embryo... Where are the human rights of which you are always so proud of?!... Where is the fair treatment of two defenseless Muslim prisoners?!... How profound is the difference between your treatment of our prisoners compared to our treatment of yours?"

"3.) Islamic leaders from among our Muslim brothers in Austria have called upon us to free the two kidnapped civilians—while as for our brothers in Guantanamo-Austria, there is no one who mourns for them... Since you haven't listened to the voices calling on you to free the two tortured and oppressed [prisoners] held captive in Austria... for our part, we will strengthen these voices in a spirit of Islamic brotherhood and based upon the fellowship between all Muslims. If these voices are heard, pressure may be brought on Austria—forcing it to obey the new conditions of the mujahideen which call for the release of the two oppressed Muslim prisoners."

"4.) The mujahideen have shown flexibility towards Austria because of the relatively low level of hostility Austria has shown towards Islam and the Muslims. If the kidnapped civilians were citizens of another country, we would have treated them differently. Despite this, we remind our Islamic nation that Austria—according to its own official statements—is still participating with four officers in the occupation of Afghanistan... What business does Austria have in allying itself with the criminal gang which has invaded the land of Islam?!... And what have the unarmed Muslim people of Afghanistan done to the nation of Austria that has caused it to send four officers to participate in the occupation of their country and in the desecration of their religion, land, and honor?!... We insist that Austria not try to confuse people with false statements suggesting that the four officers are engaged in humanitarian work!!... The Muslims have already experienced the troubles, massacres, and destructions caused by the humanitarian work of the crusader alliance in Afghanistan and Iraq... and in the interests of spreading freedom and cursed American democracy."

"And in conclusion, we state: we have fulfilled our responsibilities and we have done all that can be expected of us—but it seems that Austria hasn't really been serious about saving the lives of its civilians. Now that the new conditions of the mujahideen have been made clear and explicit, Austria should consider itself fully responsible for the lives and fates of its civilian hostages. Allahu Akhbar, Allahu Akhbar, Allahu Akhbar, and the honor goes to Allah, his messenger, and to the mujahideen."