

Speech of Professor  
**Mario Rizzetto**  
Co-Winner of King Faisal International Prize  
For Medicine 1984/1404H  
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Your Majesty King Fahd Ibn Abd Al-Aziz  
Crown Prince Abd Allah Ibn Abd Al-Aziz  
Princes and Excellence

It is for me a great pleasure to receive the King Faisal International Prize for Medicine. This privilege honours not only me but also the many colleagues that have collaborated to the discovery and identification of the delta agent and to the characterization of its epidemiological and clinical features. Among the many Professor Beretta Angussola, here with us and Professor Verne, Italian Scientists who gave me continued support and Dr. Purcell, the well-known American Scientists with whom characterization of the delta virus as a separate pathogen was accomplished.

On my behalf and on behalf of my co-workers I wish to thank His Majesty the King and the Selection Committee of the King Faisal International Prize for this great honour and recognition. I wish also to express gratitude to the King Faisal International Prize for the contribution that this institution is providing to the scientific community world-wide. As expressed by the interests of the King Faisal International Prize, the purposes of this Institution are far reaching and well tuned in the context of contemporary Saudi Arabia. The institution for 1985 of awards in Islamic studies, Arabic Literature, Medicine and Science can bring to human welfare. Thus the achievements of the King Faisal International Prize are truly International, in that the ultimate benefit goes to every nation in the world. This is clearly shown by the choice of the Selection Committee as fields for the awards in Medicine, that I have this year the honour to receive.

Diarrheal disease, selected in 1984 and viral hepatitis selected this year are major causes of important morbidity and mortality especially in developing countries. By devoting the Medicine Prize to these issues, the Committee has focused attention to plagues that affect millions. Placing in proper perspective formidable problems that are sometimes neglected in the face of sophisticated technological models. Perhaps more rewarding in the short-term to the scientist and the sponsor, yet of much lesser universal concern.

By promoting exchange of information and facilities for scientists the Prize has become an independent pole of culture, representative of an independent culture, certainly the most authoritative and important in the area.

Most essential, the Prize serves as a fascinating impetus to encourage young people to pursue medical research in its broader and true sense, namely the benefit to the sick and the weak, as it offers the example that recognition is not bound to immediate pay-back but can come in the long-term from an intellectual consensus that gratifies the individual much more than any economic reward.

For these reasons I am proud of being awarded the Prize and sincerely hope that my proudness may be a modest return for all the efforts endured to establish this important scientific momentum.

The best proof of the success of the King Faisal International Prize is provided by the very short time that it has taken to become a major scientific appointment; as you all know only eight years have elapsed since its foundation. I am sure that the Institution will have also in the future the most prominent role as a leading culture center.