

Speech by

H. E. Professor Khalid Al-Karki

President, Jordanian Arabic Language Academy
Winner of the 2017 King Faisal International Prize for Arabic
Language and Literature
39th KFIP Awards Ceremony
Tuesday 04/04/2017

Assalamu Alaikum and may *Allah's* mercy and blessings be upon you.

Peace be upon this Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its dear people, and upon their Royal Highnesses the princes, revered scholars and distinguished guests. Greetings and deep affection from your brothers in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, for your generosity and the kindness of your people.

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,

"We knew best when we asked in *Najd*: is our road still long, or is it? Whenever the gardens welcomed us, we wondered: are we heading to Aleppo and this was the way?"

Saif Ad Dawla's Aleppo is "Riyadh;" it is Damascus and it is Amman" I was filled with joy as I approached *Najd* and recalled *Jawahiri* of Iraq saying:

" ... and I headed towards you not like one longing to see a place, but like a lover longing to see the face of his adored."

We were overwhelmed by the scent of history and the voice of the reciter of the Holy Qur'an which guides us, and the clouds touching your land.

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,

I came to express, on behalf of the Jordanians and my colleagues in the Academy, our deepest gratitude to you for nurturing the language of the Holy Qur'an, and they also entrusted me to convey to you their congratulations for winning the Prize for Service to Islam. Greetings to the Arabic language that sustained our history from the time we dreamed of justice through the verses of the Holy Qur'an to our

declaration that easiness of religion, allegiance to succetion, consultation and protection of rights are the tenets of Islam.

Allow me also to extend thanks to the Prize's team, especially His Royal Highness Prince Khaled Al-Faisal, Chairman of the Prize Board, and all the staff of the Prize's General Secretariat. Today, the Academy stands as a mature figure while the Prize has become an accolade decorating our nation as it regains the radiance of its language that emerged in the Arabian Peninsula.

Accept our yearning to the Peninsula and the pleasant scent of the *Arar of Najd*.

"Say goodbye to *Najd* and those who came to it, and it is rare that we bid farewell to *Najd*.

Assalamu Alaikum.