

International Criminal Court: Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi

I. Background

Note: This is not a REAL case of the ICC, treat this case as if it was REAL. When writing resolutions, you may consider the variety of possible rulings, but be sure to present your own ideas. We will be presenting you with new witnesses and the case may take a turn away from the expected. YOU have the power to decide how this case proceeds.

Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi was born on July 28, 1971, and is the leader of ISIS, a terrorist organization, controlling large territories in the Middle East. On October 4, 2011, The U.S State Department added his name to the list of wanted and the U.S offered a reward up 10 million dollars for information about him. Along with the United States, many other nations have placed Al-Baghdadi on their most wanted lists. Throughout his life, another name that was given to Abu bakr al-baghdadi was “Believer,” as he is believed, by some, to be the true Caliphate and spent much of his childhood and early adult life studying religion. Due to his intense religious studies, and persuasive abilities, he leveraged himself into a position of power under the idea that he would promote religious ideas and expand territory. However, at this juncture, many of his followers believe he has the authority to commit many immoral acts, such as execute people whose faith were different than his in his territory. Due to his influence over ISIS, the plaintiff believes he can be held responsible, and be convicted, for many acts, both his own and those committed by his followers.

Abu bakr al-baghdadi is allegedly responsible for the array of attacks carried out by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS.) There are claims that he raped and murdered women, among other travesties committed against innocent civilians. Due to the precedent set at the Nuremberg trials, following WWII, the leaders of organizations can be held responsible for actions their followers commit, even if not directly involved. Because of this, Al-Baghdadi can be tried for the Paris attacks, in which over 130 people died or in 2015, the San Bernardino attack at an Inland Regional Center killing 14 people. The defendant would argue that despite appearances, he does not have the unparalleled control of ISIS, and that the plaintiff lacks sufficient evidence to seek a conviction.

II. Plaintiff

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi should be responsible for the heinous crimes and heartless acts of terrorism. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is leader of the worldwide terrorist organization known as ISIS. ISIS has conducted mass murders of hundreds of people at a time. Not only are they guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, they claim to have committed thousands of terrorist acts. Not only that, but he has owned sex slaves, raped many women, and wrote “rape rules” for ISIS. This man must be held responsible for what he has done.

III. Defense

There is simply not enough hard evidence to convict Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the crimes he's allegedly committed. Given how much we know about ISIL as a terrorist organization, the only thing that can be gathered is an assumption that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is really the leader of ISIL. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi likely is functioning as a figurehead for the true leader of ISIL, held hostage by the threats they impose to his life. Although many believe Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi spreads terror in the name of Islam, he himself is a peaceful practitioner, that was forced into a position of terror, in fear for himself.

Abu bakr al-Baghdadi's involvement with ISIL is a mystery in itself. He has rarely shown himself, which further adds to the fact that he is being forced to present himself as the leader when really he's a figurehead. Reports say that he was most likely the cleric for a mosque back in 2003. On top of this, media outlets have stated that he is a devout scholar and has a Ph.D. in Islamic studies. All this followed by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's ex-wife's claim that he was a "family man" and a "teacher." This evidence clearly indicates that Abu bakr al-Baghdadi was a peaceful supporter of Islam and a family man. That is, until recently, when ISIL held his life against him, forcing him into a figurehead position.

IV. Guiding Questions and Points

- Is the presented evidence strong enough to convict Abu bakr al Baghdadi of all crimes held against him?
- Do actions of ISIS as a whole reflect on what Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi has done wrong?
- Are the convictions plausible and just?
- Are there other people who also had an effect on actions of ISIS?

V. Possible Witnesses

- Saja al-Dulaimi
- Ex ISIS member
- Syrian Shop Owner
- US Marine who fought against ISIS forces

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