

# NEWSLETTER

No:53

December 2000

*20th Anniversary of IRCICA*



SPECIAL ISSUE



## Newsletter

*Research Centre for Islamic  
History, Art and Culture  
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The Ninth Islamic Summit Conference convened in Doha, Qatar

The Sixth Session of the OIC Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC): proceedings, resolutions

On the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, IRCICA is gratified by the support given and the appreciation expressed by the OIC Member States for its accomplishments. The commemoration of this anniversary, celebrated with various cultural and social functions held under the patronage of the President of Turkey, in presence of the ministers of the Member States together with participants from the world academic and cultural community, gave us a fresh stimulus.

Having completed twenty years of activity in 2000, we have made an effort to evaluate IRCICA's achievements and reconsider its work plans in order to improve them if necessary. On the occasion of this anniversary, we invited all those concerned with the Centre's work to share in this exercise: representatives of the Member States, international organisations, academic, artistic, cultural and media circles participating in the commemorative events were presented with the results of our activities and our plans for the future.

We believe these events helped to reinforce public awareness of the tasks undertaken by IRCICA and injected new impetus into the collective inter-governmental effort it exerts as the OIC's cultural representative.

This collective effort which materialised in the establishment of IRCICA has ever since been the essential ingredient for maintaining its progress. Its importance increases continuously as nations' consciousness of their mutual dependence grows stronger, calling for greater solidarity, including greater cultural solidarity, between them.

The present Special Issue of the Newsletter begins with a concise account of IRCICA's activities completed during the past two decades and a brief description of its current work. It highlights the meetings, ceremonies, awards and other events relating to the twentieth anniversary. Altogether, its contents reflect the themes emphasised in IRCICA's activities, its established network of international relations and its present status as an international cultural institution representing the Muslim world.

Taking into consideration that the present issue will appear in January 2001, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Azeddine Laraki, who will be completing his mandate as Secretary General of the OIC, for the valuable advice and constant assistance he gave to IRCICA. I would also like to express my admiration for the valuable contributions made by Dr. Laraki towards improving the efficiency and productivity of the Organisation with a sound and earnest approach. On this occasion, I would like to congratulate His Excellency Dr. Abdelouahed Belkeziz, a distinguished academician and statesman from Morocco, who will take the office at the beginning of 2001 as the new Secretary General. I am assured that under the guidance of H.E. Dr. Belkeziz, the OIC will gain further momentum in the coming years and strengthen its position in all spheres of its activities. I wish H.E. Dr. Belkeziz continuous success in the fulfillment of this lofty mission.

I also take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to our readers for the month of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, Christmas, and the New Year. I thank you all once again for your interest in our activities.

*Ekmeleddin Ihsanoğlu*

# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF ISLAMIC CIVILISATION:

## An Outline of IRCICA's Activities



IRCICA, the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture, is an inter-governmental institution with fifty-six Member States. It was established in 1980 as the first cultural subsidiary of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). It undertook activities relating to research, publishing, documentation and the dissemination of information in a wide range of subject areas concerning Islamic culture and civilisation, including the history of Muslim countries, arts and sciences in Islam, cultural development issues, among others. These activities help to better introduce the Islamic culture and civilisation throughout the world, foster mutual understanding between Muslims and with other nations and cultures, and promote Islamic studies as a field of scholarly research.



## SOME LANDMARKS IN IRCICA'S HISTORY

The decision to establish IRCICA was adopted by the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers at its seventh session (Istanbul, 1976), at the proposal of the Republic of Turkey. The Establishment Statute of the Centre was adopted by the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Dakar, 1978). The Centre's first work program and first budget were submitted to and adopted by the Eleventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Islamabad, May 1980). Later, the Statute of the Centre was modified and re-approved together with the statutes of the other subsidiaries of the OIC, by the Sixth Islamic Summit Conference (Dakar, 1991) which adopted the Framework Statute of the Subsidiary Organs.

IRCICA's headquarters are located in the three buildings named Seyir Pavilion, Çit Qasr and Yaveran Qasr in the historical Yıldız Palace in Beşiktaş, Istanbul. These buildings were allocated to the Centre by the Government of the Republic of Turkey.

The Centre's work programs were officially announced to the international cultural and academic circles on 23 May 1982 at a ceremony inaugurated by H.E. Turgut Özal, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of Turkey at the time, in presence of the Secretary General of OIC the late H.E. Mr. Habib Chatti.

Following the establishment of the International Commission for the Preservation of Islamic Cultural Heritage (ICPICH), another subsidiary of the OIC, under the chairmanship of the late Prince Faisal bin Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, in 1983, IRCICA assumed the functions of ICPICH's Secretariat. It carried out this function together with its own until the merger of ICPICH with IRCICA in 2000. After the merger, IRCICA's functions were enlarged to cover those activities that were previously carried out by ICPICH.

IRCICA's tenth anniversary was commemorated on 10 October 1990 on its premises. Mr. Turgut Özal as the President of Turkey extended his patronage to and chaired the ceremony held on this occasion. H.E. Dr. Hamid Algabid, Secretary General of the OIC, was present at the ceremony.

The fifteenth anniversary of the Centre was commemorated under the patronage and in the presence of H.E. Süleyman Demirel, President of Turkey, on 7 November 1995, with a large-scale international ceremony held in presence of the OIC Secretary General Dr. Hamid Algabid, at IRCICA's headquarters.

This year, the twentieth anniversary was commemorated with cultural events, beginning with the opening of the Centre's exhibition by H.E. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of Turkey, on 25 October 2000. An anniversary ceremony was held the same day under the chairmanship of H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister. These events were placed within the program of the Sixteenth Session of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) convened in Istanbul. The twentieth anniversary was also the first to be commemorated outside the Centre's host country: an IRCICA Week was organised jointly with the Academy of Language and Literature in Kuala Lumpur, during the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, and started with a ceremony which was held on 25 June 2000 under the chairmanship of H.E. Datuk Syed Hamid Albar, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

## A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENTS

### The Centre's premises



IRCICA started its activities in the 130-sq.m. building named Seyir Pavilion located within the Yıldız Palace complex.

Çit Qasr, the second building allocated to the Centre by the Turkish Government, was restored and put to use in 1983. This raised the total office area to 1020 sq. m.



Later, in 1986, the Centre completed the restoration of its third building, the Yaveran Qasr, raising the total office area to 1870 sq. m. More recently, a four-room apartment of 150 sq. m. within the Yıldız Palace complex was added to its premises in 1998. Thus, the total area available to the Centre rose to 2030 sq. m.



## Research projects and related activities

The scope of IRCICA's work plans grew steadily over the years, as completed activities were replaced by new projects and research programs of continuous duration were expanded to cover new themes of interest.

The majority of the Centre's projects and programs are implemented on a long term basis, in several successive and /or simultaneous stages related to various aspects of a given theme or involving various types of activities, such as data collection and treatment, consultations, convening of scholarly meetings, editing, publishing, etc.

From its earliest years onwards, the Centre disseminated the results of its activities all over the OIC Member States and in the academic, cultural and artistic circles world-wide, by means of its publications, its paper presentations at conferences, its exhibitions of documents and illustrations, its communication and cooperation with universities and cultural institutions and by providing library and archive services to visiting researchers.

The publications, the scholarly meetings, the collection and dissemination of information and other types of activities mentioned above are implemented within the framework of various programs and projects. These programs and projects can be grouped under the following broad themes and titles (including the tasks that were incorporated into IRCICA's activities after the merger of ICPICH with IRCICA in June 2000):

The history of Muslim nations – studies covering the history of Muslim peoples in various regions of the world including Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Caucasia and the Balkans, West Africa, East Africa, and the history of Turks

The history of Islamic civilisation outside the Muslim world - the history and cultural heritage of Muslim nations and communities living outside of the OIC member countries

The cultural and architectural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina – studies, restoration activities, the "Mostar 2004" program of annual architectural workshops

The history of science – research on scientific institutions, scientists from the early centuries of Islam up to the present time, and the introduction process of modern science and technology from the West to the Muslim world

Bibliographic studies on translations of the Quran: printed, manuscript and oral translations

Studies on manuscripts - cataloguing of manuscripts, editions of major manuscript works

Catalogues of library and archive materials as references on the history of culture

Islamic arts and history of arts – studies on the characteristics and development patterns of classical and modern arts of the Muslim world in a historical and cross-cultural context

Preservation of cultural heritage - study and restoration of monuments, archive and museum items; training programs and international competitions to revive and preserve traditional arts and promote the concept of cultural heritage

The Craft Development Program – seminars and festivals highlighting various traditional crafts and dealing with issues related to their promotion and development

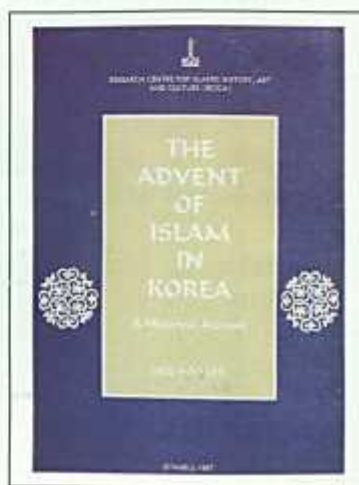
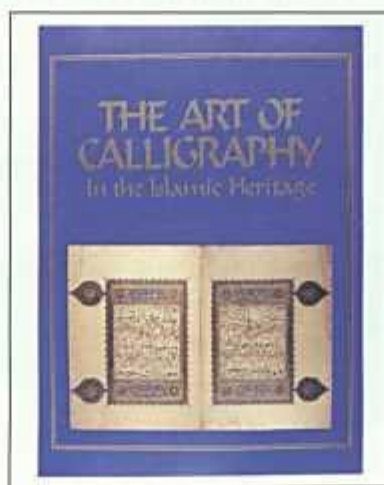
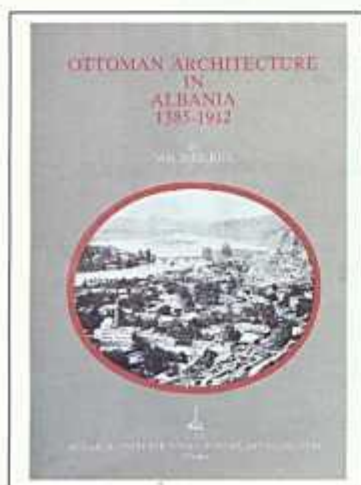
Studies on the cultural dimensions of development – collection and comparative evaluation of data and information on cultural policies, scientific R&D, book publishing, library and museum activity, etc. in OIC member countries

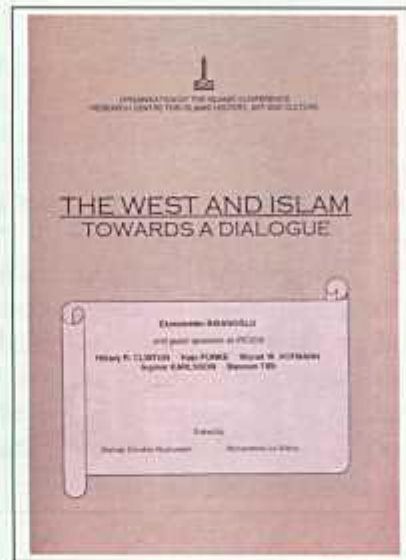
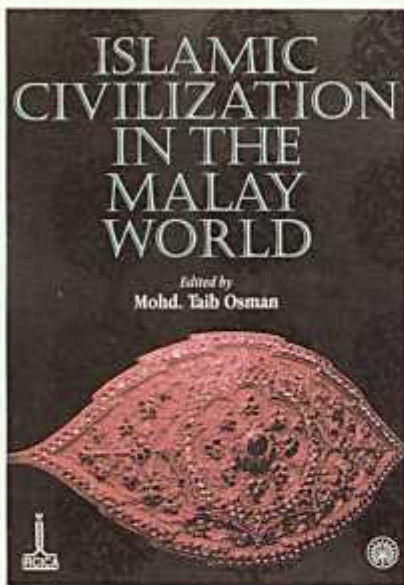
Assessment of the state of research in Islamic studies, promotion of cooperation among institutions, researchers and other parties concerned

Data banks and directories concerning the cultural institutions from around the world that are engaged in Islamic studies, including such institutions as educational establishments, academies, research centres, libraries and archives and museums.

