



WORLD CONGRESS
OF MUSLIM PHILANTHROPISTS

The 2nd World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists

“Conventional to Strategic: A New Paradigm in Giving”

March 22-23, 2009 • Abu Dhabi, UAE

Preliminary Report



Al Faleh Group
for Educational
& Academic Services

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Summary:

On March 22 and 23, 2009, the World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists (WCMP), with the support of Islamic Development Bank, Emirates Foundation and Al-Faleh Group, held its second international conference under the theme of “*Conventional to Strategic: A New Paradigm in Giving*”.

The conference drew a diverse gathering of world leaders, international donor agencies, foundations, philanthropists and researchers from over 20 countries, with the hope that enhanced cooperation between different philanthropies through strategic partnerships will add profound value to their output. The conference served as a forum to share innovative policies and practices, encouraged promising new philanthropic initiatives, and featured cutting-edge research and practical tools designed to enhance philanthropic performance and impact. The overall impact of this conference will be a more informed and professional workforce in the field; increased collaboration across institutions and individuals; and new philanthropic efforts that improve and strengthen the regional and global community.

This report provides a broad overview of the conference, highlighting recent achievements and key issues that emerged from the meeting. A special meeting took place among the representatives of Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), and World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists (WCMP). A brief summary of this special meeting is also provided in this report. The conference proceedings will be available within 8-12 weeks.

Highlights:

- ❖ Representatives of leading Muslim philanthropic institutions and other major regional or international organizations met one another, during and on the sidelines of the conference. This interaction enabled excellent opportunities for bridge building between participants and accordingly a series of high-level negotiations took place that are likely to lead to future partnerships. This development alone

indicates a strategic shift that is emerging in Muslim giving in the era of globalization.

- ❖ The conference featured several key figures such as OIC Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Mr. Atta El-Manane Bakhit, HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, the Muslim world icon Mr. Amr Khaled, UAE Economy Minister Shiekha Lubna Al Qasimi, UK Justice Minister Shahid Malik, UN Special Envoy Mr. Ray Chambers, Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh Al-Thani of Qatar, and internationally renowned Senegalese musician and philanthropist Mr. Youssou N'Dour.
- ❖ A pre-congress high-level dinner was organized with a particular focus on MDGs and Malaria. The dinner was attended by number of UAE based government officials, ambassadors of Muslim states, and heads of foundations and corporations. The keynote address was delivered by former UK Prime Minister Mr. Tony Blair who also is the Middle East envoy working on behalf of the US, Russia, the UN and the EU
- ❖ The conference featured a tight schedule of presentations by world-renowned experts in economy, education, corporate social responsibility, community service and global challenges such as poverty, disease, environmental degradation and conflict. Included were workshops on secure-giving, accountability and outcome measurement of the impact of giving. The participants contributed to the vibrant debates around global challenges, accountability, and partnership building.
- ❖ The conference carefully examined the current economic situation's effect on Muslim philanthropy, and looked at ways that can be found to deal with the challenges we face. The need for foundations to continue to fund social- and third-sector activity was stressed. The speakers underlined the harmful effect that economic troubles have on the poorest members of our societies, but raised the encouraging fact that as need increases during a recession so does giving. It was emphasized that in every recession of the recent history the amount of giving was actually increased. Therefore, instead of cutting social funding, the onus should be put on spending more efficiently, creating strategic partnerships, and reducing non-developmental spending.
- ❖ The WCMP also succeeded in launching the *Academy of Philanthropy* that will offer donor education with an emphasis on a more strategic and accountable giving. The

Academy through its program *“Building Leaders for Change”* will engage young board members and foundation executives into a short but comprehensive multi-disciplinary education-cum-training module. The Academy will also partner with Human Development Foundation to establish *“Human Development Institute”* that will enhance governance, management and program service delivery relevant to human development with special understanding of the needs of the Islamic world.

