



**Proceedings**

**International Conference**

**The Ummah at the Crossroads:  
The Role of the OIC**

**13 - 14 October 2003  
Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur**

Editors:

Ahmad Murad Merican, Ahmad Suhaimi Ismail, R. Jeevaratnam,  
Rahmat Mohamad, Rozita Hajar, Umminajah Salleh, Zaini Abdullah



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## INTRODUCTION

Islam is the world's fastest growing religion today and is adhered to by over 1.7 billion people making up approximately a quarter of the world's population. The interest shown in the religion has burgeoned over the past three years since the tragedy of 911, and in no time, the religion will have the largest number of followers across the globe.

To those who practise Islam, it is not only a religion but also a way of life; it is *addin*. Every aspect of their life is accounted for in the scripture (i.e. the *Qur'an*) and the sayings (i.e. the *hadith*) of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.). Observed diligently, as had been practised during the time of the Prophet, and that of his Companions, and the period that followed, it provides the guiding light, paving the way for Muslims to achieve greatness in various fields of knowledge -from mathematics and physics, to astronomy and medicine, to philosophy, law, architecture and the arts.

In spite of the lull over the centuries following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the essence of Islam is still alive in the hearts of Muslims the world over. The Ummah awaits empowerment the nature of which is misinterpreted and misrepresented in a world dominated by Western hegemony. The world through the eyes of the West underestimates the power of the Ummah's solidarity and strives to vitiate the Prophet's dream of creating a universal brotherhood.

### The Aim

It is against such a background that an international conference featuring scholars and prominent figures from within the Muslim community worldwide is convened, to share their thoughts and design strategies that will boost efforts towards the advancement of the Ummah.

The conference aims to provide a platform for the meeting of minds to discuss issues which are relevant in propelling the Muslim ummah towards knowledge enhancement.

The gathering of Muslim scholars from different parts of the world seeks to address issues which have for sometime hindered the development of the Ummah in the face of adversity and at a time when Muslims are stamped labels that impede their chance of advancement in a globalised world. The conference does not merely provide a forum for the meeting of minds, it is the gateway towards better things to come for the Ummah.

## **The Objectives**

- To provide a forum for Muslim intellectuals and scholars to share ideas and formulate strategies for the betterment of the Ummah
- To clarify and probe critical areas of concern in the cooperation between the Islamic and other civilizations of the world
- To initiate a process that will be able to bridge the differences among the civilizations .
- To draw the 'big picture' for the purpose of progress for the Ummah -politically, economically and socially
- To introduce significant initiatives for the knowledge advancement and capacity building efforts of the Ummah

## **Themes**

The themes featured in the two-day conference are wide-ranging, covering aspects concerning the Ummah, and the world community, largely forward-looking, without mulling over past glories. Insha Allah, the debut event driven by the will to improve the Ummah's stake in the present and future global set-up, will be a turning point for all the hopefuls, the optimists and the strategists within the community the world over, to chart the path of the Ummah of the future.

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