

Speech delivered by

**Professor Nasir Al-Din Al-Asad**

Winner of the King Faisal International Prize  
for Arabic Language & Literature (1982-1402)

His Royal Highness, Prince Fahd ibn Abd Al-Aziz  
Your Highnesses, the Princes,  
Your Eminences and Excellences,

Gentlemen,

Praise to God and prayers and Peace be upon our Prophet Mohammed. We are meeting here due to a pious deed bestowed by God. This deed is self-explanatory, as kits clarity relieves us from expatiation. But, it is the right of the person acting exactly the right way to say to him you are correct, in order to keep him firm in pursuing the right and proper course. Also it is the right of the beneficent to speak in the most laudatory terms of his deed in order to spread out virtues and to identify good qualities. Forsaying nothing about right, ignoring performance of good deeds, will be in gratitude to benefaction, frustration of the intentions, effacement of the example, and cease of the Sunna.

Therefore, may I ask your permission to greet the people, the King, the Crown Prince, the leaders, the men of thought, education and culture of this good country, and pass sincere commendation to them as they hurried to initiate this noble deed and spread out in the whole world in the name of Islam and Muslims. Such deed was to celebrate the blessed memory of a great man and a noble monarch. As the late King of noble traits of character in life and after death. He devoted himself to the services of Islam and dedicated his efforts to spread religion and defend sacred areas of Muslims. We have to contemplate, in this honorable meeting, some of the significances of King Faisal International Prize. First we see that the Prize is of Islamic origin. For honoring of science, scientists, establishment of science and education institutions, and bestowing liberally upon them with donations, endowments and prizes, is a habitual practice of the venerable ancestors, as the caliphs, princes and walis were in charge of them. This task was reflected in the establishment of the institutions of education, translation and public libraries: which spread out everywhere. Each of which contained valuable literary books and translations. Some of which became as lighthouse which guided many scientists, at that time, as well as their successors up to now.

Second, the Prize has a civilized aspect and essence, as institutions which spend money to encourage scientific researches by means of prize allotment for the purpose of honoring scientists, men of letters, leaders of thought, and artists, is deemed as the most distinct objects of pride, civilization monuments of modern countries and becoming the object of competition and work for many people therein. Therefore this Kingdom, protected by God, was most adequate to adopt means of civilization, as being provided with material and spiritual possessions bestowed by God, as well as attentiveness and comprehension of its leader.

Third, the prize has, in every respect, an international objective. It does not make a distinction between a race and another or a language and another, or even between a religion and another. The prize has been awarded to Muslim Arab, Non-Muslim Arab as well as to, who is neither Muslim nor an Arab, because he was man dedicated his efforts and knowledge to the service of mankind. God will reward anyone for good performance.

Fourth, the prize has a comprehensive view covering numerous fields of science and research. It started in limited field, then expanded gradually to cover new topics which are linked together in a chain, in spite of their inter distance, in order to substantiate the original principles of teaching and education thought in Islam representing unity of the international legacy and human knowledge.

Fifth, the prize aims at pursuing right and justice. Hence, it will now be deviated by, whether; a political party spirit, or let personal inclinations or foreign interventions distort good intentions, just as in some other international prizes.

However, I wish I would have discussed the very core of the scientific subject, to come upon the most recent researches pertaining to the pre-Islamic and the first Hijra century eras, in order to follow-up the stages of development of the earnest endeavours during the last years, as this occasion require, but time restrictions made this desire inaccessible to me. May God have mercy upon Faisal & reward upon his sons and guardians of this matter. We, also, plead for God's mercy and to be worthy of His Grace and benefaction.

Our Lord! Forgive us! If we did forget or mistake.

Peace be with you.

Nasir Al-Din Al-Asad