

Statement by Professor Mahmoud Fahmy Hegazi

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

King Salman bin Abdulaziz

King of Saudi Arabia -May Allah Preserve him-

It is a special day in history on which the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Royal Highnesses the Emirs, His Excellencies the Ministers, and the University Directors meet with a group of scholars from different disciplines in the Islamic world and from the West in recognition of their world-class accomplishments in their respective specializations.

Islam calls for the acquisition of knowledge, and Saudi Arabia is reviving the glory of Arabo-Islamic civilization by honoring scientists and scholars.

King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Prize is a universal symbol that embodies respect for scholars and scholarship. It is a clear indication of Saudi Arabia's awareness of the significance of the rapprochement of civilizations, the integration of knowledge and respect for science and scholarship in their comprehensive sense. It is indeed a genuine honor for me to live this remarkable day which marks the culmination of my work spanning some 60 years for the sake of Arabic, the language of the Holy Quran and Islamic civilization through research on Arabic-related contemporary issues domestically and the propagation of that knowledge internationally.

Issues bearing on the Arabic language in the modern era relate to development in all fields, including the use of Arabic script through the use of modern technologies and the production of scientific and technical terms. Within this perspective, we need to focus on teaching Arabic to children speaking other languages and preparing specialists in this field, as well as promoting modern Arabic lexicology and establishing terminological observatories in a bid to unify and disseminate terminologies. Likewise, we need to attach critical importance to the role of the media in linguistic development, support the position of Arabic in the contemporary world and in international organizations, enhance Arabic studies abroad, and develop appropriate language planning. I must say that I have been able, thanks to Allah, to prepare research studies on a number of these issues, just as I have shared experience with several countries in the world on the reality of Arabic and its future prospects.

I am truly honored today to be among those who are awarded the Prize of King Faisal -May Allah rest his soul in peace. I wish to express my gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Khalid Al-Faisal -May Allah preserve him- and to all the employees of this prestigious international foundation for their professional approach and their objectivity in undertaking research and selecting the theme of this year's prize together with the various other scientific and scholarly specializations. May Almighty Allah bestow on Saudi Arabia and all its decision-makers health,

happiness, success, and the support of the noble Islamic values calling for the respect of scholars and scholarship and the dialogue of civilizations.

Peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you all.