- ❖ The two-day long conference covered a vast array of topics relating to the theme of the conference *“Conventional to Strategic: A New Paradigm in Giving”*. Some of the key findings are shared here:
 - Multiple paradigm shifts are taking place in the arena of global philanthropy that needs to be followed. a) NGOs are positioning themselves as a means for social investment, not charity; corporate philanthropy is seen as a value added for corporations. b) Collaboration across groups is increasing. c) Need for the intermediaries to recommend charities and rank them for effectiveness is increasing. d) More emphasis is being given on exit strategies. e) Donors want sustainable solutions that lead to self-reliance and do not create long-term dependence. f) Bridging the digital divide is now taken seriously.
 - It is essential to establish educational institutions that strengthen Islamic Scholarship particularly in the West.
 - Youth engagement in community service, the economic wellbeing of depressed Muslim societies, and resolving international conflicts at policy level are a must to subside the influence of extremisms.
 - Women have a special role to play in providing leadership for the cause of philanthropy thus programs that facilitate this shift should be funded on priority.
 - Malaria is exploding in the Muslim world. Over 40% of Malaria victims in Africa are in Muslim states. Malaria is not just a health problem – it stuns the overall growth and development of societies. Malaria and other lethal diseases such as hepatitis, HIV and Tuberculosis particularly in Muslim states can be best addressed through joint efforts of Muslim philanthropies and international agencies that have attained expertise in these specific fields.
 - While an emphasis on primary education remains significant, there is an increasing need to expand access to higher education that is both world class and includes the sensibilities of appropriate technologies. As these priorities are

- realized, it is important to conduct and include research that addresses the cultural requirements unique to the Muslim world.
- A recent McKinsey & Company report states that philanthropy in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is approximately a \$15-20 billion sector, making GCC among the most generous regions in the world. However, this generosity is challenged by the fact that less than \$1-2 billion is actually institutionalized. When significant amounts of available funding is not responsibly planned for, collected or distributed by appropriate organizations, it is often simply given away through informal channels without the benefit of measureable impact. Investing in nonprofit organizations to build capacity for achieving and reporting real impacts is one possibility for collaboration.
 - The growth and development of civil society in the Muslim world has led to new challenges and new opportunities. There are national policies, practices and regulations governing the development and operations of NGOs. Since these regulations are not consistently applied, international conflicts have had an adverse fiscal impact on giving to Muslim institutions because of a concern over links to terrorism. Consequently, philanthropic organizations are charged with the onerous task of ensuring that NGOs receiving their support are not linked to terrorism in any way. Philanthropies are also charged with the responsibility to ensure that their grants and support go to worthy, well managed, and effective organizations that serve a public purpose. To address this need, WCMP invites philanthropists to partner in establishing a clearinghouse named as “Secure Giving”. This comprehensive system will inform philanthropies across the world about the operation, structure, and standing of participating charities.
 - Rapidly shifting social expectations underscores the importance of integrating giving in corporate strategic planning. Corporations should promote alternative methods of corporate contributions besides direct cash distributions. Some of the methods include employee volunteering, corporate matches, product donations, capacity sharing and asset leveraging to better address the economic challenges.
 - In recent years, global partnerships have emerged demonstrating great interest in confronting global challenges directly. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a good representation of such interest. Engagement of communities and faith-based organizations in the development process can significantly improve the chances of achieving MDGs.

❖ Notable regional and global players from the development arena were represented at the conference. A partial list of which is provided hereunder:

- Organization of Islamic Conference
- Islamic Development Bank
- The World Bank
- UNDP – Millennium Campaign 2015
- Emirates Foundation, UAE
- Al-Faleh Group for Educational and Academic Services, Qatar
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Switzerland
- Malaria No More, USA
- Grameen-Jameel, UAE/USA/Bangladesh
- Qatar Foundation/Reach Out To Asia, Qatar
- King Khalid Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Sheikh Zayed Foundation, UAE
- Tony Blair Faith Foundation, UK
- Religions for Peace, USA
- Al-Waleed bin Talal Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Marafie Foundation, Kuwait
- The Executive Office, Government of Dubai
- PepsiCo Foundation, USA
- ExxonMobil (Al-Khalij), Inc.
- Network of European Foundations, UK
- The Royal Institute of Interfaith Studies, Jordan
- King Hussein Cancer Foundation, Jordan
- Arab Foundations Forum, Switzerland/ Jordan
- The American University in Cairo: Gerhart Center for Philanthropy, Egypt
- University of Oxford: Smith School of Enterprise, UK
- Arab Science and Technology Foundation, UAE
- Pakistan Center for Philanthropy, Pakistan
- King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates University, UAE
- Indiana University: Center on Philanthropy, USA
- American University of Beirut, Lebanon
- YUKOK, Malaysia
- Silatech, Qatar
- Education for Employment Foundation, USA

- ISNA Development Foundation, USA
 - Chicago Global Donors Network, USA
 - Human Development Foundation, Pakistan
- ❖ Print and electronic media covered the meeting extensively both locally and internationally. Major UAE based papers such as *Khaleej Times*, *Gulf News* and *The National* placed front page stories. The editorial team of *Islamica Magazine* managed the communication and media relations.