

THE NEED TO RETURN TO THE QUR'ANIC PARADIGM

*In the name of Allah, The
Most Compassionate, The
Most Merciful*

THE NEED TO RETURN TO THE QUR'ANIC PARADIGM OF INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

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INTRODUCTION

The disappointing collapse of the Copenhagen U.N. Summit on Climate Change on the 18th of December 2009, much to the dismay of environmentalist organizations and the poor countries of the world, is yet another global symptom - in our humble observation - of the larger crisis of contemporary secular world order and a secular humanistic civilization grounded in the ontology of *Kufr* (disbelief) and the epistemology of autonomous reason. This historic failure means that the poor and "scientifically-technologically less developing countries" (henceforth STLDCs) will continue to be the most vulnerable to the future ravages of global warming as well as the turbulent consequences of economic and financial globalization imposed by the world capitalist system in the name of "development", the "free market" or "liberalization". The chaotic outcome of the Summit which "did not set legally binding targets to reduce the emission of gases that scientists say are heating up the world's atmosphere to dangerous levels" (AFP, *The Star*, 25 December 2009) also indicates that the unjust political and economic systems dominating the world today will continue to preserve their hegemonic interests at the expense of the STLDCs.

Looking back several decades ago, the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 80s witnessed the rise and euphoria of a triumphant liberal capitalist world ideology. But the signs of the collapsing syndrome of soulless and greedy capitalism could already be seen in 2001 with the first Wall Street crash, followed later on by a wave of Wall Street scandals which destroyed Enron Corp and WorldCom. The soulless and immoral spirit of the scheming financial wizards whose "breathing symbol of this economic sordidness" was personified in Bernie Madoff is now being punished with a 150 years jail sentence "for

orchestrating the biggest Ponzi scheme in the history of humanity." (*Time* , 7 December 2009). With all the signs of broken dreams and collapsing structures characterizing the last decade, it is no wonder that *Time* magazine (7 December 2009) calls it the "Decade from Hell". The writer who analyses the current US economic crisis gives his verdict as follows:

Our economic narcissism was certainly the culprit in the devastation wrought by financial markets, which have subjected us to an increasingly frequent series of crashes, frauds and recessions. To a great degree, this was brought about by a lethal combination of irresponsible deregulation and accommodating monetary policies.... Bankers and financial engineers had an unsupervised free-market free-for-all just as the increased complexity of financial products - e.g., derivatives - screamed out for greater regulation....Enron, for instance, was a bastard child of a deregulated utilities industry and a mind-bending financial alchemy. (Andy Serwer, "The Decade from Hell", *Time* , 7 December 2009)

HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR ALTERNATIVE PARADIGMS

The current global economic crisis which has been considered as the worst since the Great Depression of the 30s appears to us as a major sign of the larger systemic moral decadence of an unjust (*zalim*) contemporary civilisation - a civilisation anchored in the European Enlightenment period and constructed upon the dominant worldview of secular humanism which dethroned God and, instead, deified autonomous human reason. This acute civilisational crisis which manifests the dismal failure of secular modernity and its reigning paradigm of human knowledge devoid of transcendent meaning, nevertheless, provides a historic opportunity for Muslim thinkers, academic institutions and Islamic NGOs to come forward with alternative paradigms of knowledge, systems, perspectives, approaches and ideas.

It should be pointed out that Muslim thinkers, intellectual, reformists and renewalists have expressed their deep reservations and anxiety, during the period of Western imperialism and colonialism, regarding the negative aspects of secular or agnostic Western civilization and culture, and have argued that Islamic intellectual and cultural values offered more wholesome alternatives for modern man and society because they were grounded in a worldview of the inherent harmony and complementarity between Divine revelation and human reason. However, those Islamic reformist and renewalist discourse was arrogantly dismissed by the Western intellectual establishment as "apologetic", backward and anti-modern. With the exposure of the failure of secular modernity to deliver the promises of rationalism, positivism, humanism and scientism by Western post-modernist thinkers themselves in the 70s and 80s, the moral hazard of secular democracy and liberal capitalism has reached threatening proportions with grave global consequences. In their frantic search for the panacea to the crisis of global depression, some Western economists and financial experts are now willing to allow the Islamic financial system and banking to play a more active role as one of the possible ways of alleviating the current ailments as a result of the highly speculative and exploitative free-market forces which created "a crisis of deviant economics" (Robert Skidelsky, 2008) and enthroned the "religion" of "market idolatry" (William Raspberry, 1998) which has, in fact, plunged the world into "The Age of Turbulence" (Alan Greenspan, 2008).

