

Excerpts from “This is the Promise of God”¹

By Abu Muhammad al-Adnani

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In this speech, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, the spokesperson of the Islamic State, declares the jihadist group’s establishment of a “caliphate” in Iraq and Syria. He asserts that the establishment of this “caliphate” requires all Muslims, including other jihadist organizations, to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the Islamic State’s leader and newly-appointed “caliph.” This speech marked the first time that the Islamic State announced its self-proclaimed status as a “caliphate” to the world, setting the stage for the 2014 Yazidi Genocide and the United States’ intervention against the jihadist group.

After the Islamic State came, by God’s bounty, to possess all the constituent elements of the caliphate—which Muslims are sinning for failing to establish—and it became clear that no impediment or legal excuse exists to absolve the Islamic State of the sin of its delaying or not establishing the caliphate, the Islamic State, represented by the *ahl al-hall wa’l-‘aqd* (lit., “those who loose and bind”), including senior figures, leaders, commanders, and the Shura Council,² has decided to announce the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate, the appointment of a caliph for the Muslims, and the giving of *bay‘a* [oath of allegiance] to the mujahid [jihadist] shaykh, the learned, the active, and the devout, the warrior and the renewer, the descendant of the Prophet’s house, Ibrahim ibn ‘Awwad ibn Ibrahim ibn ‘Ali ibn Muhammad,³ the Badri, the Qurashi, the Hashimi, and the Husayni by descent, the Samarra’i by birth and upbringing, and the Baghdadi by learning and residence.⁴ He has accepted the *bay‘a*, becoming thereby the leader and caliph for the Muslims in all places...

We inform the Muslims that, with the announcement of the caliphate, it has become obligatory for all Muslims to give *bay‘a* and support to Caliph Ibrahim—may God protect him. Void is the legitimacy of all emirates, groups, administrations, and organizations to which his authority extends and his army comes...

¹ Source excerpted from Cole Bunzel, “From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State,” *The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World - Analysis Paper* no. 19 (March 2015): 41, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/the-ideology-of-the-islamic-state.pdf>.

² The Shura Council is an advisory council within the Islamic State that is comprised of the jihadist group’s senior members. It provides the leader of the Islamic State with political, strategic, and administrative advice.

³ “Ibrahim ibn ‘Awwad ibn Ibrahim ibn ‘Ali ibn Muhammad” was the real name of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State from 2010 until his death during a U.S. counterterrorism operation in 2019.

⁴ This explanatory footnote that discusses the symbolic and religious importance of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s real name comes from Dr. Bunzel’s “From Paper State to Caliphate”: Badrī refers to an Iraqi tribe; Qurashī to the Prophet Muhammad’s tribe of Quraysh; Hāshimī to a clan within Quraysh named for the Prophet’s great-grandfather; Husaynī to the Prophet’s grandson; Sāmarrā’ī to the Iraqi city of Samarra; and Baghdādī to Baghdad.

A message to all groups and organizations waging jihad, working to support God's religion, and raising the slogans of Islam, and [a message] to the leaders and commanders: We say, Fear you God... We see no legal excuse for you to delay supporting this state... It is the caliphate! The time has come for you to end this lethal division and separation and disunity...

O soldiers of the groups and organizations. Know that after this political capability and the establishment of the caliphate, the legitimacy of your groups and organizations is void. It is not permissible for any of you who believe in God not to profess loyalty (*wala'*) to the caliph... And know that nothing has delayed victory, and continues to delay it, more so than the existence of these groups; they are the cause of division and difference.