

Key: UM = Unidentified Male Speaker
Translator comments, clarifications, and additions are italicized in brackets

[Time Stamp: 00:01]

[The recording starts mid-sentence.]

Sa'dun Hammadi: The area of Al-Khafji. I don't believe they should be left alone. On the contrary, they should be personally supervised by you in terms of details.

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Sa'di—

Sa'di: Mr. President, we have conformed to the Soviet Union and to the international pressure. We expected, as a result of our conformity, a change in position, especially on the part of the Soviet Union. Therefore, I would like to ask, just for clarification, is it possible to ask the Soviet Union to give us weapons, not necessarily for the frontlines? They were opposed to the fact that the enemy had exceeded the limits and launched attacks on cities. These limits were determined by the Security Council resolutions. Isn't it feasible or appropriate to ask for the support of the Soviet Union in this matter? Even for help with [*weapons*] for the frontlines. Especially since the Soviet Union was humiliated by the Americans rejecting their mediation. I believe this is a good opportunity for us to exploit these facts.

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Taha—

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Mr. President, I do not believe that any political action preceding the ground battle would be in our favor. I still believe if the ground attack takes place after we reacted politically and conformed, the combat spirits will improve. Especially if perceived this way by the people and the military. It would be as if we pulled back into our borders and are fighting on our grounds. They [*the Coalition Forces*] have not given us a chance to withdraw. Therefore, I don't believe it would have been advantageous if the ground battle took place a week ago or before the initiative. It would be different if [*the ground battle*] had started within the first few days. However, it is already postponed. Additionally, in the past ten days —four or five days before the initiative and a few days after — you have taken certain measures, including those mentioned by Comrade Dr. Sa'dun—

Saddam Hussein: Call the Chief of Intelligence for me.

UM1: Yes, Sir.

[Inaudible, the chief of intelligence is speaking to Saddam while Tariq Ramadan is speaking]

Taha Yasin Ramadan: [*Picks up mid-sentence*] including everything mentioned by Comrade Dr. Sa'dun when he was abroad, including the return of [*inaudible*], the role of the Party, the squads, the pardons, the role of commanders on the frontlines and the defection. Instructions and memos were issued and organizational activities, stimulants, etc. were not only diplomatic, but beneficial as well.

I intended to mention earlier that, I agree with Comrade Sa'di regarding your most recent letter, which you sent without realizing that there would be a ground attack. Is it useful to send a letter

to the Soviet Union asking them to clarify their position regarding the ground attack, which has already started? Are they going to comply with the resolution that entitled the United States to attack? Or are they going to affirm that this attack is not in agreement with the international will and Security Council resolutions? The Soviet Union was among the nations that voted for the entitlement resolution. Due to its proposed peace initiative being unsuccessful, the Soviet Union must be looking for other alternative languages. [*The peace initiative did*] not only state that the allies have exceeded the limits of the entitlement, but that they have continued with the hostilities, despite all initiatives and calls.

[*Time Stamp: 05:00*]

This is just a query; your last letter was sent before the beginning of the ground attack and the [*Soviets*] response was also in the same order. Would you perhaps, Mr. President, consider that we write something better to the Soviet Union?

Saddam Hussein: Yes, we can write a letter regarding the political and military aspects.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: I believe Comrade Sa'di is correct. I do not wish to get into the details of the media aspect. However, the broadcasting should inspire and rally the masses. It should call on the Arab people to revolt and fight against the enemies of our nation and their interests everywhere. Meanwhile, we will continue to increase our efforts and propaganda in an explicit call to all Arab and Muslim masses; a call to rise up and attack the interests of all coalition states without discretion or diplomacy. We have only one, small broadcasting agency, but it can do the job and convey a message that if Arab and Muslim leaders who do not stand up [*against the Coalition Forces*], they will have to face them [*the masses*]. Thank you, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Muhammad—