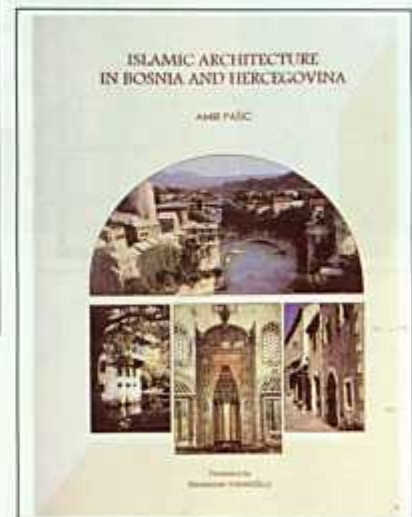
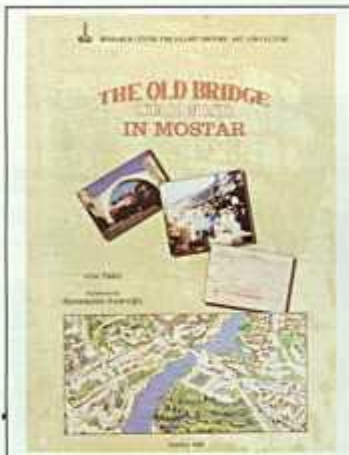
## Publications

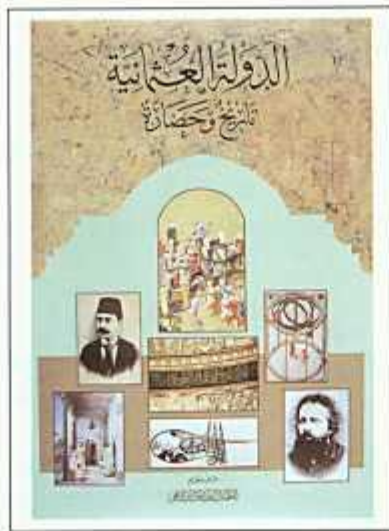
IRCICA published seventy-six editions of books by the end of 2000. These include research works, congress proceedings, collections of lectures, catalogues and bibliographies: among others, two editions of world bibliographies of translations of



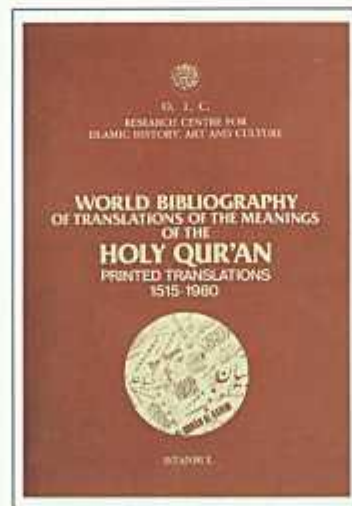
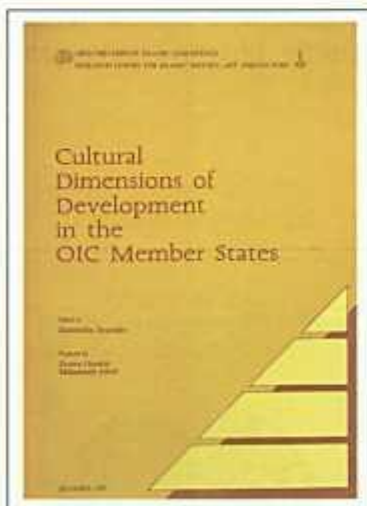


the Quran covering printed translations and manuscript translations, respectively; two books on *Islamic Civilisation in the Malay World* and one book on *Islamic Civilisation in West Africa*; seven books on the history and cultural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina; a number of reference books on Islamic arts; a collection of lectures entitled *The West and Islam: Towards A Dialogue*, and a two-volume collection of papers on Arab-Turkish relations.





Many of them have been translated and published in different languages; for example, English, Arabic, Turkish, Japanese and Malay editions of the scholarly and artistic publication entitled *The Art of Calligraphy in Islamic Heritage* were published; English, Turkish, and forthcoming Arabic, Urdu and Russian editions of the book on the history of Turks -excluding the Ottoman State can also be mentioned, together with the Arabic and Turkish editions of the book entitled *Arab-Turkish Relations* and the Arabic, Turkish and English editions of the two-volume book entitled *History of Ottoman State and Civilisation*. On the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, the Centre published a commemorative book titled *IRCICA 1980-2000* covering the activities it undertook since its establishment. IRCICA also produced two documentary films on Islamic arts in 1983 and three documentary films presenting its own activities on the occasion of its tenth, fifteenth and twentieth anniversaries.



## Exhibitions

137 exhibitions of works of art, historical photographs, and publications were organised by the end of 2000, 102 of them at IRCICA's headquarters and 35 in various countries (Egypt, France, Germany, Guinea, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Yemen). The Centre's exhibition of "Photographs of Bosnia and Herzegovina" was presented during Islamic Conferences of Foreign Ministers and Islamic Summit Conferences, at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 1993), and in the U.S.A. (put up in various universities, 1993). Numerous exhibitions of calligraphy were organised during conferences of the OIC and by participating in art festivals and exhibitions hosted by the Member States. Moreover, to introduce its publications in the world markets, the Centre participated in international book fairs within and outside the Muslim world.



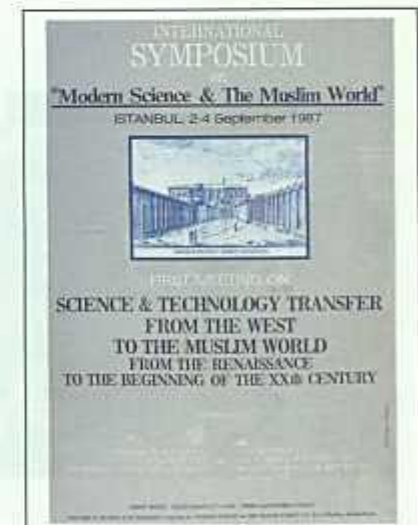
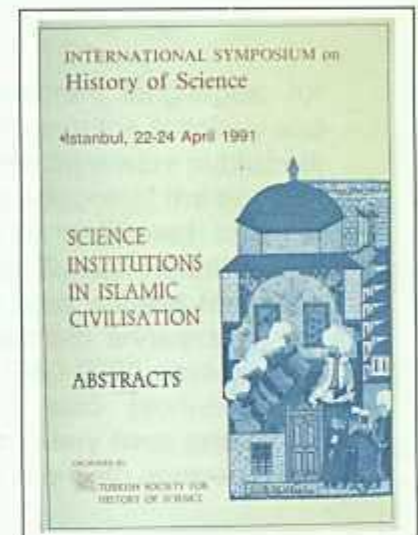
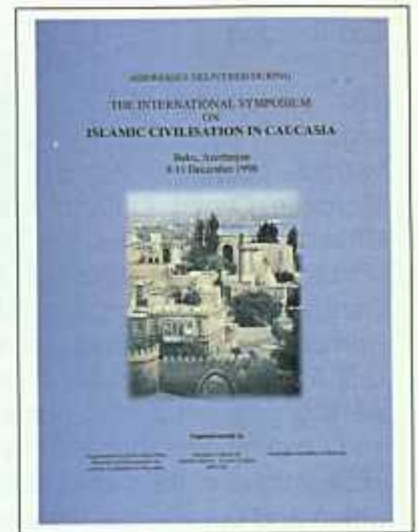
## Symposia and seminars

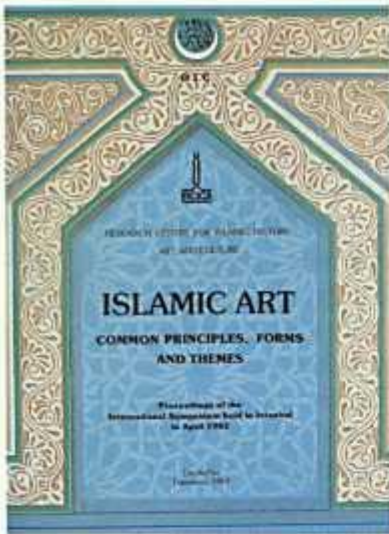
Until 2000 inclusive, the Centre organised forty international symposia and seminars on various topics, including the following:

relating to the history of Muslim nations, the international symposia on "Islamic History, Art and Culture in South Asia" (jointly with the Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan, 1986), "Islamic Civilisation in the Malay World" (jointly with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Brunei Darussalam, 1989), "Islamic Civilisation in West Africa" (jointly with the "Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire" - IFAN, Dakar and the World Islamic Call Society, Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, in Dakar, Senegal, 1996), "Islamic Civilisation in Caucasia" (jointly with the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, Baku, 1998), "Learning and Education in the Ottoman World" (in cooperation with the Turkish Historical Society and the Turkish Society for History of Science, with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey and the commemoration committee for the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary chaired by the Ministry of State, Istanbul, 1999),

on the history of Islamic civilisation outside the Member States, the international symposium on "Islamic Civilisation in the Balkans" (jointly with several scholarly and cultural institutions of Bulgaria, in Sofia, 2000) (in the same series, an international symposium on "Islamic Civilisation in Volga-Ural" will be organised in Kazan, Tatarstan in 2001)

in the field of history of science, the international symposia on "Transfer of Modern Science and Technology from the West to the Muslim World from the Renaissance to the Beginning of Twentieth Century" (Istanbul, 1987), "Modern Techniques of Transportation in the Muslim World" (Istanbul, 1989), "Science Institutions in Islamic Civilisation" (jointly with UNESCO, the Third World Academy of Sciences-TWAS and the Turkish Society for History of Science, Istanbul, 1991), "The Introduction of Modern Science and Technology to Turkey and Japan" (with the International Research Centre for Japanese Studies of Kyoto, Istanbul, 1996),





on arts, the international symposium on "Common Principles, Forms and Themes of Islamic Arts" (Istanbul, 1983) (a second symposium will be organised in Isfahan, Iran in 2001),

relating to handicrafts, the international seminars on "Crafts: prospects for development" (jointly with Ribat Al-Fath Association, Rabat, 1991), "Creativity in Traditional Islamic Arts" and the First Islamic Artisans-at-Work Festival (jointly with Lok Virsa, Islamabad, 1994), "Traditional Crafts in Islamic Architecture with special emphasis on Mushrabiyya and Stucco Coloured Glass" (jointly with the Ministry of Culture of Egypt, Cairo, 1995), "Arabesque in Traditional Crafts of OIC Countries" (jointly with the Ministry of Culture of Syria, Damascus, 1997) and "Traditional Carpets and Kilims in the Muslim World" (in cooperation with the National Handicrafts Office, Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts of Tunisia, in Tunis, 1999),



six international architectural workshops held every year starting from 1994, and an international seminar on "Turkish Architecture and Settlements" (organised jointly with the Faculty of Architecture, Yıldız Technical University, Istanbul, 1997),

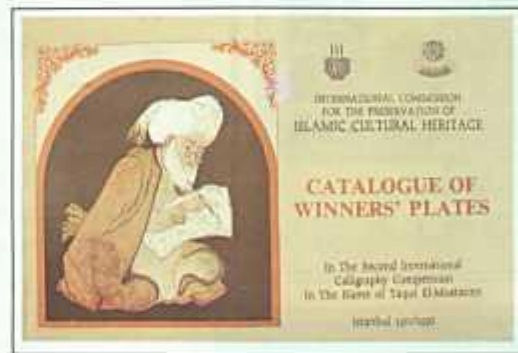
relating to the state of research in Islamic studies, the international seminars on "Islamic Oriental Studies" (jointly with Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt, 1985) and "Research in Islamic Civilisation: Outlook for the Coming Decade" (Istanbul, 1988),

on translations of the Quran, the international symposium on "Translations and Interpretations of the Holy Quran" (with the cooperation of World Islamic Call Society, Tripoli, in Istanbul, 1986).



## IRCICA as the Executive Secretariat of ICPICH

IRCICA carried out a series of activities in its capacity as the Executive Secretariat of the International Commission for the Preservation of Islamic Cultural Heritage (ICPICH) from the establishment of the Commission in 1983 until its merger with IRCICA in 2000. Within this framework, it organised the King Fahd Awards Competition for Design and Research in Islamic Architecture (1986), the First International Calligraphy Competition in the name of Hamid Al-Amidi (1986), the International Photography Competition on the theme of "Islamic Heritage" (1989), the Second International Calligraphy Competition in the name of Yaqut El-Mustasimi (1989), the Third International Calligraphy Competition to commemorate Ibn El-Bawwab on the millennium of his death (1993), and the Fourth International Calligraphy Competition in memory of calligrapher Sheikh Hamdullah (1429-1520) (1998). The fifth international calligraphy competition (2000), dedicated to the late Sayed Ibrahim, Egyptian master of calligraphy who is considered as the dean of Arab calligraphers, was declared open on 31 May 2000. Simultaneously, IRCICA organises the "IRCICA Award for Distinction in Calligraphy" on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, to honour the best performances in calligraphic skill.





IRCICA also organised, in its capacity as the Secretariat of the Commission, two international training courses on the "Restoration and conservation of archival documents and manuscripts", which were implemented in cooperation with Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul, in 1990 and 1993. The first course was attended by archivists from African member countries, while the majority of participants in the second course were from Central Asia, Caucasia and Brunei Darussalam. Another program implemented by the Commission Secretariat (IRCICA) was the presentation, in 1999, of plaques of appreciation to twenty-five select artists who have contributed to the development of traditional decorative arts such a gilding, bookbinding, miniatures, marbled paper and applications on various materials. In addition, the Commission published the catalogues of award-winning works in the competitions, presented exhibitions in the Member States, organised training courses for visiting artists, and participated in international activities aiming to preserve the Islamic cultural heritage in various parts of the world.



## Public lectures

182 public lectures were given at the Centre by guest scholars and specialists working in fields related to those of IRCICA. Recordings of these lectures are kept in the library and published occasionally. The publication titled *The West and Islam, Towards A Dialogue* contains the texts of lectures given by specialists from within and outside the Muslim world on themes concerning relations between the Muslim world and the Western world.

## IRCICA Library

The Centre's library has a collection of more than 55.000 volumes of books and 1554 periodicals in 54 languages. In addition, it has 300 microfilms and microfiches, 183 slides, 16 video films, 33 albums and 971 maps. The holdings of books and periodicals include personal collections which were donated to the Centre by private parties. The library publishes periodical acquisition lists and cumulative bibliographic catalogues. It cooperates with other libraries around the world.



## The archive of photographs

The archive of historical photographs includes the Yıldız Photograph Albums consisting of 35.000 photographs of cities, monuments and scenes of social life in the Muslim world, dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The archive also comprises other collections of historical photographs numbering approximately 25.000 in total. The Centre occasionally publishes selections of photographs relating to particular themes, countries or cities.



*The Holy Ka'ba in the Ottoman period*



*Lahore, Pakistan*

## IRCICA Awards

An award program entitled "IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research" was instituted in 1990 to give recognition to outstanding research efforts in various areas of Islamic studies. The program consists of presenting plaques of appreciation and certificates of merit to select scholars and researchers. Another award entitled "IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship" has been established in 2000 on the occasion of IRCICA's twentieth anniversary, to express recognition to patrons and promoters of Islamic studies (a special section of the present issue is devoted to these awards).