REDIFINING DEVELOPMENT AND ACTUALISING THE UMMATIC VISION

Driven by a different civilizational vision and sets of underlying assumptions about mankind and knowledge, the Islamic intellectual discourse on education, economics, politics, law, literature, architecture, psychology, sociology, science and technology which was started by the reformist-renewalist Islamic movement in the 50's, paved the way for the construction of an alternative paradigm of contemporary knowledge based upon the values and norms from within the worldview of Islam. Contemporary Muslim social scientists and natural scientists, including professionals and academics, carry upon their shoulders a civilisational, humanistic and religious duty to offer, among other things, a definition of "development" and a reinterpretation of the

meaning of this well-established Western concept because it is part of the secular Western paradigm of modernity and progress. The Muslim reinterpretation has to be based upon the worldview of Tawhid -- the Islamic monotheism based upon the absolute oneness of Allah as the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful, Omnipresent Master of the universe and the Living Ruler of all mankind, who has laid down the Divine Path for a) the proper growth and well-being of human beings as His servants ('ibad al-

Ra'fman), vicegerents (*khulafa' fi al-ard*),

believers (*al-mu'minun*), and b) the best form of social grouping, social solidarity and transnational community with the attribute of "the best community brought forth (by Allah SWT) for mankind" (*khaira ummatin*

ukhrijat li al-nas (Q.3:110) and the "justly balanced

community to be a witness to all people" (*ummatan wasa'lan*

litakunu shuhada' 'ala al-nas (Q.2:143).

As the servants of the One True God, Allah (S.W.T), all human beings are supposed to live in peace with one another, in accordance with the revealed scheme of life of the Compassionate Creator and Ruler; to worship Him alone, to obey Him and to be grateful to Him for all the bounties He has provided for the mankind in the universe. Rebellion against His will is surely the worst form of ingratitude (*kufr al-nimah*)

on the part of human beings who are the best of His creatures. As the vicegerents on Allah's earth, all human beings -- the ancients as well as the moderns -- are entrusted with the responsibility of constructing life on earth or this-worldly existence (*al-hayat al-dunya*)

and a theocentric civilisation as Allah's trustees and trustworthy implementors of the Divinely-revealed way of living which interacts harmoniously with the world of nature and with fellow human beings of different ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Vicegerents are duty bound to utilise all the Allah-given bounties (*nimah* , *fadl* , *rizq* , *barakah*)

in man and in nature as Divine trusts (*amanah*), not as the absolute property of the trustees, in order to attain goodness in earthly existence (*hasanah* *fi al-dunya*)

and as a means of achieving goodness and felicity in the everlasting Hereafter (*hasanah fi al-akhira*). Vicegerents are supposed

to be the workers for the attainment of ultimate well-being and success (*al-falah*) as opposed to ultimate loss and misery (*al-khusran*), but unfortunately many human beings are not aware nor conscious that they are-Muslims or non-Muslims-divinely appointed vicegerents.

Many human beings of the modern era forget or deny their roles as servants of Allah (S.W.T) and His vicegerents on earth, and consequently behave as though they are completely free to develop communities, societies, nations, paradigms, ideologies or theories, according to their own whims and fancies. Hence the emergence of secular or materialistic notions of "development", "progress" and "modernisation" to challenge the religious or spiritual perspectives of true human development.

