PRESS RELEASE
WINNERS ANNOUNCED
1996/1416H KING FAISAL INTERNATIONAL PEIZE
FOR
SERVICE TO ISLAM

The Selection Committee of The King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam has awarded the 1996 prize to:

Dr. Abd Al-Rahman Humood Al-Sumait

Dr. Al-Sumait (Kuwaiti) graduated from the College of Medicine, Baghdad University, and pursued post-graduate medical studies in the UK and Canada. He is a consultant gastroenterologist in his country. However, his responsibilities as a physician have not distracted him from an even nobler cause for which he has worked earnestly, namely the welfare of African Muslims. In 1981, he founded and became Secretary General of the African Muslims' Committee, the first specialized Islamic organization serving throughout Africa.

Dr. Al-Sumait personally directed the field operations of the African Muslims' Committee and worked relentlessly under extremely difficult, and often dangerous, conditions to accomplish and further its objectives. Under his leadership, the Committee has built more than 1,000 mosques, 54 hospitals, 840 schools, and tens of Islamic centers. It has also drilled 760 artesian wells and hundreds of surface wells in drought-stricken areas. Furthermore, the Committee has held 130 training courses for African teachers and preachers, provided financial support for 8,500 orphans, paid tuition for 74,000 needs student and financed over 200 post-graduate scholarships in medicine, engineering, science, and technology for African Muslims. The Committee also distributed 3.5 million copies of the Holy Qur'an and printed and distributed 6.5 million manuals explaining Islam in native African languages. Other philanthropic activities include the distribution of tens of thousands of tons of food, clothing and medicines, the payment of monthly wages for nearly 2,000 preachers and teachers and the construction of dams and agricultural projects to increase food production.
In addition to these immense activities, Dr. Al-Sumait has founded associations for Muslim physicians and students in the United States and Canada. In 1984, he established the Kuwaiti Islamic Relief Commission which helped save the lives of 320,000 Muslims during the drought and famine that struck many parts of Africa that year. Dr. Al-Sumait is the author of several books and articles, largely concerned with Islam in Africa.