

## **Speech of**

**DR. ABD ALLAH AL-SALEH AL-UTHAIMEEN**

**Secretary-General of the  
King Faisal International Prize  
1997**

In the name of Allah,

Praise be to Allah and peace and prayers be upon the Prophet Muhammad and his family, companions, and all his followers until Judgment Day.

Your Royal Highness Prince Sultan Ibn Abdul Aziz,  
Your Royal Highnesses,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,

Assalam Alaikum,

It gives me great pleasure to present the winners of the 1997 King Faisal International Prizes for Service to Islam, Islamic Studies, Medicine and Science.

The King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam has been awarded to the Honorable Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia. Dr. Mohamad has been nominated for the Prize by the Muslim Youth League and receives the award in recognition of his distinguished accomplishments including:

1. Successfully leading his country towards economic development and prosperity while adhering to and promotion the ideals of Islam.
2. Pursuing a wise policy that both reflects the magnanimity and forbearance of Islam and fosters rapport and cooperation between Malaysian Muslims and non-Muslims.
3. Establishing important Islamic cultural and economic institutions such as the International Islamic University, the Islamic Bank, and the Center for Understanding Islam and the Islamic Organization for Economic Development.
4. Working thought Islamic organizations to achieve reconciliation between Muslims and to support the cause of Muslim minorities, especially in South East Asia, and to defend their rights to equality and better living.

The King Faisal International Prize for Islamic studies in the topic of *Studies on the Status of Women in Islam* has been awarded to Professor Abdul Karim Zaedan Biej (Iraqi), Professor at the College of Arts, Sana'a University, Yemen. Professor Biej has been nominated for the Prize by the King Saud University, King Abd Alaziz University, Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University and the Muslim Youth League. He has been awarded the Prize in recognition of his excellent work *Al-Mufasssal fi Ahkam al-Mar'atu wal Baitul Muslim*. This 11-volume book is an original, comprehensive and thoroughly documented study of the status of women in Islam, and represents a significant effort to relate the rationale of various aspects of Islamic law to contemporary issues facing women in modern society.

The King Faisal International Prize for Medicine in the topic of *Degenerative Diseases of the Nervous System* has been awarded jointly to Professor Colic Luis Masters (Australian), Head of the Department of Pathology at Melbourne University, Australia, Professor Konard Traugort Beyreuther (German), Professor of Molecular Biology at Heidelberg University in Germany and Professor James Francis Gusella (Canadian), Professor of Neurogenetics at Harvard Medical School in the USA.

Professor Masters has been nominated for the Prize by Monash University in Australia while Professor Beyreuther has been nominated both by Monash University and the German Foundation of Science. Professor Gusella has been nominated by Massachusetts General Hospital.

Professors Masters and Beyreuther receive the award for discovering and characterizing abnormal amyloid plaques associated with the development of Alzheimer's disease a disabling and fatal condition affecting the central nervous system. Professor Gusella has been awarded the Prize for his discovery of the gene defect responsible for Huntington's disease another disabling disease of the nervous system characterized by involuntary movements.

The King Faisal International Prize for Science in the topic of *Physics* has been awarded jointly to Professor Carl Wieman and Eric Cornell (Americans) of the University of Colorado at Boulder, USA. Professors Wieman and Cornell, who have been nominated by their university, receive the award in recognition of their successful achievement a new state of matter: the Bose-Einstein Condensate, by magnetically trapping and cooling a gas of atoms to a far lower temperature than has ever been previously achieved. This discovery enriches our knowledge of matter in a previously unseen phase and paves the way for further studies into this matter that could hopefully benefit mankind.

On behalf of the General Secretariat of the King Faisal International Prize, I would like to extend our utmost thanks to His Royal Highness Prince Sultan bin Abd Al-Aziz, representative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, for sponsoring this ceremony, and to all of you for kindly attending the occasion. I would also like to thank everyone who cooperated with the General Secretariat during the stages of nomination, refereeing and final selection.

I conclude by extending warm congratulations to the winners.

May Almighty Allah guide and support those engaged in virtuous deeds.