Although vicegerency is an automatic status conferred by Allah (S.W.T.) to all human beings by virtue of being human, the status and identity as "one who submits to Allah (S.W.T.) - *al-muslim* -and one who truly has attained to faith, *al-mu'min* , is not

automatic. Human beings can -- and many do -- choose not to submit or to have true faith. Their choice of not submitting to the One True God or denial (*kufr*) of the creed of Tawhid as conveyed by Allah's

Messengers constitutes a grave violation of man's purpose of existence and thus incurs the displeasure or wrath (*ghadab*) of the Almighty Sovereign of mankind (*Rabb al-'alamin* and *Malik al-nas*). Thus their search

for the good society, "progress", "development", "happiness" or "prosperity" often ends in failure, self-destruction or collective misery. At this juncture it may be appropriate to reflect on the meaning and implications of the following translation of Qur'anic verses (Q. 7, *al-A'raf* : 94-100):

And never have We sent a Prophet unto any community without trying its people with severe misfortune and hardship, so that they might humble themselves; (95) then We changed the evil for the good until they increased in number and in wealth, and they said to themselves, "Our forefathers too were afflicted with misfortune and hardship" whereupon We seized upon them all of a sudden, without them being aware of what was coming; (96) Yet if the people of the town had believed and had the *taqwa* (of Allah SWT), certainly We indeed have opened for them blessings out of heaven and earth, but they belied (the message from Allah SWT), and so We took them to task (punish them) through what they had been doing. (97) Can, then, the people of any community ever feel secure that Our punishment will not come upon them by night while they are asleep? (98) Why, can the people of any community ever feel secure that Our punishment will not come upon them in broad daylight, while they are engaged in worldly play? (99) Can they, then, ever feel secure from Allah's stratagem? But none will feel secure from Allah's stratagem except those people who are already lost. (100) Has it then not become obvious to those who have inherited the earth from the former generations that, if We so willed, We could smite them too for their sins, and seal up their hearts so that they cannot hear (the truth).

As for the true believers, they will always seek the guidance of Allah (S.W.T.) as revealed to the Messengers and culminating in the final revelation to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) in understanding the meaning of life and in constructing a holistic civilisation which ensures the proper "growth" and "development" of human personality, culture, community, state and civilisation. The true believers perceive their whole life as part and parcel of the larger meaning of '*ibadah*' (worship) and '*ubudiyah*' (servitude) to Allah (S.W.T.). Their economic, political, cultural, social, intellectual and spiritual lives and systems are therefore constructed to be in accordance with worldview of *Tawhid*, a worldview which:

a) integrates all worldly acts or activities with the value of true faith (*iman*), constant mindfulness of the pleasure and displeasure of Allah (S.W.T.) (*taqwa*) and goodness or acts of beneficence (*ihsan*);

b) makes the believers in Islam deeply conscious of the inevitability of the Day of Judgment and the final consequences in the Hereafter; and

c) places the believers in Islam a universal and Global Community (Ummah) committed to moral excellence, justice and the pursuit of goodness in this world and goodness in the Hereafter as defined by Allah (S.W.T.).

The Ummah, based on the creed ('*aqidah*) of *Tawhid*, transcends all the geographical, cultural and nationalistic barriers and stands for the fulfillment of the Divine commandment of "enjoining the good and prohibiting the evil" (*al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahyu 'an al-munkar*). It

is, at the same time, the embodiment of the spirit of *rahmatan li al-Nalamin* (mercy to all the worlds) which holds out the promise of the true inner peace, harmonious co-existence with fellow human beings, justice and fairness for all creatures of Allah (S.W.T.) and upholding the dignity of all human beings (*karamah insaniyyah*) and mutual respect for the brotherhood of all mankind, without compromising the fundamental beliefs and values. To the true believers who faithfully seek the Divine guidance in the Qur'an and draw lessons from the normative Prophetic tradition (Sunnah) of Islamic

civilisation, the proper way to attain *al-fala'* is to follow the holistic and integralist model of human "development" which fulfills all the material and non-material needs of human beings, families, communities, societies, states, nations, and the eco-system. Based on a theocentric worldview and the Prophetic normative precedents, the believers' conception of "development" as well as "the good society" is necessarily different from the secular, atheistic or liberal democratic conceptions of models of development

or "the good society".

