

SILVER JUBILEE OF ASSOCIATION
OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

At Herndon

1996

PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD



SILVER JUBILEE OF ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

By Senator Professor Khurshid Ahmad

I am delighted to learn that on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists, a special Souvenir is being produced under the leadership of my brother and colleague Prof Dr Mushtaqur Rahman. The souvenir would see the light of the day on the occasion of the Annual Conference of the Association being held at Herndon on October 25-27,1996.

I take this opportunity to thank Allah S.W.T. for enabling some of the Muslim Social Scientists, who had been engaged in teaching research or education in the USA in the early 1970's, to organize themselves into a professional forum - The Association of Muslim Social Scientists. The Association has, ever since, become a rallying point for creative intellectual activity by Muslim social scientists, not only in the USA and Canada, but almost the entire world. The credit goes to those pioneering intellectuals, who while positively responding to the challenge of Western scholarship, have successfully made a seminal effort towards developing, on the one hand a clique of Western social thought from an Islamic perspective, and on the other, re-construction of Islamic socio-economic thought by applying Islamic and contemporary methodologies. Their approach is authentic, as they are trying to look upon the contemporary problems by drawing upon the fountain-head of the Quran and Sunnah. But their approach is also modern as they are aware of the contemporary trends of thought and methodologies and are trying to seek Islamic solutions to present day problems.

When I look back into the long vista of a quarter of a century, my heart is filled with gratitude to Allah S.W.T. for enabling these Muslim intellectuals to make a positive contribution towards developing Islamic socio-economic thought. I have no reservation in submitting that the Muslim scholars, Ulemas, legists and social reformers have creatively enriched Islamic thought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But the last twenty five years are distinct because during this period the thread of intellectual exercise was picked up by Muslim social scientists from the place upto which it was raised by the Ulema, to begin a new chapter to Muslim scholarship by developing and expressing Islamic ideals, principles, values in the language and idiom of contemporary social sciences. The annual conferences of the AMSS have been important platforms for the presentation of these thoughts and for developing personal contact and dialogue between Muslim scholars. The Association has become a very healthy forum for reflection, discussion and debate. These intellectual efforts have gradually attained greater sophistication with the result that now Islamic social disciplines are beginning to be accepted in the academic circles of the world as representing a new stream of thought, capable of leading towards the emergence of a new intellectual paradigm.

The journal of the Association (The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences) has also played a very important role in furthering contemporary Muslim thought. While we all are aware that the Muslim intellectuals have still a very long way to go, the contributions made during the last twenty five years do constitute a historic milestone. We can further strengthen this effort by still greater commitment to the Islamic values and ideals and by pursuing sustained and painstaking research to seek Islamic answers to some of the complex problems that confront us as Muslim intellectual, as also the wider intellectual community. It is only through uninterrupted intellectual effort, research and discussion that we can move towards a glorious future to have our tryst with destiny.

On this occasion, while I share my contentment on what has been achieved, I would also like to suggest that the challenge that besets us is grave and multi-dimensional and calls for even greater efforts in the future. I pray Allah S.W.T. to bless these efforts and I hope the Muslim Social Scientists will succeed in blazing a new trail in human thought, enabling the mankind to enter the new millennium in such a position that a truly Just World Order could be established and peace, tranquility, moral excellence and spiritual bliss achieved for the entire human race. The Islamic Ummah is vested with a great responsibility in this respect and it is our duty as Muslim intellectuals and social scientists to play our role in ushering in a new era for mankind.

PROF KHURSHID AHMAD