PRESS RELEASE
WINNERS ANNOUNCED
1989/1409H KING FAISAL INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR
ISLAMIC STUDIES

Topic: Studies Dealing with the Islamic City

The selection committee for the king Faisal International Prize for Islamic studies suggested in the year 1408 A.H./1988 that the subject of the prize for this year 1409/1988-89 to be studies on “The Islamic City”, for the importance of this subject in the history of the Islamic Umma and its civilization.

The selection committee for this year 1409/1988-89 met and looked in the studies that dealt with the Islamic city. It look into consideration the objectives of the prize and its aims in recognizing the achievements of outstanding scholars and honoring them, and decided to award the prize to Professor Salih Ahmad al-Ali for the excellence of his work in methodology, analysis, depth, and originality.

The selection committee noted that the two works of Prof. Dr. Salih Ahmad al-Ali:

1. The economic and social organization of Basra in the 1st cent. A.H.

2. The plan of Basra and its district.

are closely interrelated and constitute one comprehensive study showing the type of the “Islamic City” in its early period.

The author chose Basra specifically as one of the early centers of settlement outside the Arabian Peninsula. He noted in his work the circumstances and factors – natural, social and economic – which the Muslims took into consideration in founding this city, as well as Islamic
concepts and ideas of urbanization. Thus it had a great role in our civilization and culture, which we still view with admiration.

The author followed a strict methodology: in the wide range of sources, in the critical approach, in analysis, and in documentation, leading to a comprehensive view. All this made him a pioneer in this field.

The selection committee felt that he made a fine choice in studying Basra, that he did well in his research and applied the proper historical method in scope, criticism and documentation.