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[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

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## Bin Laden son questions killing

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A statement purporting to come from a son of Osama bin Laden has questioned the legitimacy of the al-Qaeda leader's killing.

The statement, published by the *New York Times* and attributed to Omar bin Laden, bin Laden's fourth eldest son, said the al-Qaeda chief's children reserved the right to take legal action in the United States and internationally to determine the true fate of their vanished father. "We are not convinced on the available evidence in the absence of dead body, photographs, and video evidence that our natural father is dead," the statement read, adding that the family was seeking "conclusive evidence" confirming bin Laden's death.

Obama announced bin Laden was killed in a raid by US forces on a compound in the Pakistani town of Abbottabad. His body was quickly buried at sea, according to the US. Obama has vetoed the release of photos of bin Laden's body.

The statement from the family continued, saying that if bin Laden was indeed dead, "then we are just in questioning as per media reports... why an unarmed man was not arrested and tried in a court of law so that truth is revealed to the people of the world".

"If he has been summarily executed then, we question the propriety of such assassination where not only international law has been blatantly violated but USA has set a very different example whereby right to have a fair trial, and presumption of innocence until proven guilty by a court of law, has been sacrificed."

The statement said bin Laden's "sudden and unwitnessed burial at sea has deprived the family of performing religious rights of a Muslim man".

### **Photo evidence**

Questions have multiplied since the White House said the al-Qaeda leader was unarmed when US helicopter-borne commandos raided the villa where he was hiding.

Some in the US senate have said that they too need to see photographic proof to confirm that bin Laden was truly dead.

US senators serving on the Senate Intelligence Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee will be able to see post-mortem photos of bin Laden by making a special appointment with the CIA, according to reports.

Three Republican senators, including Saxby Chambliss, vice chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, initially claimed to have seen the photos last week, before acknowledging they were likely duped by photoshopped fakes.

The statement from bin Laden's family made sure to distance his son from the al-Qaeda leader's ideology, saying: "In making this statement, we want to remind the world that Omar Ossam Binladin [sic], the fourth-born son of our father, always disagreed with our father regarding any violence and always sent messages to our father, that he must change his ways and that no civilians should be attacked under any circumstances".

The statement added that it was "unworthy" of US special forces to shoot unarmed female members of the Bin Laden family.

It also urged the government of Pakistan "to release and hand over all minors of the family and [ensure] all the family members are reunited at one place and are repatriated to their country of origin".

It ended by calling for a response from the US within 30 days. Failure to answer the family's questions would result in their seeking redress with bodies such as the UN or the International Criminal Court, it said.