Muhammad [*Probably either Muhammad Hamza al-Zubaydi, a Regional Command member (1982–2001) who became deputy prime minister in March 1991 and played a key role in suppressing the Shi'a uprising, or Muhammad Saeed al-Sahhaf, the minister of foreign affairs (1992–2001)*]: Mr. President, I truly believe the plot has been accurately executed and the Soviet Union is well aware of that. In fact, it supported the United States in its aggression. Despite all this, I believe it is crucial for us to embarrass the Soviet Union in this phase and escalate our political maneuvering. We accepted the Soviet Initiative while the Security Council was still in session and it was later rescheduled, but the ground attack started anyway at 3:00 AM. So, I believe it is very necessary here—

Saddam Hussein: I think the Security Council decided to reassemble at 6:00 AM.

Muhammad: They convened and the session was later adjourned.

Saddam Hussein: Was [*the Council*] in session?

UM2: Yes. They received the news and decided there was no point to have the session...

Muhammad: So, what is the point of the Security Council?

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Why was there no point for the session? The war was underway, even before the ground attack.

Muhammad: The five permanent members of the Security Council had not yet made a decision regarding the Soviet initiative when the United States decided to launch its aggression. I consider this behavior to be insulting, especially to the Soviet Union. We should make this point the center of attention. Furthermore, I support the arguments of Comrades Sa'di and Taha and would like to add another remark. I believe it is essential for us to take advantage of the situation in some Arab countries, especially countries, which along with their masses, are expressing substantial support for us. Take for example Algeria, where we can dare the Algerian government to provide us with weapons, military equipment, or any kind of support to fight against this American aggression. We can do the same with many other countries that sympathize with our cause such as Tunisia, Mauritania, Yemen and others. We are well aware of what they can offer. But even if we can get a rifle from Mauritania, for example, we can then consider Mauritania to have supported us in such a difficult time. On the other hand, Mr. President, we can test Iran from the Islamic perspective and we can incite the Iranian clerics, parliament and civil organizations in any way we can to gain their sympathy and support, along with other Islamic countries.

[Time Stamp: 09:42]

The truth is, Sir, an Iranian cleric was on Iraqi TV yesterday during the Friday religious ceremony. He spoke in Arabic, and was curious about the motive behind the American aggression on Iraq. Iraq has accepted all the demands of the international community, including the unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. I am not sure of this cleric's name, but he had a huge turban and was inciting the audience against the United States and explaining Iraq's position. In my estimation, there is popular support for us [*in Iran*] and we should take advantage of it. We should intensify our political efforts in sympathetic Arab and foreign countries, in addition to Iran. As you know, Mr. President, we have gained great experience through our long war with Iran. Most of the comrades here have worked in the field. Therefore, we have to reassess our organization of the popular support. Although I was away for a while, I am aware of the current events. I believe we have to prepare, reorganize and re-arm the popular militias and the civilians. I recall when we were training females in Al-Basrah to participate in the war by supplying fighters with weapons and ammunition. We have to have emergency plans in store for all governorates, especially those most likely to be penetrated. They [*the Coalition Forces*] claim they have already crossed the borders into Iraqi territory. They will therefore try to make their way into Al-Najaf and Al-Nasiriyyah. They will try to infiltrate through these areas, because our borders with Saudi Arabia are so long. I suggest examining and searching these governorates on the Iraqi-Saudi borders. The popular militias and civilians in these areas should be armed, trained and prepared. Training should not be exclusive to organized and trained fighters, but quite the opposite. Whoever is able to use a gun and is trusted by Ba'thist organizations should be armed and trained. Let it be a street fight, a house to house fight, even females who can participate should help in the fight. I am certain that the comrades who are in charge of these organizations have already considered all these aspects. I am just trying to remind them.

Saddam Hussein: They have specific, written instructions that explain to them what to do in different situations. This includes how to maneuver, attack, and defend villages and cities and the types of weapons they can use.

When will the rest of the Command members receive their instructions?

