

Acceptance Speech of

PROFESSOR MUHAMMAD MOHAR ALI

Winner of the 2000
King Faisal International Prize for Islamic Studies

Sunday 14 May 2000 (10 Safar 1421H.)

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Your Royal Highness, Prince Sultan ibn Abd Al Aziz
Your Royal Highnesses
Your Excellencies
Brothers and Sisters

Asslam Alaikum,

All praise belongs to Allah; and peace and blessings of Allah be on His Prophert Muhammad, his family and followers.

It is with sincere thanks and gratitude that I accept the King Faisal International Prize for Islamic Studies. The award given to me and to the other scholars in different fields of study signifies the generosity and practice of the King Faisal Foundation in encouraging and promoting learning and research and furthering the cause of peace and humanity. May Allah grace the Foundation with continued success and prosperity and enable it to render still greater services to the cause it has in view.

The branch of study for which I have been awarded the prize is a vast and important subject and has attained even greater significance in the context of the globalization of human society due to the tremendous development in technology and means of communication, both physical and intellectual.

The spread of any concept is related mainly to two sets of factors – those helping its communication from one group of people to another and those relating to its acceptance by the people to whom it is communicated. The technological developments have greatly facilitated the process of communication. Those relating to acceptance, however, have remained practically the same as before, since they are concerned, on the one hand, with the intrinsic worth of the concept itself and, on the other, its relevance to the social, economic, intellectual and psychological situation of the people concerned.

Islam is not merely a concept or idea in the usual sense of the

term. It is a divinely prescribed way of life and culture beneficial to all mankind. Its acceptance implied guidance to the right path which is essentially a favour from Allah Alone. Hence, while the communication and dissemination of the knowledge and teachings of Islam might be within the sphere of one's intention and exertion, the attainment of that guidance is solely a divine blessing; it cannot be explained as merely an outcome of this or that physical factor.

On this occasion I would like to mention that the first two of my works on the Prize's topic were sponsored by the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh; and the third work was sponsored by the Islamic University, Madina. I am grateful to the authorities of these two universities for their generosity and support.

Finally, I once again thank the King Faisal Foundation and the members of the King Faisal International Prize Board. Thank you all.