

This is an ICSR insight by Senior Fellow Shiraz Maher, with translation provided by ICSR Atkin Fellow, Amany Soliman.

Al-Qaeda has today issued a statement on jihadist forums confirming the death of its leader, Osama bin Laden. The statement is dated 3 May 2011, but only appeared on known jihadist forums today (6 May) at around 1230 GMT.

The statement confirms that Osama bin Laden had recorded a new audio statement one week before his death and that it will be released soon. Al-Qaeda members also promise a series of further attacks which 'will even make the hair of babies turn grey', and call for Pakistanis to rise up against their government.

The statement was released in Arabic but has been translated in full by ICSR and can be downloaded [here](#) (the original statement in Arabic can be downloaded [here](#)).

Key excerpts from the statement include:

- "That the Americans have killed Osama is neither shameful nor disgraceful as men and heroes are only killed on the battlefield, and every soul has an appointed time."
- "Are the Americans able to kill what Sheikh Osama lived and fought for, even with all their soldiers, intelligence, and agencies? Never! Never! Sheikh Osama did not build an organisation that would die with him, nor would end with him."
- "If the light of Islam and jihad could disappear with the killing or death of just one man, it would have gone the day Prophet Mohammed died, or it would have ended the day Omar was killed in the mosque, or Othman next to his book of Quran, or Ali in the street (may Allah bless all of them)...Instead, they were emboldened by these attacks from their enemies and were determined to extract revenge, holding the flag of truth in their hands..."
- "Al-Qaeda makes a pledge to Allah and we seek his help, support and assistance, to proceed down the road of jihad along which our leaders have traversed behind Sheikh Osama."
- "...there will be a curse hunting the Americans and their agents, chasing them both outside and inside their countries. Soon, God willing, their joy will turn to sadness and blood will mix with their tears."
- "We call for the Muslims in Pakistan on whose soil Sheikh Osama was killed to rise up and revolt, and cleanse this shame imposed on them by traitors and thieves who sold everything to the enemies of their nation."

Pressure had been building on al-Qaeda to release an official statement in recent days

- Popular jihadist forums have been awash with statements from their supporters and members in recent days requesting official confirmation of bin Laden's death.
- One user called 'Mujahid' on the Ansar forum expressed his frustration at the lack of information: **"Is there really still no official word out? It's weird on both ends, the story the americans are saying doesn't make sense and no official word has been put out yet by AQ pretty unusual, people are martyred all the time and we always get the news relatively quickly"**.
- Administrators from Ansar also issued a statement pointing out: **"More than 48 hours have passed and still there is no official statement from Al-Fajr media regarding the Martyrdom of Sheikh Osama bin laden. The supporters of the Mujahideen are waiting for the official statement with their hands on their hearts"**.

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