UM3: They already arrived, Mr. President. The instructions include the topics of arming and dealing with border infiltration—

Saddam Hussein: I want more [*accomplishments*] in this effort.

UM3: Yes, Sir.

Muhammad: I am confident of our victory. Our people can clearly see we are fighting America and what is required of them is...

Saddam Hussein: Time will sort things out. With time, America will end up with England and a few the oil countries. This coalition is not going to last forever, especially after we have taken this new political position.

Muhammad: I believe our people have been strongly holding together since this war started. I truly believe we will achieve victory, God willing, and they will be defeated. We have survived the first strikes on the 16th and the 17th and our people will survive this one, as well. If we can have the Americans lose 5,000 soldiers in this battle—

Saddam Hussein: Five hundred.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: [*Inaudible.*]

Sa'dun Hammadi: I told the Chinese president that we would win if we lose one [*Iraqi soldier*] for every one [*American soldier killed*] or two [*Iraqis*] for one [*American*]. He said no.

Saddam Hussein: No, his assessment is right; I told my soldiers four to one.

Sa'dun Hammadi: [*The Chinese president*] said that "even if we had one [*American soldier killed*] for every four [*Iraqi soldiers killed*], you are the victors." He told me that himself.

Muhammad: We have to do our best to inflict as many casualties among their ranks as we can. I am confident of your estimate, Mr. President.

[*Time Stamp: 15:00*]

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Muhammad, whether it is our artillery or our direct fighters' fire, as long as they enter the battleground, they are going to bear casualties.

Muhammad: God willing, we will achieve victory.

Sa'dun Hammadi: We will need bravery. We need to use methods other than those we were taught at military schools. We can overcome their overwhelming majority and technological superiority by the heroism of our troops.

Muhammad: Thank you, Mr. President.

Saddam Hussein: Comrade Sulayman—

Sulayman: In reference to the popular activities and the partisan organizations, they were actively involved in instigating patriotic sentiments until the war started. They were required to put certain military and mobilization procedures into operation prior to the war. We all know, as we learned from you, Mr. President, our greatest teacher and leader, that popular support is essential for the fight. In fact, it is the backbone of the soldiers on the frontlines, in addition to its influence over the political international arena. Now that the ground battle has started, I have noticed that these partisan organizations need to work harder on inciting patriotic sentiments and activities; they need to publicize these issues, because they will definitely empower the operations and boost the morale of the fighters on the frontlines. There were some measures that were recommended to the Mobilization Committee before the war, which you approved and requested be carried out in case of aggression against Iraq. I recall some of these measures as follows: Rallies and prayers are to be held in the mosques and Jihad is to be declared, even on the streets.

There were other measures you requested be postponed because the timing was not appropriate for the events. In brief, the status of the general public, up until the beginning of the war, may have been appropriate for the situation. However, the current situation requires that additional measures be taken—

Saddam Hussein: Motivation.

Sulayman: In order to motivate and support more popular involvement. Some procedures may seem shallow, but, in fact, they help rally and motivate the masses and inspire enthusiasm. Such procedures include parades of popular militias on the streets, the presence of armed personnel in public and public meetings of partisan groups. This battle is a national battle. In fact, it is a battle for our existence as Iraqis, as Arabs and as humans. Therefore, I call on these groups to come out to fight, defend and support their fellow soldiers in any way they can.

My objective is for this grassroots movement to adopt new and unconventional methods and tactics, while they utilize past experiences. Through the advice of my fellow comrades and your valuable leadership, I am certain they will excel in their efforts to strengthen the spirits and the determination of our people. We noticed, as a result of some shots fired in Baghdad, that Bush came out to analyze and comment on the incident, and concluded that the Iraqis were opposed to the war. Our intensions are for the Iraqi people to get more involved and to become enthusiastic and articulate. As for the political situation, in addition to the Soviet Union, we can involve Iran. We can even talk about the involvement of Israel in this war.

[Time Stamp: 20:00]

Saddam Hussein: Why should anyone who wants to join be concerned? There is no difference between America and Israel.