### The "IRCICA Award for Distinction in Calligraphy"

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of its establishment, IRCICA will grant an "IRCICA Award for Distinction in Calligraphy" in recognition of excellent skills and creativity in the performance of this art. The award competition was launched in May 2000 simultaneously with the Fifth International Calligraphy Competition. It aims to encourage calligraphic reproductions of Quranic verses, *hadiths* (traditions of Prophet Mohammad) or sayings, relating to the "the pursuit of science and learning". An award of US\$ 3,500 will be granted to the best of advanced performances in each of the following three styles: *jaly thuluth*, *thuluth* and *naskh*, and *jaly taliq*.

Until now the Centre received fifty applications for this award and 1500 applications for the Fifth International Calligraphy Competition, from forty countries. The fifth competition is dedicated to the late Sayed Ibrahim (1897-1994), one of the eminent Egyptian calligraphers of the twentieth century.

The entries for these competitions are expected to reach IRCICA by the end of February 2001. Evaluation processes for the two programs will take place concurrently. Their results will be announced in the middle of 2001.

## Cooperation with other institutions

IRCICA established a mutually beneficial cooperation with international, regional and national organisations, cultural and academic institutions all over the world. Most of the Centre's congresses, symposia and seminars and some of its publications resulted from such cooperation. For example, the *World Bibliography of Translations of the Meaning of the Holy Quran* was published with the cooperation of the International Islamic Call Society (Libya), the book titled *Ottoman Archives* jointly with the University of Jordan, the *Catalogue of Ibn Khaldun's Manuscripts in the Libraries of Turkey* in collaboration with Bait al-Hikmah (Tunisia), the book titled *Islamic Swords and Swordsmiths* jointly with the Ministry of Information of Kuwait, the symposium papers

entitled *Common Principles, Forms and Themes of Islamic Arts* in cooperation with "Dar ul-Fikr" (Syria), among others.

Academic institutions cooperating with IRCICA also include the University of Qatar (Doha), the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM, Kuala Lumpur), Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Malaysia (DBP, Kuala Lumpur), the Institute of Arab Scientific Heritage (Aleppo, Syria), the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and Dowling College, New York (U.S.A.), the Third World Academy of Science (TWAS, Italy) and the Middle East Studies Centre, Harvard University (CMES, U.S.A.).

The Centre cooperates with various agencies of the United Nations system in common fields of interest, within the overall framework of cooperation that has been established by periodical meetings between the OIC and the UN. Active cooperation between UNESCO and IRCICA was reinforced through a memorandum of understanding for cooperation between UNESCO and IRCICA in 1996. Furthermore, IRCICA was assigned as the focal point of the OIC for a new priority area in the OIC-UN cooperation, namely "Development of arts and crafts and promotion of heritage", starting from 1996. The Centre also signed an agreement with the UN International Trade Center (ITC, Geneva) in 1999, to contribute to the development of the marketing of craft items and training of manpower. A list of fields of cooperation between IRCICA and various UN agencies was approved in 2000, confirming the Centre's assignment as a focal point of OIC-UN cooperation.

#### Corporate activities in various fields

IRCICA actively participates in inter-religious and inter-cultural forums aimed at promoting dialogue between peoples of different faiths and cultures. Director General Prof. İhsanoğlu was invited to the Religious Summit Meeting on Mt. Hiei, Kyoto, Japan, 1987 organised by the Japan Conference of Religious Representatives, where he spoke on behalf of the Muslim participants; the Inter-Religious Dialogues co-chaired by H.R.H. Crown Prince Hasan Bin Talal of Jordan and H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, in 1984, 1986 and 1987; the First Conference of the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, Oxford University, 1988; the Global Forum on Environment and Development for Survival, Moscow, U.S.S.R., 1990; the international forum on Globalisation from a Cultural Perspective - Confrontation or Association held at the Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, 1992; the Conference on Relations between European and Islamic Cultures and on the Position of Muslims in Europe, Stockholm, 1995, convened by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Second Conference on Relations between the Muslim World and Europe, Al-Albait University, Jordan, 1996; the Eighth Muslim-Christian Consultation, Istanbul, 1997, organised by Al-Albait Academy and the Orthodox Centre of Chambesy, Switzerland; and the conference on The Power of Culture: Cultural Policies for Development, Stockholm, Sweden, 1998 convened by UNESCO.

Among the other activities concerning international and inter-cultural dialogues, a Meeting of the Leaders of the Different Faiths Represented in Turkey was held by IRCICA on the occasion of the visit of Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton, First Lady of the U.S.A., on 28 March 1996. Furthermore, the Eighteenth Mediterranean Conference was organised in Rome and in Istanbul, the latter part on IRCICA's premises, in 1996.

IRCICA also hosted and participated in the 1995 Meeting of the International Commission on the Balkans, a joint initiative of Aspen Institute, Berlin and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.).

As part of its mandate, IRCICA submits activity reports to the Islamic Summit Conferences, the Islamic Conferences of Foreign Ministers and other high-level bodies of the OIC. Thus, it was represented in all the Islamic Summit Conferences held since its establishment, from the Third (Mecca/Taif, Saudi Arabia, 1981) until the Ninth (Doha, Qatar, 2000), all the Islamic Conferences of Foreign Ministers, from the Eleventh (Islamabad, Pakistan, 1980) until the Twenty-seventh (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2000) and the sessions of the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) from the First (Dakar, 1983) until the Sixth (Dakar, 2000). IRCICA's activities were reviewed by the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs which acts as the General Assembly of the OIC subsidiaries including IRCICA, from the Sixth Session (Jeddah, 1980) until the Twenty-third (Jeddah, 2000).

The Centre also participated actively in the two Islamic Conferences of Ministers of Culture held until now: the First in Dakar, 1989, and the Second in Rabat, 1998, and in the Islamic Conferences of Information Ministers, from the First, held in Jeddah, 1988, to the Fifth, in Tehran, 1999. Occasionally, the Centre took part in committees, fact-finding missions and task forces which were set up by the OIC at different times to deal with various issues of interest to the Muslim world.



# THE COMMEMORATION OF IRCICA'S TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Istanbul, 25 October 2000

*The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), subsidiary of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), commemorated its twentieth anniversary with a cultural ceremony held on 25 October 2000 in Istanbul, Turkey. The event was placed within the program of the Sixteenth Session (23-26 October 2000) of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC), an international ministerial committee chaired by the President of the Republic of Turkey.*

*H.E. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey, opened an exhibition exposing IRCICA's accomplishments, on 25 October 2000.*

*An anniversary ceremony was held the same day under the patronage and in presence of H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey. H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC was present at the ceremony together with ministers from the OIC Member States.*

*During the ceremony, the third group of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research, and the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship instituted for the twentieth anniversary, were presented to the awardees, as was approved by the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (June 2000) at the recommendation of the Governing Board of IRCICA.*

*On the occasion of this anniversary commemoration, the Governing Board of IRCICA met on its Sixteenth Session on 26-27 October 2000.*

A number of cultural events marking IRCICA's twentieth anniversary were organised throughout 2000. One of them was "IRCICA Week", a cultural program that was held during the period of the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, in Malaysia, June 2000. The program included a ceremony at Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Academy of Language and Literature), Kuala Lumpur, on 24 June 2000, held under the patronage and in the presence of The Honourable Datuk Seri Syed Hamid bin Syed Jaafar Albar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia (please see *Newsletter* no. 52, August 2000).

The Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers and IRCICA Week were the first venues for IRCICA to present the OIC Member States' delegations with copies of the commemorative book titled *IRCICA 1980-2000*, a record of all the activities undertaken by the Centre since its establishment that was published earlier in 2000.

The anniversary commemoration in Istanbul took place within the framework of the Sixteenth Session of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation.



The COMCEC session was inaugurated by H.E. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of Turkey, in the morning of 25 October 2000. In his opening address, the President reviewed the OIC's activities in various fields, in particular those undertaken by COMCEC to promote economic and commercial cooperation. The President also referred to the missions of OIC bodies and institutions working in other fields such as IRCICA. The President evoked the successful achievements made by IRCICA during its first twenty years and underlined the significance of commemorating its anniversary on the occasion of the COMCEC ministerial session. The President said "I would like to take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to the Istanbul Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) on the twentieth anniversary of its foundation. I wish to congratulate the Director General as well as all the staff for their fruitful work. The Istanbul Centre has been extremely successful in the twenty years of its existence and, with the valuable support and sustained interest of the OIC General Secretariat and Member Countries, has achieved meaningful results on the cultural and artistic works which are a treasure of Islamic civilisation" (excerpts from the address are published below).



*Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister (in the middle), chaired the ceremony; on his right, Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC*

**EXCERPTS FROM THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF  
H.E. AHMET NECDET SEZER, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY AND  
CHAIRMAN OF THE COMCEC, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE  
COMCEC COVERING THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF IRCICA  
(Istanbul, 25 October 2000)**

Honourable Ministers, Honourable Secretary General, Distinguished Delegates,  
Distinguished Guests,

...  
The Organisation of the Islamic Conference, has after the new adhesions, increased its membership to 56 countries. Our community, which is composed of brotherly countries situated in regions extending from Asia to Europe, from Africa to South America, is the organisation with the highest number of members, second only to the United Nations.

...  
Economic and political events are developing rapidly and globalisation is having a growing impact on all aspects of modern life. Globalisation, the positive and negative consequences of which can be briefly described as accelerated growth, rise of the standard of living and new opportunities, now appears clearly. On the other hand, the distribution of the opportunities created by globalisation is unfortunately far from being equal and just while developed countries benefit much more from the opportunities generated by globalisation, thanks to their economic and technologic superiority, developing countries are faced with increased trade deficits and deteriorating income distribution leading to social unrest, increasing brain drain and similar serious problems. The failure to bridge the growing gap between the level of prosperity of various countries, the rich growing richer while the poor poorer, will inevitably have a negative impact on world peace and stability. In this context, while we have to devise ways and means to benefit to a greater extent from the opportunities offered by globalisation, we must also develop measures to prevent possible threats of this process.

...  
We have now entered a new millennium. Great progress and achievements in the recent past have ensured a happier and more prosperous quality of life for humanity as a whole. However, besides the problems which have still not been coped with by mankind, we are still faced by serious problems created by the specific conditions of the present era.

I would especially like to draw your attention to the issue of poverty. In spite of the important economic improvement observed in the world in the last fifty years, there are today still over a billion people who survive on a daily income of less than one dollar. Together with poverty the excessive widening of the income distribution gap both among countries and within countries constitutes an serious threat to the peace and stability of society.

It is impossible for communities caught in the vicious circle of poverty to solve other urgent problems. The lack of concern of the international community in this situation means isolation of poor communities. As a result of this, we witness a phenomenon of marginalisation parallel to globalisation. To break the vicious circle of poverty, the developing countries need a qualified work force, education, increasing investment in the young generations as well as to closely follow the technologic developments in the world and raise their production standards so as to increase their share of world trade. Instead of the raising obstacles, the support of developed countries in these efforts is an important factor in shortening the road to success.

There is no doubt that no time should be wasted in taking measures to fight poverty at the national level. It is however obvious that national resources will be insufficient to solve problems of such urgency and magnitude, and that international solidarity and cooperation will be required at this point. In this context, the Millenium Summit of the United Nations, held last September with a large number of participants, was a meeting of historical significance for the international community on the necessity for solidarity and cooperation in solving the problems facing the world. ... Another point I would like to emphasize as one of the main outcomes of the Summit, is that human rights are no longer the internal affair of a country and that concepts like the supremacy of law and democracy have evolved thanks to globalisation. It is probable that there will be an increase in the developments in this field in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that a growing proportion of the world population will benefit from the opportunities provided by democracy for decent life standards and self-improvement.

...  
**I would like to take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to the Istanbul Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) on the twentieth anniversary of its foundation. I wish to congratulate the Director General as well as all the staff for their fruitful work. The Istanbul Centre has been extremely successful in the 20 years of its existence and, with the valuable support and sustained interest of the OIC General Secretariat and Member Countries, has achieved meaningful results on the cultural and artistic works which are a treasure of Islamic civilisation. I am sure that this work will be pursued thanks to your support and interest.**

...  
As mankind enters the 21<sup>st</sup> century with new hopes for a better and peaceful future, conflicts, tensions and violence are unfortunately still seen in various corners of the world. There is no doubt that, as member countries of the Islamic Conference, we are more concerned with the Middle East problem. The people of this region which own the richest natural resources in the world are negatively influenced in their rightful scientific, economic and social development due to the failure to reach a long-awaited peace and stability in the Middle East.

...  
The conditions of the new era in front of the international relations require a closer economic cooperation between our brotherly countries proud to share the same historical, moral, and cultural heritage.

...

Following the inaugural ceremony of the COMCEC session, H.E. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of Turkey and Chairman of the COMCEC opened an exhibition of photographs that illustrated IRCICA's accomplishments. The exhibition was put up in a hall adjacent to the session hall at The Marmara Hotel.

After the opening of IRCICA's exhibition, the President of Turkey and Chairman of the COMCEC received the heads of delegations attending the conference. During this reception, IRCICA Director General Prof. İhsanoğlu presented the Centre's plaque of gratitude to H.E. President Sezer as an expression of appreciation for the continuous support given by the Republic of Turkey to IRCICA and the patronage kindly extended by President Sezer to the Centre since his taking the office.

