

TRANSLATION

Speech of Professor

**Ryoji Noyori**

Co-Winner of King Faisal International Prize

For Science 1999/1419H.

Tuesday 2.3.1999 (14.11.1419H)

Your Royal Highness, Prince Sultan Ibn Abd Al-Aziz,  
Your Royal Highnesses,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,

Please accept my heartfelt gratitude on this splendid occasion for having been honoured with the most prestigious international prize for science. My emotions at this moment run so deep as to prevent me from adequately expressing my appreciation for your recognition of my achievements. I also feel privileged to share the Science Prize with Professor Dieter Seebach, a fellow researcher in this important scientific field, for whom I have had the utmost respect for many years.

I am very proud that we have been able to contribute to human welfare through chemistry, particularly chemical synthesis of organic substances of practical and theoretical importance. Our accumulated knowledge can now convert natural resources, including petroleum and biomass, to chemical substances of a high-added value such as pharmaceutical drugs, agrochemicals, flavors, fragrances, and many other functional materials. Professor Seebach and myself, together with many other colleagues worldwide, have successfully developed a series of efficient chemical methodologies for this purpose. We believe that chemical synthesis is crucial for the future of mankind because this scientific realm provides a firm, logical basis for molecular sciences and technologies. Our efforts are further to be directed toward solving a whole range of existing, or even unforeseen,

social and global issues associated with health, materials, food, energy, and the environment, among others.

In terms of petroleum, Saudi Arabia is the richest, and therefore the most important, country to the chemical industry and to the world of chemistry at large. Unfortunately, we academic chemists in Japan, have had little opportunity to cooperate with your chemical community. If, in the near future, we organize intellectual and technological collaboration, then chemists will be able to contribute to the quality of human life to a far greater extent than is currently the case.

The King Faisal International Prize is the highest honour to be bestowed upon me in my academic career but much of the credit for what I have achieved belongs to my research group in Nagoya and to other collaborators.

Finally, I am very grateful to the Chemical Society of Japan for having nominated me to the selection committee, in response to strong encouragement from the Japan-Saudi Arabia Society.

I am most certain that I shall not forget this moment for the rest of my life.

God bless you all.