Muhammad: Some of them [*Arab nations*] made this argument.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: I think this group is not willing to join.

Saddam Hussein: They won't join.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They will make up other motives.

Saddam Hussein: Some have already said, even if Israel joins [*the war*]*—they will not join.*

Muhammad: Our people are the foundation [*of these efforts*], if they are inspired.

Saddam Hussein: When our people have the strength and can express their determination, other Arab and Muslim people will be motivated by the sense of honor and passion.

Muhammad: There is a proverb that says "The bravery of some men emboldens other men; therefore, people will hearten and embolden each other."

Saddam Hussein: This is everyone's duty in relation to their capacities. This includes all institutions. For example, Comrade Muhammad can perform this duty from his work at the Ministry of Telecommunications. He can motivate his own group of people in a precise and technical manner. In addition, those who work at the Economic Committee can dedicate five minutes to demonstrate the significance of this battle, prior to commencing their daily routine. Moreover, when Comrade Taha meets with the Kurds, he can talk to them about this war. He can make it clear to them that this war is not limited to one ethnicity over the other or a certain political agenda over another. This war is against all Iraqis. Mizban, Saddam and others can all work to achieve these goals. We are taking upon ourselves the implication of these duties and the need to perform them from our own position. Regarding the operational aspects, if Comrade 'Izzat were not feeling well or unable to perform his duties at the Organizational Committee, then Comrade Taha could hold the meeting for either the Leadership or the Organizational Committee. The same concept applies if Comrade Taha were occupied. Comrade Sa'di could perform his duties by holding a meeting for the Organizational Committee. This would keep up with the progress and so forth. Thus, there are three approaches to sustain the progress and the operation of the Organizational Committee.

Sa'dun Hammadi: I have a specific recommendation. I believe today should be proclaimed a day of celebration. We should have the broadcasting service announce we are celebrating the beginning of the ground war.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: I do not support this idea at all. It would be a grave mistake. People will take it against us, as they did when we played music at the beginning of the war...

Saddam Hussein: What music?

Taha Yasin Ramadan: A Fayruz [*a prominent Arab singer*] song. This is war; we will celebrate when we win.

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: Let us wait until we deal them the ultimate blow.

UM4: Mr. President, people left Baghdad in the first two days of the strikes. The city was vacant. We played some patriotic music to let people know that airstrikes were not going to eliminate every soul. In fact, they started to return to the city.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They did not return because of the music.

Sa'di: At least we gave our best effort.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, it was a good effort.

UM4: It was a good effort and I support the idea of the Doctor and the First Vice President. We need to induce more enthusiasm and public support. If the manifestations of demonstrations, armed parades, police and armed youth were not present last week, they need to be today. These manifestations are taking place in Jordan; why shouldn't we have them here, where the aggression has occurred?

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Outsiders will wonder what is wrong with us if they hear we are celebrating.

UM5: Why would we have the popular militias parading if they are supposed to be fighting on the frontlines?

UM4: We do not have to parade, but we can publicize the presence of these forces in public places, especially during the airstrikes. To place a group of a thousand on a city block would be ridiculous, but perhaps a few of these individuals in each neighborhood will have a great impact. The current events, Mr. President, are exactly what you had expected. We were not completely shocked by the ground assault. This is evident by the maps and the drawings we have for our plans. We have to persevere and do what is necessary to keep on fighting and stay connected with our army and people until we achieve victory. I believe diplomatic efforts are also necessary, especially with Arab nations that we are on good terms with. These nations need to make statements against the aggression and encourage their populace to demonstrate and condemn the aggression.

[Time Stamp: 25:00]

On the other hand, the Soviet Union needs to have a clear position regarding these events. They stated yesterday that if the ground attack occurs, they will not condemn the assault, but they will express their displeasure. This is not a good position—

Saddam Hussein: Is that what they claimed?

