

Exhibit 1

Declaration of Adham Amin Hassoun

I declare under penalty of perjury pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746 under the Laws of the United States of America that the following is true and correct:

1. My name is Adham Amin Hassoun, A 074-079-096. I am detained in Buffalo Federal Detention Facility (BFDF), 4250 Federal Drive, Batavia, NY 14020, since Oct. 10, 2017. After arriving here in immigration custody, I did not fight my deportation and did everything I could to try to find a country that would accept me. After more than six months, ICE could not find a country to deport me to because I am a Stateless Palestinian.
2. Since this case started, I have been waiting for my chance to speak to the Court and deny the false allegations against me. Then, last week, the government told the Court it wanted to cancel my hearing because the government couldn't prove anything it said. But the government still wants to keep me in detention. I do not understand how this could happen to a person. My lawyers have explained to me all the government's legal maneuvers and how they are denying me the chance to take the stand and testify. Since they have denied me this chance, I have insisted on submitting this sworn statement to the court.

The False 1st FBI Letter

3. Nearly all of the allegations in the 1st FBI letter were generated by a detainee named Shane Ramsundar. They were all lies.
4. For 15 months, the government held me on the basis of Mr. Ramsundar's lies. In August of 2019, the government decided to invoke the PATRIOT Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1226a, for the first time, on top of the regulation, 8 C.F.R. § 241.14. This meant that there had to be more months of legal briefing all while I continued to be detained based on Mr. Ramsundar's lies.
5. Apparently the government did not properly investigate Mr. Ramsundar's allegations or any of the others. It just put them in a letter and decided that was enough to keep me locked up and throw away the key without worrying about or investigating whether the allegations were true.
6. It was only in May of 2020—15 months after the government wrote the 1st FBI Letter and told the Court that it justified my detention for life—that me and my lawyers finally found solid evidence exposing Ramsundar's fabrications. That evidence came from the government's own Alien File on Ramsundar. If any government official had bothered to read Ramsundar's Alien File before writing the 1st FBI letter they would have realized that he was cut-and-pasting false allegations against me that he had made against other people in the 2000s.
7. My lawyers found solid evidence exposing Ramsundar lies and fabrications that was in the FBI 1st letter and confronted the government lawyer who immediately dropped Ramsundar as a star witness along with his allegations in the FBI 1st letter and moved to settle the case by offering my competent lawyers conditions for my supervised release pending approval of top officials in the government. On May 22nd, 2020, I agreed to these conditions with

strong hopes that finally I will get my freedom. I was wrong!

The Government's Response When Its Case Collapsed

8. Instead of learning from its mistake and reconsidering its conclusion that I am dangerous, the government came up with a new FBI letter (the 2nd FBI Letter) that repeats their unfounded insistence that I am a threat to national security. But I have never been a threat to anyone in my life. It's always easy to make an allegations that you don't have to prove.
9. Only a few days before I was finally going to have the evidentiary hearing where the judge would actually see the government's evidence, and where I could respond to these false allegations by testifying under oath, the government moved to cancel my day in court. They admitted they could not prove that I am dangerous. But they want to keep me locked up anyways without the Honorable Judge Wolford having a chance actually to look into their allegations. They are now seeking a stay of my release while they appeal Judge Wolford's rulings.
10. These government officials have gamed the courts to drag out my detention for 16 months already based on lies and now they want to drag it out for many more months in appeals while I stay in detention and no judge ever has a chance to find the truth or question their allegations. All I want is for someone to recognize the truth and set me free.

My Criminal Conviction

11. The 2nd FBI letter repeats the government's unfounded accusations of me being a threat to national security. The letter spends two pages talking about my criminal case. But they ignore the findings of the Hon. Judge Marcia Cooke at sentencing. After the jury convicted me, the Hon. Judge Cooke made her formal findings at sentencing and directly **rejected** the government's argument that I am dangerous or a threat to society. She saw all the evidence during my trial which lasted for four months. She presided at four years of proceedings. She also saw letters of support and character witnesses from family, friends, community members, coworkers and employers. She concluded that I was not dangerous and that the government was wrong to seek a life sentence against me. She determined that when I did the things I was convicted of doing I was motivated by a desire to help people who were victims of war.
12. Judge Cooke saw the truth because she saw the evidence. She rejected the life sentence that the government wanted. Instead she gave me a sentence that was almost 15 years below the **minimum** sentence under the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines. The government did not even appeal that sentence and dropped the remaining eight charges.
13. Now that I have served my time, the government cannot admit that it was wrong and that Judge Cooke got it right.