Islamic religious scholars since the time of al-Ghazali (d.1111) until today have emphasized the fact that Allah's Divine Way which constitutes a Divinely constructed scheme of life for human beings was aimed at fulfilling certain fundamental objectives which they called the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* (objectives of the Divine Way). These are the protection and preservation of Tawhid, true religion, sound intellect, life, legitimate property, lineage, human dignity and legitimate rights. Later scholars such as Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi expanded the objectives to embrace a larger cluster of legitimate and abiding human concerns endorsed by Islam. A holistic and integrated human and sustainable development from the Islamic perspective would have to include the above objectives, including one of the fundamental missions of the Messengers of Allah (S.W.T.), namely "the purification and advancement of the human self" (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) through the application of the ethics of Tawhid and the Prophetic education (*ta'lim*, *tarbiyah* and *tazkiyah*) (Q. 91:9; 3:164; 62:2).

Unfortunately, many of the existing Muslim nation-states and the ruling political elites and leadership of Muslim countries do not portray the attributes of holistic excellence of the universal Ummah or the model of *tazkiyah* or *taqwa*-driven growth. The overriding concerns tend to be the preservation and protection of vested, national or self interest, and sometimes because of the need to curry the favour of the powerful and rich nations of the Western world. Their conception of "development" is, therefore, to a large extent adopted from the secular paradigm of development as when they accept without reservation the Western classification of countries and nations into "developed", "developing", "less developed", "least developed" and "underdeveloped", whereas the primary criteria implied in the above classification are primarily economic, scientific and technical - in short, they represent a predominantly materialistic and tangible criteria which do not do justice to the holistic notion of human spiritual purification and advancement, based upon the worldview of unity of material and spiritual dimensions as well as the unity of wellbeing in this world and wellbeing in the Hereafter.

FAILURES OF THE SECULAR PARADIGM OF DEVELOPMENT

Realising the shortcomings and failures of the dominant secular paradigms of development, either in economics, politics, culture or education, Muslim scholars and intellectuals have come up with the alternative models of "development". The writings of Khurshid Ahmad (1979-1980) in Pakistan, Aيدت Ghazali (1990), Ataul Huq (et.al. 2006) and Muhammad Shukri Salleh (1987, 1995, 2009) in Malaysia are some of the examples of the attempt by contemporary Muslim scholars who disagree with both the liberal capitalist as well as the socialist-Marxist models of "development". The latest writing on the Islamic perspective of development that we would strongly recommend is by Muhammad Umer Chapra with the title *The Islamic Vision of Development in the Light of the Maqasid al-Shari'ah*

(2008). Beside the Muslim critiques, there are also useful critical analyses by some Western dissenters of the conventional and mainstream viewpoints, as contained in Gilbert Rist's book, *The History of Development from Western Origins to Global Faith* (1997). To him the "strength of 'development' discourse comes from its power to seduce, in every sense of the term: to charm, to please, to fascinate, to set dreaming, but also to abuse, to turn away from the truth, to deceive." (1997: I)

We are aware that the discourse on development has evolved from the purely economic focus in the 50s to what was called "human development" (see UNDP, *Human Development Report* 1991) in the 70s, and later in the 80s

and 90s to "sustainable development", culminating in the worldwide Millennium Development Goals by which countries agreed that between 1990 and 2015, they would "halve income poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality; reduce under-five mortality by two-thirds, cut maternal mortality by three-quarters; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; ensure environmental sustainability, and build a global partnership for development." (<http://www.undp.org>, accessed on 7 June 2009). These goals are commendable in themselves but they do not address the issues of moral development of human beings or the moral decadence of modern politics, economics, culture, art, media, ICT and global entertainment sub-cultures championed by the affluent gambling, film, drugs and liquor industries throughout the world.