The twentieth anniversary ceremony of IRCICA was organised in the evening of 25 October 2000, in the same hall where the COMCEC session took place. The event was held under the patronage and in presence of H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey. H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of OIC was present, together with H.E. Dr. Akin İzmirlioğlu, Undersecretary of the State Planning Organisation, as well as the recipients of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research and the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship, and the members of IRCICA Governing Board. This international ceremony was attended by the ministers and delegates of the OIC Member States participating in the COMCEC session, the representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Culture and other high officials from Turkey, guests from diplomatic, cultural and scholarly circles and representatives of the press and television.



*The President of Turkey H.E. Ahmet Necdet Sezer received the Centre's plaque of gratitude from Prof. İhsanoğlu, in presence of OIC Secretary General H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki*

The ceremony was opened by H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli congratulated IRCICA on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary and pointed out that this ceremony resulting from a fruitful cooperation between the COMCEC Secretariat and IRCICA was another indication of the multi-dimensional development achieved through cooperation between the Member States.

**OPENING ADDRESS OF H.E. DR. DEVLET BAHÇELİ,  
MINISTER OF STATE AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY,  
AT THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY OF IRCICA  
(Istanbul, 25 October 2000)**

I am honoured to participate in the ceremony of the twentieth anniversary of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), one of the most successful institutions of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. The present ceremony resulted from an exemplary cooperation deployed by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the COMCEC Secretariat. It gives further evidence of the multifarious orientations of the development of solidarity between Muslim countries.

The Government of the Republic of Turkey has always accorded importance to strengthening its cooperation with the other OIC Member States in all fields of action. It has closely followed IRCICA's activities since its establishment and extended all the necessary assistance and facilities to the Centre.

While the time and space dimensions of the globe shrink, peoples' similarities and differences appear more distinctly. In consequence, the cultural, religious and civilisational factors of polarity increase their effects on international relations. In this environment, mutual tolerance and understanding between nations and civilisations play a crucial role in ensuring their togetherness. And the way to establish tolerance and understanding is to introduce nations to each other on basis of their cultural characteristics.

Therefore, the Centre's studies using scholarly methods and modern techniques, its publications in various languages, and its efforts to preserve the Member States' common heritage, are all aimed at meeting this important need of our time. Its researches on the history and the arts of Muslim nations within and outside the Member States help to strengthen the links between these nations. Its international cooperation programs, artistic and architectural restoration projects contribute in promoting academic circles' interest in subjects relating to Islamic culture and civilisation.

The Centre's activities have highlighted the cultural wealth of the Muslim world and the importance of this asset within the process of the dialogue of civilisations. They have also contributed towards correcting the misconceptions of the world opinion and the academic community caused by lack of information about the history and the culture of Muslim nations.

It is seen that as a result of global developments, the objectives set forth at the Centre's establishment have acquired further importance in our time. Fulfillment of the Centre's objectives will help, at the same time, in strengthening the position of its parent organisation, the OIC, among the international organisations. I believe that this process will continue in the twenty-first century and that the Centre will have the resilience to respond to changing circumstances. Turkey is proud to host this Centre.

By taking these facts into consideration while drawing up the Centre's future plans and programs, it will be possible to make use of its accumulated knowledge and experience in an increasingly efficient way.

The presence, in this ceremony, of distinguished figures having extended support and contributed remarkably to research in Islamic civilisation, not only from the Muslim countries but from around the world, is another manifestation of the significance these subjects have acquired on a universal scale. I would like to take this opportunity to greet those distinguished personalities who will receive the award for patronage in the preservation of cultural heritage and promotion of research to be presented for the first time on IRCICA's twentieth anniversary and the third group of its award for excellence in research, and thank them for their support and contributions in these fields. The establishment of these awards of global scope, which emphasise contributions in these fields and encourage similar efforts, is one of the pioneering accomplishments of the Centre and indicate the advanced stage reached by its activities.

I would like to express my thanks to all the Member States that have contributed morally and materially to the Centre's achieving its present state; I thank the General Secretariat of the OIC and Secretary General H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, and all the institutions, organisations and persons supportive of the Centre. I also thank the Member States' honourable ministers and representatives, the members of international organisations and the esteemed guests present here for the close interest they have shown on this occasion. I congratulate the Director General the distinguished scholar Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and his colleagues on their important anniversary which brought together this select audience and wish them continuous success.

He underlined the importance of better acquainting peoples with each other by the medium of their cultures and stressed the importance of IRCICA's objectives and activities in this field (the complete text of the address is given on the previous page).

The Secretary General of the OIC H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki delivered an address in which he highlighted the wide spectrum of the OIC's fields of action and the significance of the Centre's role in the cultural field. The Secretary General pointed out the Centre's capability of enhancing the knowledge of Islamic culture and heritage for the benefit of the peoples of those countries which joined the OIC recently and of neighbouring regions outside the Member States. The text of Dr. Laraki's address is reproduced here (original in Arabic).

**ADDRESS OF H.E. DR. AZEDDINE LARAKI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OIC,  
AT THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY OF IRCICA**

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to meet you here in this beautiful city of Istanbul, which is illustrious for its civilisation and which houses today a meeting aimed at strengthening economic and commercial cooperation between Muslim countries and another meeting that has the objective of making known the Islamic arts and civilisation. These two meetings are held within the framework of the action undertaken by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in the service of the Muslim world to increase the well-being of its people, to highlight its commendable contributions to human civilisation, to introduce and upgrade them by drawing from the supreme moral and religious values. I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Republic of Turkey, its President, its Government and its people for having convened the meeting of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) and for hosting the headquarters and supporting the activities of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA).

The commemoration of this twentieth anniversary of the Centre has been made possible, initially, by the Government of Turkey, then chaired by Prime Minister Mr. Süleyman Demirel, which made a call for setting up this Centre and deployed the necessary means to lay its foundations. Also praiseworthy are the unfailing efforts of the Centre's competent staff directed by my friend Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu. The Centre, a subsidiary of the OIC; that is, an executive organ of the General Secretariat entrusted with implementing the numerous decisions taken by the OIC to preserve and promote the Islamic heritage, has carried out many studies, organised a number of international and regional symposia, seminars and festivals, which altogether contributed in strengthening Muslims' attachment to and pride of their cultural riches and heritage and their efforts to make them known to those outside the Muslim world. This can be considered as an important step towards promoting the dialogue between civilisations which is upheld by the OIC and conceived so as to re-read the historical stages of the Muslim community carefully and objectively and re-consider the consequences of its determining turning points and developments on the life of mankind. Thanks to the position of Turkey which has a long civilisational and historical past encompassing neighbouring regions, the Centre is capable of playing an important role in consolidating the spirit of belonging to Islamic culture among the peoples of the Balkans and the countries which joined the OIC recently, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The Centre's supervising the reconstruction of Neziraga Mosque in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, gives evidence of this capacity. In fact, with its efficient management, its experienced staff and the guidance of its Governing Board, the Centre is capable of deploying more efforts and producing more work to make known the contributions that various Muslim countries have made towards enriching human civilisation, developing Islamic thought and giving birth to the personalities who stood out by their patronage of knowledge, culture and arts. May God guide us on the right path.

Then, H.R.H. Princess Wijdan Ali from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, member of the Governing Board of IRCICA (elected Chairperson the following day, at the Sixteenth Session of the Governing Board held on 26-27 October 2000), spoke on behalf of the Board.

**ADDRESS OF H.R.H. PRINCESS WIJDAN ALI, CHAIRPERSON OF  
IRCICA GOVERNING BOARD, AT THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY**

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we approach the third millennium we witness the amazing revolution in communications whereby culture seems to have assumed a new role. Today culture is no more the main component of civilisation but a weapon used by the technologically advanced to change life styles, concepts and identities of those less advanced, thus making it a means to dominate societies who in the past had thought distances could not only secure their borders but safeguard their identities. Culture has become an added weapon in usurping the pride of a people in their historical roots and is evident in Palestine today during the current uprising in the West Bank and Gaza. Hence IRCICA has been given an added dimension. During the past two decades IRCICA,

under the relentless, dedicated, able direction of Professor Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, has been able to serve Islamic civilisation which, at present, is the longest surviving active civilisation, in various spheres, including identification, research, conservation and revival. For more than a decade it has become a bastion for Islamic cultures from Southeast Asia to the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, the Middle East and North and Sub-Saharan Africa. Its activities embrace traditional Islamic arts of and from the past as well as living arts and crafts of the present, thus forming a means of orientation for Islam, a bridge that would close the gap of ignorance with other cultures and an instrument for preserving our identity without xenophobia, bigotry, or isolation. On behalf of IRCICA's Governing Board and with a lot of humility and a touch of pride, I thank the Turkish Government and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference for their continued backing in the past and ask them to increase their support in the future so that IRCICA can carry on as the major cultural institution of the Islamic world whose work is reaching the minds and hearts of Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Professor Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Director General of IRCICA, gave an address, stating that it was a privilege for IRCICA to share the joy of its twentieth anniversary with guests of the highest level from the Member States, members and representatives of governments, international organisations from within and outside the Muslim world and leading figures from cultural and academic circles. He reviewed the salient features of IRCICA's aims, policies and programs and expressed his sentiments of pride for being in the service of Islamic civilisation through the activities of IRCICA for the past twenty years.

**ADDRESS OF IRCICA DIRECTOR GENERAL PROF. DR. EKMELEDDİN İHSANOĞLU  
AT THE CEREMONY OF THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF IRCICA**

Your Highnesses, Excellencies,

Your Excellency Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State, Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey and patron of this ceremony, Your Excellency Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC, Distinguished Delegates,

I am most honoured to welcome you to the ceremony of the twentieth anniversary of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture -IRCICA. It is a privilege for us to share the joy of this significant occasion with guests of the highest level from the Member States, members and representatives of governments, international organisations from within and outside the Muslim world and leading figures from cultural and academic circles. At the beginning of my address, I would like to thank you all and to express our deep gratitude, in particular to His Excellency Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, for having given us the honour of extending his patronage and gracing this event with his presence. I believe the high-level chairmanship and support accorded by IRCICA's host country the Republic of Turkey, and the interest shown by the OIC Member States, reaffirm the confidence placed on us for fulfillment of IRCICA's tasks and responsibilities. Furthermore, the international and inter-disciplinary composition of this august audience reflects the fact that throughout the first two decades of its existence, the operational environment and support network of IRCICA have reached universal dimensions commensurate with the scope of its mandate.

IRCICA was set up in 1980 as the OIC's first subsidiary in the field of culture, by decision of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers and at the proposal of the Republic of Turkey. The Centre's assigned objectives crystallised into multifarious projects directed to the scholarly study of Islamic civilisation. We gave emphasis to fostering affinities between Muslim peoples and also acquainting other peoples with the history and culture of Muslim nations. We tried to stimulate scholarly, cultural and artistic endeavours towards reviving and restoring the cultural heritage of Islam within and outside the Muslim world.

IRCICA's activities grew steadily in depth and scope since 1980. During the same period, the world witnessed decisive changes in the political, economic and cultural fields which accentuated the diversity of interests and the multiplicity of cultures. As a result, the importance of dialogue and inter-cultural understanding increased more than ever. The significance of the objectives IRCICA was originally assigned grew day by day.

I believe the twentieth anniversary is a milestone in the Centre's present phase where it achieved its full potential in a changing global environment. It is significant that this landmark occasion takes place concurrently with the thirtieth anniversary of the OIC, its parent organisation. In coming years, IRCICA will be expected to highlight the Islamic culture in all forums where cultures of the world are represented through their international institutions. By the nature of its mandate, as well as by the fact that it is centrally located in the Muslim world but at the same time in close geographic proximity to the west, and that it is the only OIC institution placed in the European continent, the Centre is acting as a cultural bridge not only between the core and the geographically peripheral regions of the Muslim world, but also with the western and far-eastern worlds.

Several cultural events have been organised to commemorate the twentieth anniversary throughout the present year. A ceremony organised during the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers last June in Kuala Lumpur, with the cooperation of the Academy of Language and Literature, in presence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, was fruitful in highlighting the Centre's accomplishments and prospects. Furthermore, special awards have been instituted on the occasion of this anniversary, namely, the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship, and the third group of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research. These awards will be presented today, to express gratitude and recognition to four leading figures who extended their patronage and support to the preservation of cultural heritage and scholarly research, and to four other scholars for their remarkable contributions to Islamic studies. The diversity of the fields and the national backgrounds of the awardees is an important feature of the award and reflects the universal coverage of the OIC's and the Centre's cultural action.

Your Highnesses, Excellencies, distinguished delegations,

I would like to conclude by thanking you once again for participating in this ceremony and your interest in IRCICA's objectives. May I take this opportunity to reiterate my profound gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey, which originally proposed the Centre's establishment, gave it the most suitable premises in the historical Yıldız Palace and extended continuous support to its activities. We are deeply grateful, in particular, to the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey for the care and assistance accorded to the Centre continuously since its establishment. We owe special thanks and appreciation to the Turkish Prime Ministry's State Planning Organisation, its Departments of External Economic Relations, Social Planning, Administration and other offices for the close cooperation they have extended to IRCICA for years on many such memorable occasions.

For all our achievements so far, we are indebted to the Member States of the OIC for the moral and material assistance they provided either individually or collectively through the OIC's bodies. I take this opportunity to thank them once again. I reiterate our profound gratitude to the General Secretariat of the OIC for the wise guidance extended to us throughout the years. We are deeply thankful to His Excellency Dr. Azeddine Laraki, the distinguished Secretary General of the OIC, for his support of our activities, and on this particular occasion, for kindly gracing IRCICA's ceremony with his presence.

As one of those who have been working for IRCICA for the last twenty years, I feel grateful for having been associated with IRCICA, and I am sure my colleagues share the same feeling. I personally believe that whatever our successes and failures are, serving the noble Islamic civilisation through this institution is a source of pride for us.