UM4: Yes. This was their statement: if the ground attack occurs, they will not condemn it, but they will express their displeasure. This is a disgraceful position—

Saddam Hussein: This is indicative of—

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They are accomplices as well—

UM4: In addition, the fact that Gorbachev called Bush and asked him to postpone the ground attack for one more night means that [*Bush*] has informed him about the ground attack. Whether he did inform him or not, I think, has no value—

Taha Yasin Ramadan: The French publicized this topic—

UM4: Nonetheless, I believe your letters to Gorbachev are of high significance and will rectify the "issue of 6:30," [*the statement of Coalition Forces claiming the capture of Failaka*] so we

don't get [*judged by*] history. Our citizens are passionate and determined. Whether they use knives, bats, rocks or whatever, this war is with the United States. So, what do we expect?

Saddam Hussein: We will keep fighting. If we can't fight from our positions, we will pull back into the cities, but we will continue the fight.

UM4: Where we pull back is not an issue. The issue at hand is how we can inflict casualties [*among the enemy's ranks*].

Saddam Hussein: If I believed we could withdraw our forces and equipment without losing half of them as a result of airstrikes, I would have had them withdrawn today. However, their current positions are much better than any other position they could have inside Iraq. This situation is different than the war with Iran. We announced our withdrawal and we did so without any obstruction, because they did not have air supremacy. [*The Americans*] would strike our forces—

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They would strike to prove their aircrafts are flying. They will strike for a couple of hours and when they stop they will state it was adequate. What can we do?

Saddam Hussein: They will never state that. The American's objective is to [*destroy*] Iraq in its entirety, including its willpower.

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: Mr. President, do you think we should leave Kuwait behind with all its buildings and let them have it all?

Saddam Hussein: The most recent battle we had was inside Kuwait City. When we withdraw, we will fight inside cities, because our forces are in control there and can still fight.

[27:45-31:50: *original recording is fast forwarded and a part of it is blank.*]

[*Time Stamp: 31:50*]

Saddam Hussein: When are comrades Taha and Sa'dun coming? Call them. Did they receive?—

UM6: Yes, they did.

Saddam Hussein: Go ahead, with the help of God, incite your organizations and your party. The ultimate conclusion of this battle is Iraq is here to stay and they will leave.

[*Inaudible background talk.*]

Saddam Hussein: We cannot read the future. The war started and we must continue to the end, when we will achieve victory by the will of God.

All: God willing.

Saddam Hussein: Go ahead, with the help of God.

[*Inaudible.*]

UM6: To them.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: The military will dispatch a vehicle. The volunteer Arab forces were processed and named today, like, Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir for the Egyptians. The Syrian forces need a name [*inaudible*]. What do you think, Doctor? What is the reason for celebration today? I think the whole Arab population is listening to songs.

Saddam Hussein: There is a song called "I Crossed the River."

Sa'dun Hammadi: You guys are taking the issue sarcastically. I am going to be honest with you. We are facing an enormous backlash as a result of demoralization and fear of the war. We must confront it. What does it mean when a man like me stands before a press conference, states that we receive martyrs with celebration, and the audience responds with a standing ovation? Is it true, when someone dies, people receive his corpse with joy? It is extremely important for our fellow citizens to understand we are content, at ease and not afraid of the war. I did not say we have to hand out sweets. But our radio broadcasts must not express any sorrow, because our people will perceive this attitude as that of the defeated and depressed. We can understand this, but this can become extreme.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Go down to the street and find out what people are looking for. I do not wish to be depressed, yet I do not wish to [*seem so happy either*]. Newscasters must have a very strong and determined tone of voice.

[*Time Stamp: 35:00*]

Sa'dun Hammadi: I did not claim we should celebrate - I want us to seem content and accepting, not contempt or depressed. We have to affirm we are pleased and that we welcome the war.

[*Inaudible background talk.*]

Saddam Hussein: Were communications restored?

UM7: Yes, Sir.

