King Faisal Prize in Science – Award Acceptance Speech

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Bismillahirahmanirahim.

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatu.

His Royal Highness King Salman, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,

His Royal Highness Prince Khalid Al Faisal, Managing Director of the King Faisal Foundation,

Distinguished Guests,

Alhamdullilah, I am deeply honored to be receiving the King Faisal Prize in Science, especially as the first female recipient of this award.

This Prize is really a wonderful gift from Allah. I thank Allah for always being there for me through the many challenges in my life.

I started my research journey when I was 17. My chemistry professor John Bové gave me the opportunity to do research in my first week at The Cooper Union. The passion in the pursuit of scientific knowledge and innovation has been with me since then.

I benefitted tremendously from my Ph.D. advisor Prof. Jay Benziger of Princeton University and my postdoctoral advisor Prof. Herbert Gleiter.

At MIT, I was fortunate to have very creative students and postdocs, and wonderful colleagues.

I am grateful to the excellent students, staff and scientific advisory board of the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology and

NanoBio Lab of A*STAR. The past 20 years in Singapore have been both fruitful and exciting in multidisciplinary research across science, engineering and medicine. I thank our collaborators and sponsors for contributing to and backing us in our efforts.

Beyond the love for science, I must say the translation and commercialization of our nanotechnology platform give me great satisfaction in being able to make a societal impact through better diagnostics and medicine, and via sustainable chemistry and energy.

I thank my daughter Hsi-Min, my best friend Noreena and my parents for their love and great support always.

Nothing is possible without the blessings and guidance of Allah. His amazing creations so evident in chemistry, biology and physics remain a constant source of inspiration for my work.