The ceremony continued with the presentation of the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship and the third group of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research to the awardees. The IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship was instituted this year, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Centre, to express recognition and appreciation for exemplary services rendered in the patronage towards safeguarding cultural heritage and supporting research in various areas of Islamic studies. The award was presented to four leading personalities of the field who were nominated by IRCICA Governing Board at its Fifteenth Session (14-15 January 2000) and approved by the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (27-30 June 2000). These personalities are:

H.H. Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council of United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Sharjah, scholar and author in history, patron of research and cultural heritage, for his cultural, social and humanitarian activities;

H.H. Sheikha Hussa Al-Sabah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, Director of Kuwait National Museum, patron of Islamic arts and antiquities, and former member of IRCICA Governing Board, for her support of international efforts towards preserving and promoting Islamic art heritage;

H.E. Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, Founder and Chairman of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London, patron of learning and research and promoter of studies on manuscripts;

and posthumously, in memory of Hakeem Abdul Hameed, Founder-Chancellor of Hamdard University and Hamdard Foundation, India, a patron and promoter of research in Islamic studies and the history of medicine.

Then, the third group of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research was presented to the recipients. The first group was presented in 1990 on the tenth anniversary of IRCICA and the second in 1997, both to scholars and researchers from around the world. The following four distinguished scholars received the award on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary:

Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas from Malaysia, Founder-Director, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation, Malaysia, Life Holder of the Distinguished Al-Ghazali Chair of Islamic Thought, professor of Islamic thought and civilisation, International Islamic University Malaysia, for his achievements in the fields of Malay language and culture and Islamic civilisation;

Professor Emeritus Iraj Afshar from Iran, professor of history, specialist in the history of Iran, and scholar of library science and Islamic manuscripts, for his accomplishments in the fields of Iranian studies, Islamic history and library science;

Professor Dr. Yusuf Ibish, professor of Islamic history and political studies, scholar and author, Director General, Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London, Founder and Chairman, Board of Trustees, Islamic Cultural Center, Beirut, in appreciation of his contributions the field of Islamic history, philosophy and political science;

and Professor William A. Graham, professor of the history of religion and Islamic studies, Chairman, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilisations, and Master of Currier House, Harvard University, U.S.A. for his services in the fields of history of religions, in particular the history and philosophy of Islam.

IRCICA took the opportunity of this august event to express its gratitude to some Ministries and authorities for the support and assistance they have offered to the Centre throughout the past two decades. Thus, the Director General of IRCICA Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoğlu presented plaques of gratitude to:

H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, in gratitude for the Turkish Government's unfailing support and assistance;

H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC, for the valuable guidance and assistance provided by the General Secretariat;

H.E. Mr. İstemihan Talay, Minister of Culture of Turkey, in recognition of the continuous support offered by the Ministry of Culture – the plaque was received by Mr. Tuncer Acar, Director General of the National Library of Turkey, on behalf of the Minister;

H.E. Mr. İsmail Cem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, in appreciation of the support and assistance extended by the Ministry to the Centre – the plaque was received by Ambassador Ferhan Erkmenoğlu on behalf of the Minister,.

H.E. Mr. Akın İzmirlioğlu, Undersecretary of the Turkish Prime Ministry's State Planning Organisation, in gratitude for the close cooperation accorded for years to IRCICA on various occasions.

# IRCICA AWARDS PRESENTED ON THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

The program entitled the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research is being implemented by IRCICA since 1990 to acknowledge achievements and encourage advances in fields of research relating to Islamic culture and civilisation. The award consists of plaques and certificates of merit for select scholars having contributed remarkably to the progress of Islamic studies. The program's scope was expanded with the establishment of the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship. This award was set up at the recommendation of the Governing Board of IRCICA (January 2000) and approved by the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (June 2000), to be presented for the first time on the Centre's twentieth anniversary in acknowledgement of exemplary services rendered towards safeguarding Islamic cultural heritage and developing Islamic studies.

The IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research was established by IRCICA's Executive Committee and adopted by its Governing Board, on the tenth anniversary of the Centre (1990). It was agreed that the award would reflect the academic and public appreciation for existing accomplishments and be a source of encouragement to others working in similar fields. The first award was presented during the tenth anniversary commemoration ceremony on 10 October 1990, to the following scholars who made original contributions in their respective fields of research: Prof. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel from Germany, professor of Indo-Muslim Culture at Harvard University, USA, was selected for her invaluable contribution to the history of Islamic culture, mysticism and literature; Prof. Stanford Shaw, professor at Los Angeles University, USA (currently at Bilkent University, Ankara), and historian of Middle Eastern Studies, for his thorough study of the history of the Middle East based on the Ottoman archives; Prof. Oktay Aslanapa, for being one of the eminent art historians and the author of many works in English, German and Turkish on Islamic arts and architecture, among which is the book "Turkish Art and Architecture" published by IRCICA; Prof. Roshdi Rashed, historian of science, also Director, "Centre National de Recherche Scientifique" (CNRS), Paris for his diligent researches and publications; Prof. Dr. Izzet Hasan, professor of Arabic literature at the Université Mohamed V in Rabat and the author of several books, for training numerous students in this field; Prof. Dr. Muhammed Hamidullah, famous scholar in Islamic studies, culture and civilisation (from India, based in Paris); and Hakeem Mohammed Said, President of Hamdard Foundation and Founder-President of "Madinat Al-Hikmat", Karachi, Pakistan.

Following this tradition and at the recommendation of IRCICA Governing Board to institutionalise this award, the second group of awards were presented in 1997, to: Prof. Leila Sabbagh (Syria), professor, researcher and author in social and cultural history of the Arab World; Prof. Géza Fehérvári (Hungary), archeologist, researcher and author in the field of Islamic art and archeology; Prof. Kemal H. Karpat (USA), for his work on social and cultural history of the Turkic World in the age of modernisation; Prof. M. Taib Osman (Malaysia), professor, researcher and author in Malay Studies; and Prof. Abdurrahman Badawi (Egypt),

researcher and author in Islamic philosophy. The award ceremony was held in Istanbul on 3 November 1997, in presence of the Minister of State of the Republic of Turkey, Ministers and high officials of the OIC Member States, within the framework of the Thirteenth Session of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC).

At its session held in January 2000, the Governing Board recommended that the third group of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research, to be distributed on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Centre, be presented to the following scholars: Prof. Dr. Syed Naquib Al-Attas (Malaysia), Chairman of the International Institute of Islamic Thought, Malaysia; Prof. Iraj Afshar (Iran), specialist of Islamic history, library science and Islamic manuscripts; Prof. Dr. Yusuf Ibish (Lebanon), Professor of Islamic history and political studies, and Prof. Dr. William Graham (U.S.A.), professor of history of religion and Islamic Studies, Harvard University. The Board also recommended that an IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship be presented, together with the awards, to the following four personalities, in recognition of the patronage and support they have given towards culture, learning and scholarship and protection of cultural heritage: His Highness Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Ruler of Sharjah and member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates; His Excellency Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, Founder and Chairman of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London; Her Highness Sheikha Hussa Al-Sabah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, Director of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiya (National Museum), Kuwait, and, late Hakeem Abdul Hameed, Founder and Chairman of Hamdard University and Hamdard Foundation, India, deceased on 22 July 1999, as a tribute to his esteemed memory. The awardees recommended by IRCICA Governing Board were approved by the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers convened in June 2000.

Thus, the third group of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research, and the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship instituted for the twentieth anniversary, were presented to their recipients during IRCICA's twentieth anniversary ceremony held in Istanbul on 25 October 2000.

The ceremony of the twentieth anniversary and presentation of the IRCICA Awards was held under the patronage and in presence of H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey. H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of OIC, was present at the ceremony, together with the representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Culture of Turkey, H.E. Dr. Akın İzmirlioğlu, Undersecretary of the State Planning Organisation, and the members of IRCICA Governing Board. The audience was comprised of the OIC Member States' delegates in the COMCEC session, high officials, guests from diplomatic, cultural and scholarly circles and representatives of the press. The objectives of the awards and the biographies of the awardees were introduced to the audience by Mrs. Zeynep Durukal (IRCICA).

Following the addresses of Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Princess Wijdan Ali and Prof. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, the ceremony continued with the presentation of the awards.

## The IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship

The IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship was presented to H.H. Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council of United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Sharjah, H.H. Sheikha Husna Al-Sabah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, Director of Kuwait National Museum and former member of IRCICA Governing Board, H.E. Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, Founder and Chairman of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London, and posthumously, in memory of Hakeem Abdul Hameed, Founder-Chancellor of Hamdard University and Hamdard Foundation, India. The award for Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, a scholar and author in history, patron of research and cultural heritage, expressed IRCICA's respect and admiration for his cultural, social and humanitarian activities covering a wide spectrum of subject areas across borders. The citation for Dr. Al Qassimi underlined that

"Sheikh Al Qassimi's scholarly career is fruitfully combined with his statesmanship. Based on his specialisation in history and the political geography of the Gulf, his research has been prolific. His books opened new avenues for historical studies on unexplored aspects of the history of the Gulf region. His concern for fostering culture and education in his country led him to establish a number of institutions. Having served as the Minister of Education of the United Arab Emirates in the early 1970s, Sheikh Al Qassimi simultaneously carries out his functions as Ruler of Sharjah, member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates, President of the University of Sharjah and the American University of Sharjah both founded by him, and Distinguished Professor at the University of Sharjah. Some of the many institutions of science and learning he established are Sharjah Islamic Museum, Heritage Museum, Archeology Museum, Science Museum and Learning Center, Arts Institute, Theatre Institute, Public Library, and Planetarium.

IRCICA expresses its gratitude to Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qassimi particularly for his cultural and humanitarian deeds in support of the preservation and development of Islamic heritage, through his generous donations for the reconstruction of historical monuments and construction of mosques outside the Muslim world. His patronage of efforts in this field are exemplified in the funding he provided for the reconstruction of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century monument Neziraga Mosque in Bosnia completed last year and his funding of several mosques presently in construction in Bosnia and Bulgaria."



*Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, presented the award to Sheikh Dr. Al Qassimi*

The award was presented to Sheikh Al Qassimi by H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, Minister of State and Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey. After having received the award plaque and certificate, Sheikh Al Qassimi gave an address of thanks (original in Arabic), in which he said that "The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture is an artery that links us together, that bridges together especially those countries which were part of the Ottoman Empire and share a common history. After a through review of this history, our ties will be stronger and the realities will appear clearly. A most important reality is that the Ottoman State did not give up a single spot of the land of Palestine and we are thankful for this. Other realities will appear very soon, with my next book entitled 'The Ottoman-Portuguese Conflict in the Gulf'. The documents I collected from research centres in Portugal, in The Netherlands and in England are not sufficient, as one cannot ignore the information Turkey houses, and any evaluation concerning the Ottoman State cannot be correct without considering these documents. For years, I visited this Centre and the other research centres and libraries. Their authorities helped me a lot. The Turkish Government preserves this rich stock of information and presents it to researchers, but it is not possible to classify all the documents due to their large volume. As I was looking for some information, I was told the source wasn't classified yet, and the whole classification work would take 120 years. Therefore, I propose to set up a fund within IRCICA, to finance the works of other research centres towards speeding up the classification of these documents for their usage by researchers." Sheikh Sultan affirmed his constant readiness to sponsor this operation in order to facilitate the classification of the documents.

Professor Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu expressed his gratitude to Sheikh Al Qassimi for his generous financial, and continuous moral, support of cultural and scholarly activities in general and the Centre's work in particular.

Sheikha Hussa Al-Sabah Al-Salim Al-Sabah was acknowledged for the support and encouragement she gave to studies and international efforts towards the preservation and promotion of Islamic art heritage. Sheikha Hussa was represented at this ceremony by H.H. Sheikh Selman Daoud Al-Selman Al-Sabah, member of IRCICA Governing Board from the State of Kuwait. The citation stated that

"Herself a museum and art specialist and internationally recognised art collector, Sheikha Hussa Al-Sabah is the owner, together with her husband Sheikh Nasser Al-Sabah, of Al-Sabah collection which is on loan to the State of Kuwait under the auspices of the Ministry



*On behalf of Sheikha Hussa Al-Sabah, Sheikh Selman Al-Sabah received the award which was presented by OIC Secretary General Dr. Azeddine Laraki*

of Information. Her expertise is reflected in the variety and value of this collection representing the riches of art heritage, as well as in her management of artistic promotion in her capacity as the Director of Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiya (Museum of Islamic Art) in Kuwait City. This museum was founded on the Al-Sabah collection since its opening in 1983. The collection is considered to be among the most important concentrations of Islamic art in the world. Sheikha Husa contributed to the development of scholarly studies on Islamic arts and the promotion of artistic works by her various international engagements. IRCICA is deeply appreciative, in particular, of the valuable guidance she provided in support of IRCICA's activities through her membership in the Governing Board of IRCICA for two terms, starting from 1986, and pays tribute to Sheikha Husa Al-Sabah for her exemplary cultural deeds as a patron of research and international efforts for the benefit of Islamic arts and antiquities."