Going back to the book of Gilbert Rist, we wish to highlight his critiques of the inadequacies of the definitions of development which he considers as "an element of the religion of modernity" and "a result of Western arrogance" (Gilbert Rist, 1997: 21). In his judgment, "development" is always presented as a solution, whereas in actual fact it is "a problem (as well as creating problems)" (1997: 46). The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) has come up with several declarations since the Earth Summit in Rio Janiero in 1992, the international conventions on climate change, on biodiversity, on the forest and Agenda 21 (for the twenty-first century) which consists of eight hundred pages and considered as the "bible of sustainable development" (1997: 188-190). He seriously doubts the successful implementation of those grandiose plans and noble declarations because of the "deliberate ambiguity" in their interpretations, and that the ultimate aim is still that of the economic growth which benefits the North more than the south. (1997:192-193).

Notwithstanding the misgivings and serious critique against the Western development paradigm, there are those who honestly believe the only way to survive in the near future is to create a "sustainable society" by making people really conscious of its necessity. They believe that people need to have the right vision and implement "social learning" as the major avenue to social change. One such intellectual is Lester W. Milbrath of the State University of New York, who wrote his *Envisioning a Sustainable Society: Learning our Way Out.*

(1989).

His well-argued and well-documented thesis is that **the present trajectory of secular modern society is not sustainable** (1989: xi, emphasis mine). He says that modern society has learned too well how to dominate and if it fails to "learn how to control our exuberance... [then] our 'success' will lead to our extinction." (1980: 3). He concludes that "we have built a society, and economic system, that cannot sustain its trajectory" (1989: 4). He says further:

Devastation from climate change will be exacerbated by other global biospheric effects: loss of the ozone layer, acid rain, and poisonous red tides of algae, toxic pollution of soils, water, and air, species extinction. Nature may have many additional unpleasant surprises in store for us. When these effects are combined with resource shortages, we may well wonder how we can continue to support even the 5 billion people already living, much less the additional billions that are destined to arrive (even if we strive vigorously to limit population growth).

Today our power to dominate and injure nature is awesome. We can move mountains, fly to the moon, obliterate cities, slash down jungles, poison large water bodies, and create new species. Our ability to control the power we have gained is not well-developed. The industrial disasters at Bhopal and Chernobyl signal that we can expect many more such disasters. A nuclear war followed by a nuclear winter could obliterate nearly all life from planet earth.

The people living 100 years ago could hardly have imagined the changes that this brief span of time would bring. Nearly everyone today expects the pace of change to accelerate. If nanotechnologies, which I discuss in Chapter 12, were developed, they would accelerate our thrust for power and change 1,000 times. We are told that this is progress and that is good. Labeling an activity as progress implies that we know where we are going and that we can measure our speed on getting there. Actually, we do not know where we are going and we do not know we wish to go. *Progress* is a meaningless term without this knowledge. We also forget to ask, "Can we sustain what we are building?" (1994: 4-5).

Lester Milbarth also discusses what he considers as the "Technological Imperialism of the Developed Countries", "The Imperialism of Large Technology-Based Systems" and "Structural Wastefulness" (1989: 225-260) and offers examples of structures and technology that enhance sustainability. The reality according to him is that we "humans live in one biosphere but our world is fragmented" and the policies of the rich and powerful nations are not geared to help sincerely the poor and technologically underdeveloped societies and countries of the south. (see also Paul Krugman, "Betraying the planet". *New York Times*, 30 June 2009; Bunn Nagara. "Global Emperors Have No Clothes,"

Sunday Star, 12 July 2009, and Martin Khor, "New gloomy findings on global warming", *The Star*, 16 March 2009). Recently Jacques Diou, the Director of Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the U.N. revealed that, as a result of the current global financial crisis, the number of the hungry people in the world has reached a record 1.02 billion, an eleven percent increase compared to the figure of 915 millions in 2008. (*Mingguan Malaysia*, 21 June 2009).

In the light of the world-threatening multiple but interrelated global crises affecting all countries of the world, in particular the poor and weak states as well as Muslim countries, it is imperative that the alternative Qur'anic paradigm of holistic and fully integrated development be studied, understood, disseminated and finally implemented, first in Muslim countries and later as a model to be appreciated by other communities across the globe.

