

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

Speech delivered by

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Winner of the King Faisal International Prize
for Service to Islam (1988-1408H)

Royal Highness, Prince Nayif bin Abd Al-Aziz,
Your Highnesses, the Princes
Your Eminences, the Ulema
Your Excellences,
Ladies & Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakatuh.

May I extend my profound gratitude to the King Faisal Foundation for bestowing the “1988 Service to Islam Prize” on my humble person. The immense honour and inspiration of this Award will surely strengthen the resolve of the Filipino Muslims to serve the cause of Islam in the Philippines and the world as well.

The bestowal of this year’s “Service to Islam Prize” to a Filipino has created not only a feeling of national pride in my country but more importantly, it has triggered a sense of urgency particularly on the part of the Philippine Government in resolving the so-called “Muslim Problem”, a national problem that had long festered this nation.

Instilling Islamic consciousness and awareness in a country considered as the bastion of Christianity in the whole of Southeast Asia is not an easy task. The inherent handicap of a Muslim minority pitted against a predominantly Christian populace is only one of the evident manifestations of these difficulties. Needless to say that these difficulties had evolved into a conflict situation inspired by the Filipino Muslims’ assertion for self-determination. The recent all-out fratricidal war is only a chapter of the centuries long Filipino Muslims’ struggle to hold on to whatever is left of Islam in the Philippines. The transfer of political power from one administration to another has only brought platitudes, lacking in historical vision and wisdom, in addressing the Muslim problem in Philippines.

Hence, I feel that the wisdom of Divine Providence has finally cast its shadows on the plight of the Filipino Muslims. The international overtures that the King Faisal International Prize can emote will certainly be a source of reference of the present Government’s desire to seek a peaceful solution to the Muslim Problem.

However, if the Muslims of the Philippines have been so profuse in thanking Allah Subhanahu wa Ta’ala for the awarding of this prize to a Filipino Muslim it is because it has indelibly related the Muslims of the Philippines, along with their centuries-long struggle, to the “longings, commitments, actuations and vision” of the late King Faisal, whose life had been fully dedicated to the reformation of the “Muslim Ummah”

and its return to the pristine order enunciated in Islam. And now, under the auspices of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Saudi Arabia is playing a great role in the promotion of Islamic Faith and Principles, and the progress of all Muslims.

Finally, may I extend my deep thanks to His Royal Highness Minister of Interior for presiding this ceremony and many thanks to all the audience.

Dr. Ahmad Domoccao Alonto