H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC, was invited to present the award for Sheikha Husa Al-Sabah to Sheikh Selman Al-Sabah. Sheikh Selman Al-Sabah expressed his pleasure to be attending this significant ceremony convened in Istanbul, at the crossroads of many civilisations, a land that shelters great achievements in the fields of arts, culture, architecture and other fields. He read Sheikha Husa Al-Sabah's message which pointed out the importance of the idea and the objective of the awards presented. Sheikha Husa said "Today's ceremony highlights the values, ideas and goals of the Centre and acknowledges the efforts of people committed to them: the staff, the participants and others who contributed in projecting a good image of the Islamic arts. Kuwait, a country of small size and population but which contributed to culture at all levels through its interest in arts and in cultural activities, of which Al-Sabah collection at the National Museum is only one example. This collection was not spared from vandalism, theft and loss during the aggression perpetrated to our country. Our museum's efforts accompany those deployed by public and private parties towards enriching cultural activities within and outside the country. While political and regional conflicts divide peoples in today's world, the Islamic arts convey a message that carries noble feelings and that is expressed in most refined languages, to which peoples and nations will have recourse for salvage and peace. ... We are always thankful to the Government of Turkey, the brotherly country, for its assistance to the Centre. We are appreciative of the continuous efforts made by our brother Prof. Ihsanoğlu and his bright cadre of staff and thank them for their meritorious achievements over the past twenty years." (original in Arabic)

Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, a patron of learning and research and promoter of studies on manuscripts, was presented the award as an expression of IRCICA's recognition of his following qualities and deeds explained in the citation:

"A leading figure of world intellectual and cultural, as well as political life, a patron and promoter of culture and learning, Sheikh Zaki Yamani is well known for his professional career in the legal, political and economic fields and his activities in patronage of Islamic culture and scholarship through numerous benefactions which he undertook from a global perspective and long-term outlook. He contributed in enhancing the image of the Muslim world from various viewpoints, within and outside this world.

Following his innovative deeds as a leading figure of the oil and energy sector in his country and in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries - OPEC, Ahmad Zaki Yamani established two important institutions, assuming their chairmanship. The first one, the Centre for Global Energy Studies, is a forum for research and discussion on energy-related matters.

The second one is Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, which is primarily concerned with discovering, recording, preserving, editing and publishing old Islamic manuscripts. The foundation surveyed Islamic manuscripts from all over the world, covering 180 countries in all, and has published catalogues that constitute a complete survey, for the first time in the history of manuscript studies. In addition, a branch for an Encyclopaedia on Mecca and Medina was set up by Al-Furqan in Saudi Arabia. In addition to chairing these institutions, he continues to lecture at Harvard University on Islamic jurisprudence.

IRCICA is proud to acknowledge that Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani has offered his support to IRCICA's work in various ways, through material and advisory assistance, including his support for the publication of the Centre's scholarly and artistic major work on The Art of Calligraphy, among others, and the fruitful cooperation exemplified in the joint organisation of Al-Furqan Foundation's second training course on the Cataloguing and Classification of Islamic Manuscripts in 1994 with participants from the Balkans, Caucasia and Central Asian countries. IRCICA presents this award to Sheikh Zaki Yamani in gratitude for his remarkable endeavours as a patron of cultural studies, research and preservation of the Islamic manuscript heritage."



Sheikh Zaki Yamani received the award plaque and certificate from Dr. Akın İzmirlioğlu, Undersecretary of the Turkish State Planning Organisation. Sheikh Yamani gave an address of thanks, which he began by citing parts from three verses of the Quran that emphasise God's conferring mankind the human status and imparting him with knowledge: 17:70, "We have honoured the sons of Adam ..."; 49:13, "... The most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you ..." and 39:9, "... It is those who are endued with understanding, that receive admonition." Sheikh Yamani said (original in Arabic) that "the Quranic message, which was revealed to the Prophet of Islam and which illuminated the path of humanity and opened the gates of learning in all disciplines, including medicine, jurisprudence, astronomy, mathematics and many others. Part of this knowledge is contained in the manuscripts that are scattered around the world. Most of them are still unknown and we are trying to uncover them. Today I have been honoured by an institution which, in fact, deserves to be honoured, as all the work I undertake at Al-Furqan and at the Encyclopaedia

of Mecca and Medina is related to IRCICA's fields of interest. I owe the Centre and its Director General a lot for all the work they produce in various fields. Without him we cannot proceed on anything. I am being honoured by someone who himself deserves to be honoured. I thank them very much. I also express my thanks and appreciation to this country, this good country which encouraged these studies and gave its support to researches in the field of Islamic civilisation."

Then, the Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship was presented posthumously to late Hakeem Abdul Hameed, a patron and promoter of research in Islamic studies and the history of medicine, who passed away in 1999. With this award,

"IRCICA expresses its profound respect to the memory of late Hakeem Abdul Hameed, an eminent physician and historian of medicine from India, whose services in support of Islamic culture transcended the borders of his country and his region. Abdul Hameed's contributions to the promotion of scholarship in Islamic studies lay primarily in his founding and directing a number of cultural and scholarly institutions.

IRCICA esteems Hakeem Abdul Hameed's exemplary deeds in founding Hamdard University with his own resources, turning his pharmaceutical business into a benevolent foundation and establishing many institutions in Delhi, such as the Indian Institute of Islamic Studies, the Institute of History of Medicine and Medical Research, Hamdard College of Pharmacy, Hamdard Tibbi College. All these institutions were merged and became Jamia Hamdard – Hamdard University – by a Government decree. He also founded the Hamdard National Foundation, Hamdard Education Society, Hamdard Institute of Historical Research, the Centre for South Asian Studies, the Indian Institute of Federal Studies, twenty-five institutions in all.

IRCICA also acknowledges Hakeem Abdul Hameed's contributions as an author and editor of books in the medical field and on such themes as the philosophy of medicine and science, Arab medicine and its relevance to modern medicine, exchanges between India and Central Asia in the field of medicine, and Ibn Sina's (Avicenna) works, including a major work prepared under his supervision, consisting of the critical edition of Ibn Sina's *Al-Qanun fi'l-Tibb* and its English translation in ten volumes. This award is a recognition of his support and patronage of Islamic studies, as a scholar and benefactor of institutions of learning. May God bless his soul."



*The award for Hakeem Abdul Hameed was received by his grand-son  
Mr. Asad Mueed*

Mr. Asad Mueed, grand-son of the Hakeem, had kindly accepted the invitation to attend the ceremony. Princess Wijdan Ali, member of IRCICA Governing Board, presented Mr. Mueed with the award plaque and certificate. Taking the floor on this occasion, Mr. Mueed said "I deem it a privilege to receive the award that your great organisation has chosen to confer posthumously on my late grand father Mr. Hakeem Abdul Hameed. He had packed ninety years of his life with great achievements. He was a multi faceted genius. He brought about a transformation in the Unani/herbal/Arab system of medicine. He modernised the system and gave it a new lease of life. He modernised herbal medicine and made it easily available with modern packaging. His firm, Hamdard Laboratories is the largest manufacturer of Unani medicine in the world; a fact recognised by the WHO. ... Hakeem Abdul Hameed came to be known as a seer and a visionary, who had the capacity to translate his vision into action. He also has to his credit outstanding success in the promotion of Urdu language which derived its vocabulary from Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Turkish. ... He wrote a number of books on Unani Medicine. Among his contributions as physician is the treatment of liver diseases and hypertension. It goes to his credit for starting a new discipline of elementology, which investigates the role of trace elements in health and disease. His contribution to education was recognised when Aligarh Muslim University, one of the premier educational universities of India, elected him as its Chancellor. Although he avoided publicity and symbolised the Indian percept of simply living, his services were recognised by a number of awards, such as Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Soviet Avicenna Award to name a few. On behalf of my late grandfather Mr. Hakeem Abdul Hameed, my father Mr. Abdul Mueed, other members of my well knit family and on behalf of our great country, I receive in all humility but with legitimate pride the award conferred by IRCICA."

### **The IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research**

The ceremony continued with the presentation of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research to the following four distinguished scholars: Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas from Malaysia, Founder-Director, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation, Malaysia, professor of Islamic thought and civilisation, International Islamic University Malaysia, Professor Emeritus Iraj Afshar from Iran, professor of history, specialist in the history of Iran, and scholar of library science and Islamic manuscripts, Professor Dr. Yusuf Ibish, professor of Islamic history and political studies, Director General, Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, London, Founder and Chairman, Board of Trustees, Islamic Cultural Center, Beirut, and Professor William A. Graham, Chairman, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilisations, and Master of Currier House, Harvard University, U.S.A.

Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas from Malaysia was acknowledged for his achievements outlined in the following citation:

"IRCICA acknowledges Professor Al-Attas for his achievements as a scholar, philosopher and educator in the fields of Malay language and culture and Islamic civilisation. IRCICA holds in honour Professor Al-Attas' academic career, having served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Malaya, where he formulated a method of using the Malay language as a medium of instruction. He was one of the founders of the National University of Malaysia in 1970 which he joined as Head of the Department of Malay Language and Literature and Dean of the Faculty of Arts. He founded the Institute of Malay Language, Literature and Culture at the National University and became its first Director. His continued to promote the use of Malay as an intellectual and philosophical language. He produced

innovative research on Malay language and culture, the history and origin of the modern Malay language, and set forth methods for the categorisation of Malay literature and periodisation of its history. He has publications on Sufism in the Malay world, including his commentaries on early Malay Sufism based on old manuscripts. Professor Al-Attas produced pioneering research on the Islamisation of the Malay-Indonesian region, which helped to promote the study of the history of Islam in the Malay world as a field of scholarly interest. IRCICA also holds in great esteem Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas' scholarship and research on Islamic civilisation. He has written and lectured on religion, metaphysics, philosophy of science, history, culture and literature at various universities in America, Europe, Russia. He wrote more than 25 books, gave more than 400 public lectures in Malaysia and abroad. At the request of the Ministry of Culture, he formulated and established the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation - ISTAC in 1987-88 and became its Director. He is compiling a philosophical lexicon of Malay technical terms derived from Arab-Islamic sources in manuscript form and preparing a large work on Islamic civilisation in the Malay world."



Dr. Abdulaziz Abdulla Al-Subaie, member of IRCICA Governing Board from the State of Qatar, presented the award plaque and certificate to Professor Seyed Naquib Al-Attas. Professor Attas's address of thanks was as follows: " We are now again at the crossroads of history, and awareness of Islamic identity is beginning to dawn in the consciousness of emergent Muslims. Only when this awareness comes to full awakening with the sun of knowledge will there emerge from among us men and women of spiritual and intellectual maturity and integrity who will be able to play their role with wisdom and justice in upholding the truth. Such men and women will know that they must return to the early masters of the religious and intellectual tradition of Islam, which was established upon the sacred foundation of the Holy Qur'an and the tradition of the Holy Prophet, in order to learn from the past and be able to equip themselves spiritually and intellectually for the future; they will realise that they must not simply appropriate and imitate what modern secular Western civilisation has created, but must regain, by exerting their own creative knowledge, will, and imagination, what is lost of the Muslims' purpose in life, their history, their values and virtues embodied in their sciences; for what is lost can never be regained by blind imitation and the raving of

slogans which deafen with the din of 'development'; they will discern that development must not involve a correspondence of Islam with the facts of contemporary events that have strayed far from the path of truth; and they will conceive and formulate their own definitions and conceptions of government and of the nature of development that will correspond with the purpose of Islam. Their emergence is conditional not merely upon physical struggle, but more upon the achievement of true knowledge, confidence and boldness of vision that is able to create great changes in history. It is we who must determine the course of our history, and not let others force their history upon us. ... The establishment of IRCICA as a subsidiary of the OIC is a significant event in the history of the contemporary Muslim world as it marks a resurgence of dedicated studies on the various aspects of Islamic arts and sciences. ... I consider my being conferred this Award of Excellence a recognition not only of my personal contribution, but also of that of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) that I founded, as well as that of my country and its people. ..."

Professor Iraj Afshar from Iran, received the award for his following qualities and services:

"IRCICA is honoured to acknowledge Professor Iraj Afshar for his personal and professional achievements as a scholar, educator and author in the fields of Iranian studies, Islamic history and library science. He trained numerous researchers on the history of Iran and the broader field of Islamic history, from the sixties until his retirement from Tehran University in 1979. He contributed to the development of library science, bibliographic and archival studies, through his various responsible posts and advisory services in Iran and abroad from the beginning of the sixties, as Director of the National Library of Iran and of Tehran University's Central Library and Documentation Center, as well as in international congresses on librarianship and as editor of numerous academic journals. IRCICA pays tribute to Professor Afshar's cultural activities and book editorship in Iranian studies, library science and manuscripts, his main fields of expertise which fruitfully intersected throughout his career. He was a researcher in Iranian studies for UNESCO projects including the major project on Orient and Occident (1966), and wrote the article on "Persian historiography" for Volume 5 of UNESCO's work on the various aspects of Islamic culture (1990). He is a member of the Board of Experts of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation (London). IRCICA is proud to acknowledge the distinguished Professor Emeritus Iraj Afshar for his contributions in the fields of Iranian studies, history, library science and Islamic manuscripts, for the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research."



*Prof. Iraj Afshar (in the middle) received his award from Prof. Helmy Mohammad, member of IRCICA Governing Board*

Professor Emeritus Abdul Hafez Helmy Mohammad from Egypt, member of IRCICA Governing Board, was invited to present the award plaque and certificate to Prof. Iraj Afshar. Prof. Afshar expressed his thanks and appreciation with the following words: "Firstly I congratulate IRCICA on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary filled with works and learned activities. Secondly, I sincerely and deeply thank for the affectionate favour and hospitality I received from IRCICA on the occasion of the award. This favour shows that scholarly studies conducted in Iran, specially in the Persian language has been a means of the advancement of knowledge for the scholars of other Islamic lands, as well as for the orientalist domain. Your kind encouragement, in fact, covers all the research works related to the Islamic periods of Iran, where such studies were started in 1915 by our few celebrated erudite and their scope reached to the present extent and are presented and published in Iran and other countries. Whatever I have done, has been taken from the results of the works of pioneers in this field, around the Haft Eqlim [the seven regions]. During fifty years of my studentship, the majority of my efforts were directed towards compiling academic bibliographies, cataloguing the Islamic manuscripts and editing the unedited sources of classical Persian texts and historical documents related to Islamic periods. As such, it has had similarity and parity with the works and interest of IRCICA during its twenty years of life devoted to the development of knowledge and humanities. I wholeheartedly thank you once again."