The 2nd FBI Letter

14. In the 2nd FBI Letter, just like the first one, the government has again used lies and fabrications from detainees at the Buffalo Federal Detention Facility who are desperate for relief from the government. Just like before, the FBI does not care if these allegations are true or not.

15. The 2nd FBI Letter alleges that I was “attempting to recruit fellow detainees in support of ISIS.” It also states that I am a “self-identified follower of ISIS leader al-Baghdadi.” None of this is true. I am no follower to anyone, especially terrorists. I despise them all, from Baghdadi and beyond. I do not support any terrorist groups. I never identify myself as a follower to Baghdadi, ISIS or any other terrorist leader. I believe that terrorists and those who kill innocent people are despicable.
16. The 2nd FBI letter talks about my supposed “use of radical ideology in . . . prayer services.” This is not true. I have sometimes led the Muslim services and gave the sermon. But I never preach any radical ideology or violence or support for terrorism. These are plain fabrications from wishful detainees to attract the attention of government investigators willing to accept anything that helps the government keep me in detention. We have around thirty to sixty detainees that attend the religious service every week and they have almost all been happy with the service when I lead it and express their gratitude to me afterwards.
17. When I lead the prayer, I think about what topics would be of interest to my congregation. Being in a detention facility, one of the topics I would discuss is FREEDOM.
18. In discussing the topic of freedom, I sometimes did criticize the decisions of U.S. government officials for detaining us (Muslims) after the 9/11 attacks, including me. I explained that some people in power abuse that power, and that this abuse of power sometimes happens in the United States where it should not. I never encouraged people to be violence and I never expressed support for enemies of the United States.
19. The FBI letter states that I expressed “anti-American beliefs.” But I never had any “anti-American” beliefs now or even before I come to the United States. I am not anti-American. That is not me. However, I do criticize any government official misconduct and abuse of power, anytime and anywhere including in this country and in other countries. Officials are paid to serve the people, not abuse their authority.
20. The FBI letter states that the “spiritual program coordinator, a pastor, spoke with Hassoun in or about January 2018 and directed Hassoun to cease his incendiary rhetoric.” I did have a meeting with Chaplain Emilio Alvarez. He told me that there was a complaint about my lectures because I had spoken about injustice and some of the officials’ misconduct. In response, I explained to him what happened to me, that the government had taken me away from my family. The Chaplain seemed to understand and asked me to just tone down the rhetoric and focus on the religious teaching. I agreed and I did.
21. The FBI letter states that “Hassoun continues to identify as a terrorist and attaches himself to involvement with the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.” This is a total and complete lie. Who in the right state of mind would claim that he is involved in 9/11 or that he is a terrorist!? It is an insult and the government knows this is not true.
22. The government’s documents show that this allegation comes from another detainee, Ahmed Abdelraouf. The only time I mentioned 9/11 to Abdelraouf was in one of our first conversations at BFDF. We were talking about how we had ended up in detention. He told me a little about his convictions and history. When he asked me how I ended up in BFDF, I ask him if he remembered how after 9/11 they rounded thousands of Muslims up. He said yes. I responded, “I was one of them.” That was the entire discussion. I never said anything else about 9/11 to him, ever.

