

Translation

Acceptance Speech of

His Excellency Shaikh

SALIH BIN ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-HUSAYYIN

Co-Winner of the 2006

King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam

Monday 3 April 2006 (5.3.1427H.)

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Praise be to Allah and may peace and prayers be upon the Prophet, his family and companions

Your Royal Highness, Prince Sultan Ibn Abd Al Aziz

Crown Prince, Deputy Premier,

Minister of Defense and Aviation and Inspector General

Your Highnesses

Your Excellencies

Distinguished Guests

Assalam Alaikum,

Allah the Gracious says [about His Prophet]: "We sent thee not, but as Mercy for all creatures." It was from that boundless concept of Islamic mercy that the Prize for Service to Islam and all other King Faisal international prizes derive, while bearing the name of a great individual who had served Islam and strived to promote its principles of mercy, peace, equality and justice for all mankind.

Humanity has probably never been more desperately in need of those principles than it is now, when it is passing through the most dangerous crisis in its history – a crisis created by a combination of forces of destruction and evil that are neither restrained by moral values nor by legal limits.

In the past century, the so-called "human civilization" has ignited two global wars within 25 years. In this century it has ignited two additional global wars within one and a half years, the first being particularly unusual, involving the alliance of forty "civilized" nations against one.

From Machiavelli's time, the idea on which a "dirty war" stands is accepted as a smart policy, and from the time of Robespierre, the so-called "civilized" world has been suffering from a chronic ailment called "terror." That ailment reached the Islamic world since fifty years ago, at the hands of gangsters arriving from overseas who were subsequently called "liberation fighters." Terrorism is the worst form of violence, and the worst form of terrorism is that in which innocent people are accused of terrorism.

At the opening of this century, this "dirty war" used a heinous terrorist operation involving the dispatch of "death letters" containing the dreadful powder of anthrax in a blatantly deceptive and false attempt to link Islam with terrorism. Soon, however, the world discovered the extent of "technological advances" that biological weapon factories in the "developed" world have achieved - converting that deadly product into an even deadlier powder containing one trillion germs per gram.

In the past century, too, nuclear weapons have been used twice towards the end of the Second World War and came very close to being used twice during the "Cold War."

The present century opened with the spread of these nuclear weapons, stockpiles of which have reached sufficient level to destroy the entire globe several times. Even worse is the reckless policy that rules the reliance on those weapons for settling conflicts – a policy that an internationally renowned political expert characterized in an article published in the May-June issue of "Foreign Policy" as "immoral, illegal, militarily unnecessary, and dreadfully dangerous."

It is not just the policy of a certain nation that makes total destruction of mankind an eminent risk. It is the rules that currently govern international relations which are based – as can be seen even in educational publications - on hegemony and national interests, with complete disregard to moral considerations and international law (which is often used to justify otherwise unjustifiable actions) whenever they conflicted with national interests.

Islam, which rejects from the outset all human relations based on power and selfish interests, derives its understanding of international relations from the principles of justice and the binding force of contracts such as those currently embodied in international law.

Islam rejects all wars except jihad for which three strict conditions are set: (1) it must be driven by a moral and noble cause and not by self-interests of a nation or a people (2) it must be directed only against the aggressor; never against a peaceful or a disabled party (3) it should neither exceed the minimum force required, nor violate any human rights or standards.

We therefore believe that Islam, and Islam alone, offers a solution that could save mankind if accepted, and that it is the duty of every Muslim to seek relentlessly the application of those Islamic principles of human relations in real life. By doing that, Muslims shall serve not only Islam but also the entire humanity.

Who does not feel humbled when the King Faisal International Prize recognizes them as servants of Islam? As far as I am concerned, however, I am acutely aware of the dearth of my own role in serving Islam and this prevents me from even aspiring to such a profound honor. I believe that I

have been awarded the prize not for undertaking my official duties but for my endeavors, small though they are, to align with voluntary humanitarian institutions that truly serve Islam. For that, I must express my utmost gratitude and thanks to those who have chosen me for the prize, hoping to be able to live up to their expectations.

Assalam alaikum.