Then, the Award for Excellence in Research was presented to Professor Dr. Yusuf Ibish. His son Mr. Hussein Ibish received the award on his behalf as he was not able to attend due to his health condition. The citation was as follows:

"IRCICA is honoured to acknowledge Professor Yusuf Hussein Ibish for his personal and professional achievements as an educator, historian and author in the field of Islamic history, philosophy and political science. He taught Islamic history, religion and ethics and political history ever since in major universities, including the American University of Beirut, the University of Wisconsin, the American University in Washington, D.C. and the University of Cambridge, Mass., lectured throughout the Muslim world, Western Europe, North and Central America, India and Africa. He contributed to international cooperation and the promotion of research in cultural, academic and educational fields through his



*Prof. Yusuf Ibish's son Mr. Hussein Ibish received the award presented by Dr. Saad Al-Rashid, member of IRCICA Governing Board.*

active engagement and responsibilities in the organisation of international congresses and management of research projects. He played a major role in the planning and implementation of The World of Islam Festival in London, in 1976, contributed as the organiser of the First Conference on the Hajj at King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah, 1977, was a member of the Steering Committee of the Hajj Research Center in Mecca and trustee of the Iranian Academy of Philosophy in Tehran. He is also the trustee of the Von Krammer Foundation in Basel, the Founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Islamic Cultural Center in Beirut, and Director General and member of the Board of Experts of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation (London).

Professor Ibish published many books on Islamic history, history of thought, political philosophy and on archival sources, including chronologies of Arab political documents, and some 92 articles in related fields. He undertook projects to establish book collections, gather and disseminate publications in his fields of interest across countries. In this regard, IRCICA recalls with appreciation Prof. Ibish's donating his personal library collection to IRCICA for the use of generations of researchers in Islamic studies."

Dr. Saad bin Abdul Aziz Al-Rashid, member of IRCICA Governing Board from Saudi Arabia, presented the award to his son Mr. Hussein Ibish. On behalf of his father, Mr. Hussain Ibish expressed his thanks for the honour given by this award.

Finally, Professor William A. Graham was presented the award. The citation read as follows: "IRCICA appreciates Professor Graham's accomplishments as an authority on the comparative study of religions and would like to underline especially his research, teaching and publications on Islam, its fundamental texts and philosophy. Professor Graham's writings and teaching contributed in deepening the understanding of Islam and its sources particularly by researchers and students of the Western world.

Professor Graham's served in Harvard committees on the study of religion, African studies, Asian and Altaic studies. He was the director of the Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies, among others, which culminated in 1997 in his assuming the chairmanship of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilisations. IRCICA pays tribute to Professor Graham's distinguished efforts in publishing a number of books and articles on the primary sources of Islam: the Quran, the Hadith, their understanding, their interpretation in and governance of the lives of societies in different regional and



*Prof. Graham (in the middle) received his award presented by Prof. Günsel Renda, member of IRCICA Governing Board*

historical contexts. IRCICA believes that Prof. Graham's studies and publications represent an excellent contribution towards promoting mutual recognition between peoples of different religions and cultures through objective and authoritative scholarly research. Thus, IRCICA is proud to acknowledge Professor William A. Graham, esteemed scholar, educator and author in the field of the history of religion and Islamic studies, for the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research".

Professor William Graham received the plaque and certificate from Prof. Dr. Günsel Renda, member of IRCICA Governing Board from Turkey. Professor Graham said "I am both deeply humbled and deeply honoured by this award - humbled because there are many more deserving scholars than I; and honoured because I, as a non-Muslim who has devoted most of his life to the study and teaching of Islamic religion, history, and culture, can imagine no greater recognition than that conferred by a Muslim scholarly institution as estimable as IRCICA. I spend most of my teaching time trying to communicate understanding of Islamic tradition to American students, non-Muslim and Muslim alike. Tonight, as a small expression of my gratitude to all of you, I would instead like to share one of the things that Islam has taught me. For this I want to draw on the Qur'an itself. Everyone knows, but few have stressed sufficiently, how primary to the Qur'an's message is its call to heed God's "âyat" -- in history, in the world around us, and in the Qur'an itself. This call to cognizance of God's 'signs' is a theme found in dozens of so-called "âyat" passages, but nowhere more succinctly expressed than in the last "âyat" of Surat Yusuf, which begins as "Truly, in their stories [those of previous messengers] has been a signal lesson for persons of understanding". Here I translate "ibrah" as 'signal lesson' because it summarizes neatly the fundamental character of the Qur'an as the book of God's "signs", His "âyat". It evokes the many associations of its root, "a-ba-ra", especially those of warning - or example-giving and those of movement across, traversing, and hence comprehension. For me, these associations are adroitly brought together in a non-Qur'anic Arabic saying that plays on both senses of "abara": "O God, let us be of those who take warning/example from this world and do not [simply] pass through it". This expresses well a fundamental Qur'anic and Islamic idea: attentiveness to God's signs makes our earthly passage more than merely a biological reality. This basic message has been preserved by Muslims' faithful transmission of the Qur'anic "âyat" and elaborated in Muslim interpretation of them over the centuries. It is in a way what the careful transmission of Islamic tradition is all about: preserving and transmitting God's "âyat" and their interpretation in order to make them an enduring "ibrah" for "uli'l-albâb" in each new generation. Thus I thank you both for this honour and also for all such "ibar", or "signal lessons" that I have and will, inshâ'Allâh, continue to take from the study of Islam."



*The recipients of the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship (at left) and of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research (at right)*

## PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMAS IN CALLIGRAPHIC ARTS

Within the framework of its activities in the field of Islamic arts, IRCICA organises and coordinates training courses for artists from around the world who wish to upgrade their skills in classical and decorative arts such as calligraphy, gilding, marbled paper, binding, etc. In general, these courses are scheduled according to the trainees' needs and conditions: some students are taught by masters of these arts in Istanbul for a couple of months each, while those unable to stay continue their education by correspondence with their teacher. Trainees in calligraphy are taught the various writing styles. A number of artists from various countries were offered such training during the 1990s: one calligrapher from Algeria, one from Bosnia and Herzegovina, one from Japan, one from the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, four from Morocco, one from Syria, one from Tunisia, nine from Turkey, and one from the U.S.A. Successful trainees were given diplomas at ceremonies and press conferences convened on those occasions. The opening of the Sixteenth Session of IRCICA Governing Board on 26 October 2000 was another such occasion. During the opening ceremony, diplomas were presented to five calligraphers from Japan, Morocco and Turkey. The addresses delivered by Director General Prof. Ihsanoğlu and the Governing Board's Vice-Chairman Prof. Abdul Hafiz Helmy outlined IRCICA's activities in the various fields of its mandate including that of arts. The ceremony was enhanced by the presence of personalities from scholarly circles and high officials from the Member States who had attended the twentieth anniversary commemoration ceremony and presentation of the IRCICA Awards the day before, on 25 October.





## THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF IRCICA GOVERNING BOARD HELD IN ISTANBUL

The Governing Board of IRCICA held its Sixteenth Session at the Centre's headquarters in Yıldız Palace, on 26-27 October 2000, coinciding with the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of IRCICA. This was the Board's first meeting with its new members who were elected by the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference (June 2000) for the fifth term. The following members participated in the session: Princess Wijdan Ali (Jordan), Prof. Dr. Günsel Renda (Turkey), Sheikh Selman Al-Sabah Al-Selman Al-Sabah (Kuwait), Prof. Dr. Abdul Hafiz Helmy Mohammed, Vice-Chairman (Egypt), Dr. Abdulaziz bin Abdullah Torki Al-Subaie (Qatar), Dr. Saad bin Abdul Aziz Al Rashid (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Ahmed Tazi, Director for Coordination and Deputy Director of Cabinet representing the Secretary General of the OIC, and IRCICA Director General Prof. Ihsanoğlu. Mr. Khaled Sayer Alotaibi, Director of the Religious Information Department, Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, was also present as a guest. Mr. Ali Al-Qayim from Syria expressed regrets, and the representatives of Pakistan and Nigeria were absent pending their appointment. The following members of IRCICA's Executive Committee also attended the session: Ms. Zeynep Durukal, Prof. Amir Pasic, Mr. Mohammed Tamimi, Dr. Nazih Maarouf, Dr. Halit Eren, Mr. Erol Öcalır, Mr. Acar Tanlak, and Ms. Turuncan Kevser.

An opening ceremony was held on 26 October in the Centre's conference hall, the day after the anniversary commemoration. The audience comprised the IRCICA Awards recipients, guests from the diplomatic corps, the academic, cultural and artistic circles and the press. IRCICA was also honoured by the presence, in this session as well as in the anniversary commemoration of the preceding day, of the following distinguished officials from Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Malaysia, where an IRCICA Week was held in June 2000: Dato Abdul Rahim Abu Bakar, Chairman of the Board of DBP; Mr. Abu Bakar Mohamad, Deputy Director General, and Mrs. Rohani Bt. Zainal Abidin, Director of Publishing, DBP.

The ceremony program included the presentation of calligraphy diplomas (*ijaza*) to calligraphers who have newly completed training courses organised by the Centre. An exhibition of their works was arranged in the same hall. During this ceremony, the Centre also showed the audience a short documentary film on its activities of the past twenty years.

Prof. Ihsanoğlu gave the welcoming address. Evoking the ceremony of the Centre's twentieth anniversary, he said that was another memorable event in the history of the Centre that illustrated its advanced stage of development and mirrored its glowing image in the circles concerned. He then outlined the Centre's activities in the field of arts, in particular the training programs for calligraphy through which nineteen calligraphy diplomas were given until that day inclusive, to calligraphers from (in chronological order) the U.S.A., Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Tunisia, Syria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Japan.

Prof. Helmy Mohammed, Vice-Chairman of the Board, greeted the participants and gave an elaborate review of the Centre's activities in the various fields of its mandate. He commended the achievements that were made possible thanks to the dedication and commitment of the Director General and his colleagues and congratulated the Centre on its twentieth anniversary. Mr. Ahmed Tazi delivered an address on behalf of the Secretary General of the OIC, in which he expressed his thanks for the efforts deployed by the staff of the Centre, in particular, Prof. Ihsanoğlu. He said that as a subsidiary of the OIC, the Centre assists the OIC Secretary General in the implementation of the resolutions of the Islamic

Summit Conferences and Islamic Conferences of Foreign Ministers related to culture, arts and history. Mr. Tazi stated that "the Centre had performed great achievements thanks once again to the help of the Republic of Turkey and the care it has always shown to this prestigious Centre, and of course, to the professionalism of all its officials."

The Board held its first working session the same day. Princess Wijdan Ali from Jordan was elected Chairperson, following the end of the term of Ambassador Dr. Omar Jah (Gambia). The Director General presented the activity report of the Centre relating to the year 1999-2000 and its ongoing work program for 2000-2001. The Board members noted that after the merger of the International Commission for the Preservation of Islamic Cultural Heritage (ICPICH) with IRCICA, the tasks and activities of the Commission had been incorporated into the Centre's work program starting from the activity year 2000-2001. The Director General also briefed the members on the main achievements of the Centre realised since the last meeting of the Board, including the organisation of the international symposium on Islamic Civilisation in the Balkans in Bulgaria, in April 2000, in cooperation with several Bulgarian academic institutions and ISAR Foundation, as well as the Centre's participation in conferences and meetings of the OIC, the Mostar 2004 workshops held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the new publications in the fields of the history of Muslim nations and the history of science. The Board adopted the Centre's report and noted with appreciation that it had implemented many projects in cooperation with cultural and scholarly institutions of various countries. The Board underlined the need to foster relations between the Centre and the focal points in the Member States, in particular the Ministries of Culture, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the libraries. Taking into consideration that the Centre successfully reconstructed and restored Islamic monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Board members recommended that the Centre also gives care and attention to the Islamic sites in Al-Quds al-Sharif and investigates the possibility of undertaking some restoration projects in that area within the limits of its capacities. The Board requested the Centre to participate actively in the implementation of the project initiated by the OIC for the preparation of a draft Universal Call for Dialogue Between Civilisations in conformity with the guidelines and principles contained in the Tehran Declaration on the Dialogue of Civilisations. Within the framework of its recommendations on future projects, the Board requested the Centre to prepare a research work or a symposium to cover the theme of the interior decoration and furnishing of traditional houses in Muslim countries which is one aspect of Islamic culture that eloquently mirrors its heritage.

## THE NINTH ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE CONVENED IN DOHA, QATAR

The Ninth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference was held in Doha, Qatar, on 12-13 November 2000. Along with the Member States of the OIC, the following States, Muslim communities, international and regional organisations attended the conference as observers: Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and Thailand; the Turkish Muslim Community of Cyprus and the Moro National Liberation Front; the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of African Unity, the Economic Cooperation Organisation and the Union of the OIC Member States Councils. The following states and organisations were invitees: Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, the Arab Maghreb Union, various UN agencies, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Committee of the Red Cross, among others.

The Ninth Islamic Summit Conference was opened by President Sayed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Chairman of the Eighth Islamic Summit. In his statement, President Khatami commended the sacrifices of the heroic Palestinian people in their fight against the occupation forces, calling on the OIC to take a unified measure to support Palestine, which he considered as a historical, cultural and social necessity. After having referred to a number of other major political issues on the conference agenda, President Khatami underlined that the Islamic nations have the capacity to respond to the requirements of modern social life provided they adopt a modern vision and succeed in assessing their rich civilisational past and their existing resources. He commended the decision of the UN to endorse the initiative for dialogue among civilisations as a new paradigm in international relations that brings out the effective role of the Organisation.

