

UNAMA English Translation from Pashto of email communication received from the Political Office of the Taliban on 7 February 2014

Dear UNAMA's Head Ján Kubiš,

Please accept our warmest wishes and regards. You have fulfilled your promise by sharing the 2013 annual report about the casualties of civilians in Afghanistan with us. We commend it and thank you for that. As a matter of fact, it is a good initiative to send the report to us before it is being released. This would be a positive step in finding the facts and protecting civilians in the future.

As you are aware, since the start of jihad and the (Taliban) movement, protection of our people, their property and integrity have always remained our core objective. We are concerned about the civilian casualties no matter whomever and wherever and whenever they are being caused. We are committed to protecting civilians as a part of our strategy.

Incidentally, we would like civilian casualties not to be used as a propaganda tool for political motives as the trend has been going on for the last several years. It is a human rights issue and we ought to look at it from that perspective. Consequently, for resolving the issue of protection of civilians, we are willing to always cooperate and coordinate with you.

You also know that Islamic Emirates has constituted a special commission for protection of civilians. The main purpose of the commission is to investigate all incidents of protection of civilians and stop its recurrence.

As far as your sent report is concerned, we would like to say that this report as like the previous reports is not based on facts and unilateral allegations have been reported as facts. We do not agree to some parts of the report.

We could reply to your report in details for each paragraph, but since we have less time before your given deadline expires, we present our stance here by sharing some general observations and comments about the report. We hope you will take them into your consideration.

Firstly, you have talked about the road side IEDs in you report. We must say that our IEDs are controlled ones. They are detonated at the main target and not at the civilians. It is also a fact that civilians had died in roadside IEDs incidents. However, it is unfair to attribute these explosions to Islamic Emirates.

We know that some intelligence networks carry out this bad work for their own goals and our defamation. Sometimes IEDs are being planted on the road sides due to personal disputes in order to exact revenge. Moreover, the US forces plant IEDs themselves. There are people who have witnessed US Forces planting IEDs. There are some magnetic IEDs that are placed by our enemies and result in civilian casualties and these magnetic IEDs are then confused with the road side IEDs. In fact, they (magnetic IEDs) are not road-side IEDs and we are not involved in both of them.

You have said in your report that 561 children were killed and 11956 were wounded in 2013. You have attributed this to Taliban. This allegation is baseless. Similar allegations are made on and off against us by

American and Kabul administrations. In our opinion, you have given place to their allegations in your report and have confirmed them.

Secondly, you have written on page ... that “the incidents for which no one claims responsibility, then we attributed them to either of the parties as per our conclusion.” We would like to say that we have people and reporters in every part of Afghanistan. They immediately share the report of every incident with us and then we upload them to our website. Therefore, incidents for which we have not claimed the responsibility should not be attributed to us. But they should be attributed to unknown because attributing those incidents only to us is not fair. An international organization such as UN is expected to act and judge impartially and its report must not be prepared on the basis of presumptions.

Thirdly, you are aware that our leadership has given absolute directive to the armed mujahidin of the Islamic Emirates not to carry out attack and detonate anything at bazaars, markets, schools and bus stations. Practical measures have been taken in order to implement this directive. We condemn and have always condemned attack at similar locations. We do realize that similar incidents are being carried out to defame us and create a gap between us and our people. We hope that UNAMA would take these intricacies into account and would not attribute any of similar type of incident to us.

Fourthly, you have said in your report that some civilians go near the IMF convoy despite warnings and as a result they are killed. In our opinion, this is not the ground reality. Eye-witnesses and our reports show that many civilians have been killed by the IMF suddenly and without any prior warnings. Even farmers and shepherds have been killed. Similar incidents have enraged people, the mujahidin and even some diligent ANA soldiers and officers in Kabul government administration and have often fired at them in reactions which are not hidden from you and the internationals. We hope that UNAMA's report would be based on evidence and ground realities rather than on baseless allegations and reports of the IMF.

This is also a reality that when an IED detonates at an IMF convoy, instead of finding their lawful target or knowing it, they fire indiscriminately and it results in civilian casualties. This is now more a routine job of the IMF.

Fifthly, you have attributed 74 per cent of civilian casualties to the Taliban. We do not agree with this one-sided estimate. Unfortunately, it is simply the replication of the confirmations of our enemies that you have endorsed. You have also written that Taliban's firing have killed the most civilians in the conflict. We do not agree with this allegation either. The reason is that wherever we carry out attacks or operations or when we are being attacked, we are familiar with the terrain and its people. We know all of them and we avoid killing innocent civilians. IMF, Kabul administration soldiers are not familiar with our terrain. For them, every plant and tree appears as an enemy and they fire at them. We do not have tanks and airplanes and they have these sophisticated weapons and their careless bombardment and firing have claimed lives of many civilians.

We would like to say that we were not involved in an attack of ICRC and the Indian Consulate in Jalalabad and even at that time we have denied our involvement.

We would like to reiterate that we are committed to protecting civilians and we are willing to cooperate. We hope that for the solution of protection of civilian issue in Afghanistan, you would come up with a

policy that would be impartial and not politically motivated. We always welcome formation of such structures and we will cooperate.

Finally, we convey our best wishes and regards to you.

**Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan
Political Office**