UM8: Communications with Failaka are restored.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Thanks be to God, thanks be to God. I believe when Failaka lasts for an extra hour, they must feel the pressure of being surrounded by water. Though, this is a significant indication [*of resolve*]. [*To Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf*] Communications with Failaka are restored.

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: That is great. [*Speaking sarcastically*] they [*the Americans*] accomplished [*something*], it's only an island and they accomplished it.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They landed in the first day with about 1,700-1,800 [*soldiers*] an hour [*inaudible*].

UM9: They bombed [*inaudible*]. Can you believe a super power would do that?

Taha Yasin Ramadan: This one next to us? They only need to bomb something close to us and everything will fall apart.

UM10: America the Super Power targets a Foreign Minister!

Taha Yasin Ramadan: [*Inaudible*] what is left of Baghdad after yesterday?

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: Residential homes were targeted, too.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Was your house destroyed?

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: Only half. I sent Jamal to check it out for me. He said that the damages were obvious and the windows were smashed. We left [*inaudible*] in the trunks of our cars. I thought they would take it and distribute it to the neighbors...

[*Time Stamp: 40:28*]

[*Inaudible, Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf, Taha Yasin Ramadan and others are whispering, discussing personal things, like cars, homes, money, friends, etc.*]

[*Time Stamp: 48:36*]

Saddam Hussein: I believe today was the best fight. When it comes to certain things, Americans are—may God help us.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: It was meant as a threat. It cannot be the longest one—

Saddam Hussein: Why would America come to fight?

Sabir: That was a direct one, directly into Kuwait. They have targeted the 14th Division, because Al-Manaqeesh is the fastest way to the city. I believe they are determined to arrive at the city tomorrow, the 25th.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: How are they going to fight in the city?

Sabir: In the main directions. The idea was for the 4th Corps to shift towards Al-Mizla' and the amphibious landing is expected to take place in Ras al-Sibya.

Saddam Hussein: All sea ports have been destroyed; we destroyed all ports.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Where would the amphibious landing take place?

Sabir: Would they use helicopters for the amphibious landing?

Saddam Hussein: Yes, by helicopter. They would be hesitant to land their troops inland, because they may suffer serious losses. However, [*the enemy*] is still monitoring the situation, since the start of [*this operation*]. The enemy only had minor skirmishes with some of our troops until 2 o'clock.

[*Time Stamp: 50:00*]

Saddam Hussein: Until 2 o'clock, correct?

Sabir: Since the announcement of [*operations*] yesterday, there have been continuous skirmishes with the 3rd Corps.

Saddam Hussein: Yes, a couple of skirmishes.

Sabir: But, between the time of the announcement and 4 o'clock, there was nothing but continuous skirmishes.

Saddam Hussein: They would not have announced it if they had not prepared their offensive. Once they announced the offensive, it was understood that our troops would be ready and prepared to counter attack with artillery, etc.

Sabir: Mr. President, up until two hours after the announcement, there were only some clashes with the covering troops from the 14th Division—with the regiment. The covering troops of the 14th Division have been clashing with the enemy since before yesterday.

Saddam Hussein: Continuously.

Sabir: Therefore, I have stayed in touch with Lieutenant General Sultan [Hashim Ahmad], and [*I was told*] there is nothing unusual on the frontline, other than the covering troops [*engaging the enemy*]. The other thing I need to mention is the French in Al-Busayyah. They are suffering major losses in Rafhah. As you know, Mr. President, we do not have enough forces in regional-Salman direction; there are 30 to 40 kilometers between brigades—

Saddam Hussein: They can fire artillery at them.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They [*the French*] will start screaming if they lose a few soldiers.

Saddam Hussein: Listen, Sabir. I have said many times before the war started and I will say it again. If only 20% of our forces use their fire power, the enemy will not be able to accomplish anything. Just 20%.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: True, only if there was no negligence or dissent—

Saddam Hussein: As long as there is no negligence or disorder.

Sabir: Mr. President, for now, things are under control and there are no major issues. I call Lieutenant General Sultan every five minutes and check with the intelligence officers every time I talk to him. Things are under control.