Then, H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, was unanimously elected Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference. The Chairman delivered an address referring to the serious conditions in which the session was being held, comparing them to those at the origin of the creation of the OIC thirty years ago, with special reference to the situation of Al-Quds and Palestine. He called for consideration to be given to developments and general orientations emanating from the study of the issues by the conference in order to avoid the wasting or squandering of resources and also strive for the achievement of peace, which is at the basis of all forms of development sought by Muslim societies. His Highness spoke at length of the issue of development in Islamic countries, pointing to the grounds and practical steps which all States need to make available whether individually or in their capacity as members of the OIC so as to achieve economic integration. Then, H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC, presented an address consisting of a general report on the major activities of the Organisation. He put forth his vision concerning the ways and means to achieve further Islamic solidarity in the political field and to reinforce economic, cultural and social cooperation among the Member States.

The conference adopted the motto *Peace and Development "Al Aqsa Intifada"* for its current session. The decisions taken by the Summit Conference on matters of politics and especially its comprehensive resolution on the question of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict were widely disseminated by the international media during and after the session. The conference also took resolutions on the situation of the following countries: Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Somalia, Chechnya; the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, the aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan, the situation in Cyprus, among other country-specific issues. It also took up the questions of disarmament, anti-personnel mines, safeguarding the security of Islamic States and consultation and solidarity between them, the Muslim world and challenges of globalisation, the protection of the rights of Muslim communities and minorities in non-member States with particular focus on the situation of Muslims in Southern Philippines, the situation of the Turkish Muslim minority in Western Thrace, and the Muslim minority in Myanmar. The Summit Conference took a number of resolutions on various issues relating to information and communication, economic issues, science and technology, and cultural affairs. Some of the subjects dealt with in the cultural field were: the dialogue of civilisations, education and training of the Muslim youth, the woman and her role in the development of Muslim society, assistance to the Muslim communities in Kosovo and Sanjak, the teaching of the history and geography of Palestine, twinning of Palestinian universities in occupied territories with Member States' universities, among others. The Summit also took resolutions on the activities of the subsidiary organs, specialised and affiliated institutions of the OIC and the Islamic universities sponsored by the OIC (the Islamic Universities of Niger, Uganda, Malaysia and Bangladesh).

In the operational paragraphs of its resolution no.33/9-C (IS), the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference

1. expresses its thanks and appreciation to H.H. Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qassimi, Ruler of Sharjah and member of the Supreme Council of the State of the U.A.E., for kindly financing the rebuilding of the Neziraga Mosque in Mostar and for extending continuous moral and material support to the Centre,
2. decides to commission IRCICA to attach the name of His Royal Highness Prince Faisal bin Fahd bin Abdul Aziz to an important sector of its future activities in the field of Islamic heritage, in appreciation of His Highness's unflagging support during the chairmanship of ICPICH; to issue a commemorative medal or plate on this occasion, invite the son of the deceased, H.R.H. Prince Nawaf bin Faisal bin Fahd, to a ceremony and present him with this medal or plate,
3. expresses its thanks and appreciation to H.E. President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia, for his patronage and Tunisia's hosting the "First International Seminar on Traditional Carpets and Kilims in the Muslim World" (Tunis, 19-25 November 1999) organised in cooperation with the National Handicrafts Office of Tunisia affiliated with the Ministry of Tourism, Handicrafts and Leisure, and also commends the excellent efficient organisation of this seminar,
4. expresses thanks and appreciation to the Government of Malaysia for sponsoring the ceremony to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Centre at the Academy of Language and Literature in Kuala Lumpur on 24 June 2000, on the occasion of the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, which H.E. the Foreign Minister of Malaysia graced with his presence. It also expresses thanks and appreciation for the signing of a framework agreement on cooperation between the Centre and the Academy,
5. congratulates the Centre on winning the World Prize for the Book of the Year for 1999 granted by the Islamic Republic of Iran and expresses thanks and appreciation to H.E. Sayed Mohammad Khatami for presenting this award in person. Also congratulates the Centre on winning the Turkish Union of Writers' Prize in Book Publishing for 2000 and on the recent awarding of the Medal of Distinguished State Service to the Centre's Director General by H.E. the President of the Republic of Turkey,
6. congratulates the Centre on organising an International Symposium on "Islamic Civilisation in the Balkans" in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 21-23 April 2000, in cooperation with a number of Bulgarian academic institutions and the ISAR Waqf in Istanbul
7. commends also the organisation of a series of successful international workshops on "Architectural Heritage Today" in Bosnia and Herzegovina which continued through the Sixth Workshop held in Mostar on 14-28 July 2000,
8. welcomes the Centre's project to organise an International Symposium on "Islamic Civilisation in the Volga-Ural Region" in Kazan, capital of Tatarstan, in June 2001,
9. expresses its thanks and appreciation to the host country (the Republic of Turkey) and to the other Member States, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the voluntary material and moral support they are extending to the Centre, thus enabling it to carry out its tasks in a satisfactory manner,
10. expresses its thanks to the Member States which regularly pay their contributions to the budget of the Centre and calls upon the other countries to follow their example and settle their arrears,
11. requests the Secretary General to follow-up this matter and submit a report thereon to the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference.

## **The Minister of Awqaf of Qatar received the Centre's delegation**

H.E. Mr. Ahmed bin Abdallah Al-Mirri, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of the State of Qatar, received IRCICA's delegation in his office at the Ministry. Mr. Khalifa bin Jasim Al-Kawari, Director of Islamic Affairs, was also present. The constructive talks held during this meeting focused on how to promote cooperation between the Ministry and its affiliated institutions on one hand and IRCICA on the other. IRCICA's Director General invited H.E. the Minister to visit the Centre at their earliest convenience to see the activities on the spot; Mr. Al-Mirri expressed pleasure at this invitation and promised to pay a visit to IRCICA's headquarters at the first opportunity.

The Centre's delegation also visited the state radio for the recording of a cultural program that was going to be broadcast in two parts to a wide audience. It was related to subjects concerning Islamic culture and Islamic studies in general, and, the Centre's activities aimed at preserving and rebuilding cultural heritage assets in particular. IRCICA's delegation also visited Al-Jazira Space Channel to meet Assistant Director General Mr. Abdallah Ibrahim Al-Haj and his colleagues and discuss possibilities of cooperation between the two bodies.

## **THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE OIC STANDING COMMITTEE FOR INFORMATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS (COMIAC) Proceedings, Resolutions**

The OIC's Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) held its sixth session on 25-26 October 2000. COMIAC is one of the three standing committees which were established in 1981 by decision of the Third Islamic Summit Conference held in Mecca and Taif, Saudi Arabia. Each of these committees is chaired by the President of a Member State. COMIAC is chaired by the President of the Republic of Senegal, COMCEC (the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation) by the President of the Republic of Turkey, and COMSTECH (the Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation) by the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. COMIAC holds regular sessions once every three years.

The sixth session took place in Dakar, capital city of Senegal, upon the invitation of H.E. President Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal. President Wade opened the session and delivered an elaborate address in which he expressed his personal pleasure for participating in this session that aimed to revive the Islamic heritage with its cultural and communication dimensions. He said that the session was held at a time when, thanks to their respective experiences, all the Member States are capable of making an effective evaluation of the progress achieved in the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the previous sessions approved by COMIAC at its fifth session held in 1996 in Dakar. Nevertheless, said the President, much remains to be done in order to realise the Islamic cyber space into a concrete reality with a performance that could inform the rest of the world about the fundamental values of Islam and the Muslim world thanks to its immense communication and dissemination potential. The President stressed the importance of deliberating together so as to identify the difficulties and obstacles encountered and find the most appropriate ways and means of overcoming them practically. President Wade also said that by its commitment in making the Islamic cyber space a reality, the Muslim world is at the same time helping to enhance the dynamism of the OIC, strengthen understanding between peoples and civilisations and enrich dialogue between cultures.

The opening session heard the address of H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki, Secretary General of the OIC, delivered by Assistant Secretary General H.E. Ambassador Qassim al-Masri, in which the Secretary General lauded the great attention paid by H.E. President Abdoulaye Wade to the Standing Committee and the task entrusted to it, and the care accorded by the Government of Senegal to the OIC activities. In his address read by Amb. Al-Masri, H.E. Dr. Laraki reviewed the various activities undertaken by COMIAC in the information, cultural, scientific and social fields, and the efforts made by the OIC General Secretariat towards implementation of the resolutions issued by the different sessions of the Committee and by other meetings concerned with these fields, to enable the Member States to keep abreast of the scientific and technological developments in an era when globalisation and information prevail.

The Minister of Information of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Dr. Fouad A. Al-Farsi gave an address in which he referred to the Millennium Summit held at UN headquarters in New York last September and said that globalisation ought to enrich cultural communication and rapprochement among peoples and nations as well as widening the horizons of cooperation among them. Then, the Committee heard the address of H.E. Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Chairman of the Eighth Islamic Summit Conference (1997), read by the representative of Iran, pointing out that the sponsors of cultural and information institutions ought to take into consideration the necessity of deepening the insight into the significance and close inter-relation of culture and communications. The address underlined the need of adopting the strategies to reintroduce the real picture of Islam and its lofty teachings promoting the culture of dialogue and discussion, stressing solidarity, employing the latest communication technology, practicing objectivity, coupled with innovation, focusing on the family and its related issues as the basic unit of social interactions, and training of the broadcasting, news agencies and print media staff as well as those in the cultural, artistic and higher education centres.

The Sixth Session of COMIAC, chaired by H.E. Mamadou Diop Decroix, Minister of Culture and Communication of Senegal, considered the subjects, projects and documents on its agenda, which can be grouped under the following headings: in the field of information, the Information Strategy for Islamic States and its implementation mechanisms, the Information Plan and problems of its financing, the Islamic Code of Ethics, the Islamic Program for the Development of Information and Communications, the Islamic Information and Cyber Space (formerly called the Islamvision project), Islamic information and the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, reducing the tariffs applicable to the media and the conclusion of an Islamic agreement in this regard, setting up an expert committee for new radio and television technologies, the activities of the Islamic States Broadcasting Organisation (ISBO) and the International Islamic News Agency (IINA), support for Palestine's information organs and institutions, and the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the occupied Palestinian territories; in the field of culture, the Committee covered a number of issues including inter-cultural dialogue, education, social development, the activities of the OIC's subsidiaries and specialised institutions, and cultural issues relating to Al-Quds and Palestine. The Committee requested the Member States to distribute anew the Islamic Ethics Information Code of Conduct to their journalists and media and to abide by the said code as a basic reference in the performance of their work. It also invited the Member States to encourage their concerned information institutions to participate in the activities of the Coordination Committee (news and programs) among satellite channels in Member States and to cooperate in this regard with ISBO. The Member States were also invited to take interest in producing television and radio documentary programs to make themselves known and to send such programs to ISBO for their distribution to the Member States. Moreover, the COMIAC session urged the Member

States to take the appropriate measures to strengthen cooperation between national and regional news agencies and IINA. Relating to cultural issues, the session commended the UN General Assembly resolution designating the year 2001 as the UN Year for Dialogue Among Civilisations and expressed the importance of documents prepared by the General Secretariat for this purpose, particularly the Global Agenda for Dialogue Among Civilisations and the executive work program. Reviewing the activities of the OIC's subsidiaries, the Committee took note with appreciation of the activity report submitted by IRCICA which covers its studies in various fields, its efforts to safeguard cultural heritage, and its contributions to projecting a true image of Islam which helps to boost the efforts towards establishing dialogue among civilisations.

In the operational paragraphs of its resolution no. 25/6-C concerning IRCICA, the COMIAC commended the efforts of the Centre "as reflected in its pioneering accomplishments and its activities aimed at meeting the needs of the Muslim world and keeping pace with international developments in the field of culture and Islamic heritage in the optimal way, thus warranting satisfaction with and appreciation of the efforts exerted in this respect". The session expressed its pleasure and pride for the passage of twenty years since the establishment of the Centre and its appreciation to the Republic of Turkey represented by its President H.E. Ahmet Necdet Sezer for having hosted the ceremony marking this event. It also expressed its appreciation for the presentation of the third group of the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research, and also for the institution of the IRCICA Award for Patronage in the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Scholarship which was presented to leading figures who contributed in this field in an extraordinary way. The Committee also expresses its thanks and appreciation to H.H. Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Ruler of Sharjah and member of the Supreme Council, State of the United Arab Emirates, for financing the rebuilding of Neziraga Mosque in Mostar city, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The session also expressed thanks and appreciation to H.E. President Zine El-Abidine ben Ali, President of Tunisia, for his patronage and Tunisia's hosting of the first international seminar on "Traditional Carpets and Kilims in the Muslim World" held in Tunis in 1999. It also expressed thanks and appreciation to the Government of Malaysia for sponsoring the ceremony to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of IRCICA at the Academy of Malay Language and Literature in Kuala Lumpur, on 24 June 2000, on the occasion of the Twenty-seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, which H.E. the Foreign Minister of Malaysia graced with his presence. The COMIAC congratulated the Centre on winning the Award for the Book of the Year 1999 granted by the Islamic Republic of Iran and expressed thanks and appreciation to H.E. Sayed Mohammad Khatami for presenting this award in person. It also congratulated the Centre on winning the Publication Award of the Turkish Union of Writers 2000, and on the recent awarding of the Distinguished State Service Medal to the Centre's Director General by H.E. the President of the Republic of Turkey. The session took note of the Centre's symposia and seminars organised in the fields of history, architectural preservation and other areas of its mandate, and requested the Centre to continue providing active assistance to the OIC's project aimed at formulating a Draft Universal Declaration on Dialogue Among Civilisations in accordance with the guidelines and principles stated in the Tehran Declaration on Dialogue Among Civilisations which was approved by the Twenty-sixth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 1999).