23. The FBI letter contains other stories that were obviously made up by detainees to attract the interest of investigators. They are all untrue.
24. Here is one example. The FBI letter includes stories that an Egyptian detainee named Ahmed Hamed told investigators. The investigators' reports disclosed in discovery shows that Hamed is the one who said to investigators that I expressed support for ISIS and that I said "You had to show nonbelievers fear as well as that it was good to kill someone not of the same Ideology." I never said these things. He made it up.
25. The fact of the matter is that in November 2017 Hamed and I had an argument in his cell about the massacre that happened in Egypt in 2014 around the Rabea' Mosque where the security forces of General Al Sisi killed 850 innocent people who were protesting the coup against the elected president Mohammad Moursi. Hamed said that he was OK with these killings. His position was that if the protestors are against Al Sisi they deserve to die. I disagreed with him strongly. Killing innocent people is wrong. I asked him if he could really believe what he was saying? He told me that the killing was justified.
26. Toward the end of the argument I remember saying to him 'Well, if that's what you believe, then on the Day of Judgment you will be judged with them.' I meant that if he endorsed the killing of innocent people, that God almighty would judge him harshly in the afterlife, just as God would judge those that committed the massacre.
27. The FBI letter says that around "November 2017, Hassoun told a fellow detainee, who is Egyptian but self identifies as American, that '[he] deserve[s] to die with them.'" The FBI letter then "assesses that Hassoun believes this detainee should die because Hassoun believes that all those who are or affiliate with Americans should die." This allegation is based on Hamed's interview report. It is a lie and the FBI's "assessment" is ridiculous. Hamed lied about what happened and the FBI decided to run with it.
28. The FBI letter also claims that a detainee overheard me talking to another detainee about making explosives and planning attacks. This is another lie. The investigator reports that the government produced show that the detainee who made this allegation is Hector Rivas Merino. I guess he tried to fool the federal agents but it was clear that he was lying on different levels. In his statement, Rivas he says he "overheard" me speaking with a specific Palestinian detainee. I only spoke with that detainee in Arabic. Rivas is Salvadoran and does not speak our language. Also, the Palestinian detainee was released by ICE to the street a few weeks after Rivas made up the story that we were talking about explosives. He now lives somewhere in New York. I guess the FBI is aware of these facts but it just wants to make its report look important by filling pages with lies.
29. The statements were made by desperate detainees who apparently thought of it as a chance to get ICE to keep them in the country despite of their crimes. They were scared and desperate and thought they might get an advantage by jumping into my case. In my heart, I have sympathy and pity for them. But I shouldn't be locked up for life based on their false statements.

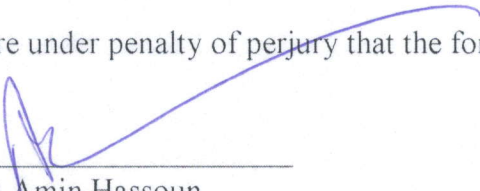
My Plea for Freedom

30. In my life I have been in many countries looking for a place that I will call home and start a family. When I came to the United States for a brief visit, I ended up falling in love with the country. I could have chosen somewhere else, but I chose your country. I settled down

and started a family with three wonderful kids all born in the United States. I admired the people, simple and friendly. I made friends very quickly and I decided to stay.

31. I admire and appreciate your country. There are many people here who I have great respect for and have an overwhelming gratitude for their support during my ordeal. I have lived a peaceful life; I was able to do what I love most, to help people. There is no greater pleasure than extending a hand of help to those who need it. The United States is a pioneer in doing that and I love and respect the country for that.
32. Before my conviction, I had no criminal violations or incidents with the law. I tried my best to be a law abiding citizen. I took good care of my family, friends and community.
33. After I served my sentence, I have been in detention 32 months and waited for sixteen months for the chance to prove my innocence in court against and then the government took the chance away from me last week. Now they want to keep me locked up while they appeal the judge's rulings she made many months ago. I was ready to testify to everything I say here and more. I want to show that I am not a danger to anyone.
34. I will comply with any rules or instructions that DHS demands. I have accepted all of the conditions they wanted to impose. When I am in Florida I will limit my communication only with family members. I won't even go to Friday prayers if the government doesn't want it. Now, they say they can't trust me not to pass messages through my family? This is madness.
35. When I am released, I will go along with however the government wants me to get to my sister's house. They can put me on an ICE airplane and then release me from the Krome Service Processing Center in Miami. I can take a commercial airplane with an ICE officer sitting next to me. If an ICE officer wants to come with me in the car while my lawyers drive me down to Florida, that is OK too. We can talk about TV shows and movies.
36. The government can continue to monitor all of my communications. I even agreed to house confinement until I leave the United States, the country I love, forever. I will leave to join my family overseas as soon as I can. All I want is, like everyone else, to be with my family again, **FREE**.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.



Adham Amin Hassoun

June 25, 2020
Batavia, NY