Saddam Hussein: Great job.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: What forces are these?

Sabir: This is a sector of the 6th Division. [*The attack from*] Al-Busayyah would worry me a little more if the [*6th Division*] were to be attacked from the front. The right wing of the guards—yesterday, the Army Chief of Staff shuffled the forces and pulled the covering troops—

Saddam Hussein: So they won't be destroyed.

Sabir: He pulled them to the front. [*The right wing guards*] replaced the covering troops and have remained there since the morning.

Saddam Hussein: This is good, so they can use their artillery. Does our artillery have enough range?

Sabir: Yes it does, Sir. And today, the weather was on our side, thank God. They were not able to fly, the weather was so bad.

Saddam Hussein: What about the oil fields? Have we set them all on fire?

Sabir: Yes, Sir. They were all set on fire. Yesterday they announced that these 350 km long black clouds were obstructing their ability to fly sorties.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: [*Inaudible.*]

Saddam Hussein: Please, have a seat so Hamid can read the letter; I have not revised it yet. Diplomats have not been helping me in writing; I have to do it myself.

Taha Yasin Ramadan: [*Inaudible.*]

Saddam Hussein: They are good men, but sometimes I rush to my pen and start writing.

Hamid Hammadi: [*Reading a letter from Saddam Hussein to President Mikhail Gorbachev*]

In the Name of God, the Almighty and Most Merciful,

The Honorable President, Mr. Gorbachev,

It is ironic and complex for us to communicate with you by sending three letters via your embassy in a 24 hour period during February 23rd and 24th. Therefore, I plead with you to be patient and may God reward you for all you do. Mr. President, if you carefully examine our two letters—

Saddam Hussein: [*Inaudible.*]

Hamid Hammadi: [*Resuming*] Mr. President, if you carefully examine our two letters, you would find that our suspicions and worries regarding the treacherous stance taken by Bush, his allies and his agents were justifiable. Bush is currently doing what he intended to do; he launched his deceitful ground attack on Iraq at the same time the Security Council was debating your initiative. We accepted this initiative earlier, as discussed with our Foreign Minister, Tariq 'Aziz.

[*Time Stamp: 54:55*]

We will not talk here about what we expect to transpire as a result of the ground attack. We are determined, by the grace of God and the faith and heroism of our armed forces, to defeat [*the enemy*] and undermine his imperialistic and aggressive objectives of destroying Iraq and the region. We are here to talk about the unmistakable insult that was directed by Bush, not to Iraq, but to you personally and the Soviet Union in particular. This is evident of a clear betrayal and is a cowardly act. After all these facts, do you or any of your comrades in the leadership have any doubts as to the intentions of Bush and his allies? Their intentions are to control not only the region, but the world, through his continuous control of the region. Are there any reasons to

postpone a decisive stance towards this disregard of world peace and security? Is there anything else that may require the Soviet Union to stay put after George Bush used it to pass a resolution at the Security Council, which entitled him to use force against Iraq?

[*Audio is missing.*]

[*Audio resumes*] by neglecting the accomplishments of the Iraqi people and their present-day successes. In addition to his most recent aggression, by initiating the ground attack after Iraq declared its correct approval of your initiative—

Saddam Hussein: Correct? [*It should be*] unambiguous [*approval*]. I was writing too fast and erred. I wrote “correct” instead of “unambiguous.”

Hamid Hammadi: [*Resuming*] after Iraq declared its unambiguous approval of your initiative, what is your position going to be politically and militarily? All these developments intend not only to destroy Iraq, but to eliminate the role of the Soviet Union so the United States can control the fate of all humanity. By military position, we simply mean supplying Iraq with weapons necessary to defend the future of the Iraqi state, the properties of Iraqi citizens, their lives and their right to have a decent life. These aspects, as you have indicated in a previous occasion, were not intended to be implied in the resolutions of the Security Council. The American aggression was, in fact, a plot that was deliberately planned by the Americans against our armed forces. We had just changed our position, stated before the 15th of February, to accepting the initiative on the 15th of February and the consequent details that were discussed and agreed upon between you and Tariq Aziz in Moscow. We changed our position after we planned our tactics and mobilized our people and our armed forces. We were unable to substantiate the position that you reached with Tariq Aziz, because of the treacherous and cowardly aggressive acts of the so-called "Coalition Forces" under the leadership of Bush, the enemy of God and humanity.

Mr. President, your clear and direct response is extremely essential, not only for our friendship and its future, but for history and for future generations.

I would like to assure you that our determination to resist this treacherous aggression is much greater and deeper at all levels. Furthermore, the invaders will not succeed in achieving their ambitions, God willing. Though we are not in support of shedding more blood or more complications, this is the will of God, which is above all wills. God is great.

Saddam Hussein.

Saddam Hussein: Is this what you requested?

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Yes, Sir. This is it.

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: Very good.

Saddam Hussein: Dear diplomats, Dr. Sa'dun, is this good? Fine, rushing was responsible for only one error, “correct” instead of “unambiguous.”

UM11: Abd-al-Jabbar Al-Muhsin issued a statement.

Saddam Hussein: This is what I wrote.

Sabir: Sir, we need [*to make a statement*] regarding the statement of Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Al-Muhsin. [*The Americans*] claimed they occupied Failaka at 0630 hours.

Saddam Hussein: This is a lie.

Sabir: Yes, Sir, the situation in Failaka is still under control and things are normal.

Saddam Hussein: Just claim our forces have deterred the enemy. As long as they have said that, you can just say they were using heavy artillery and deterred the enemy. Say Failaka is under the control of our forces and there is no evidence that it was occupied by enemy forces.

Sabir: There are more of these stories, Sir.

Saddam Hussein: Deny and talk about all of them; give the exact details of each incident. For example, you can say they eradicated a covering force here, or destroyed a regiment there and so on. However, the situation is well under control and enemy forces have been inflicted with losses as a result of our artillery.

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: Regarding the French—

Sa'dun Hammadi: If we say "a regiment was destroyed," the people will think of it as a defeat. They will not understand these terms—

Saddam Hussein: Then they need to know the details. Let it be. You say you can give the details, but what kind of details are you going to disclose?

Sa'dun Hammadi: How many in the media have to disclose 100% of the facts?

Saddam Hussein: Not 100%. We cannot say, for example, they engaged the covering forces, which consisted of a regiment and was at X distance from the line of defense and was fighting for X hours and so on. Doctor, the entire world is watching and can understand these terms. Military experts know exactly what happens when a regiment fights American forces and 30 other countries for three hours. Additionally, the regiment is within the covering troops and is not situated in its original defense location.

Let us leave this matter to Sabir and Muhsin to prepare a statement.

Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf: But we need to remain consistent without lengthy statements—

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They do not need to be lengthy—

Saddam Hussein: They do not need to be lengthy. They can immediately start with, "I ask God for mercy."

UM12: They have to be focused—

Saddam Hussein: Yes, but they must be related to people—

Taha Yasin Ramadan: They have to have statements.

Sabir: Mr. President, can I get your permission to go and see the ambassador?

Saddam Hussein: Yes, go see him. I am going to revise my statement, parts in the introduction and the conclusion. You fill in the rest.

UM11: Comrade Tariq will arrive at 6 o'clock.

Saddam Hussein: Is this a trick?

Taha Yasin Ramadan: Mr. President, if he came via Jordan, he would be targeted. I don't know why he decided to come via this route. He should avoid it.

Sa'dun Hammadi: He can return via Jordan or Iran, but they announced it—

UM11: Would he come via Iran?

UM12: Is he in Jordan?

Saddam Hussein: He told me he intends to return via Jordan in order to brief King Hussein.

[*Time stamp: 01:03:17*]

END OF RECORDING