THE QUR'ANIC PARADIGM OF UNIFIED AND INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

Living in this Era of Globalisation which emphasises the materialistic rationale for the commercialisation of education, it is important to know that a Harvard dean of 32 years decided to expose the other side of Harvard in his book *Excellence without a*

Soul: How A Great

University Forgot

Education

(Harry

Lewis 2006). Since this phenomenon of the corruption of higher education is not confined to the famous universities in the West but has spread to Asian countries, it is only proper and commendable that Muslim leaders and communities give a more urgent and serious attention to the Qur'an's paradigms of true human development and of integrated knowledge. As the Qur'an is the primary source for Muslims to seek Divine knowledge which reveals the absolute truths concerning the true nature of man, the correct methodology of holistic human development as well as the epistemology and ethics of Tawhid, a sincere and deep study of the Holy Book is never more urgently needed today than ever before. At a time when humanity as a whole is witnessing not only the failures of modern education (*Chomsky on Miseducation*, 2004) but what what Immanuel Wallerstein, the eminent

American sociologist, describes as "The End of the World as We Know It: Social Science for the Twenty-First Century" (Wallerstein, 1998) or "The End of Certainty" as described by the Nobel laureate in chemistry, 1977, Ilya Prigogine (Prigogine, 1977), the Muslim world - beset with its own internal crises and ailments - cannot afford to continue on the path of modernization modeled upon the secular paradigm of development or the system of national education in which religious education and worldly education are not fully integrated

to produce the holistic personality of "the possessors of sound intellect", the ULU'L-ALBAB which Allah (S.W.T.) mentions favorably in sixteen places in the Qur'an.

The production and growth of more Islamic intellectuals, scholars, scientists, professionals, political leaders and educated classes who combine or unify scientific knowledge and religious values, thinking (*fikr* , *tafakkur*) with spiritual recollection (*dhikr*) of Allah (S.W.T.), worldy concerns with otherworldly ends, reason with revelation, professionalism with *taqwa* of Allah (S.W.T.), and are not afflicted with the diseases of the spiritual heart which al-Imam al-Ghazali called *al-muhlikat* (destructive elements) - these holistic and God-fearing human resources - are the need of the hour to transform the ailing Muslim nations and to reconstruct contemporary human civilization mired in the moral anarchy of secular modernity.

It should be remembered that since the First World Conference on Muslim Education held in Makkah al-Mukarramah in 1977, the serious and sincere efforts of Muslim leaders, scholars, intellectuals, Islamic movements and organizations to actualize the Islamic vision of holistic and integrated education have led to the establishment of many educational institutions - from kindergartens to universities which aspire to realize the goals of Islamic education, i.e. to make the whole of human life as a service and worship (*Nibadah*) and to attain wellbeing in this world and wellbeing in the Hereafter. There are now several private schools and colleges in Turkey and elsewhere (based on Bediuzzaman Said Nursi model of integration), in the Arab world, in Indonesia, Pakistan and in some Western countries which are inspired by the holistic vision of the *Ulu'l-Albab* .

In Malaysia the school system of A.B.I.M and the Dar al-Hikmah as well as J.I.M are among the foremost in pursuing this vision, while some religious schools and Islamic educational institutions in Kelantan, Trengganu and Selangor are trying to produce Muslim students of the science stream who are at the same time memorisers of the Qur'Én. These secondary schools are popularly known as

Sekolah Tahfiz dan Sains . The latest

institution to reorient its educational objectives in line with the *Ulu'l-Albab* vision is the Mara Science College of Besut, based upon the three components of its Ulul Albab Programme, namely the Qur'anic, the Encyclopedic and the Ijtihadic (*The Way Forward* 2009; *Mingguan Malaysia* 6 Disember 2009).

This holistic and integral vision of Islamic education is, of course, the common vision of many Malaysian Muslim scientists, engineers, doctors, professionals and academics in the Malaysian universities - including the I.I.U.M. and U.S.I.M. - and Islamic professional organizations, such as the Islamic Academy of Science (ASASI). It is also the vision which underlies the Islamic paradigm shift from a secular and purely rationalistic epistemology to the Tawhidic epistemology and ethics - a shift that is represented by the intellectual movement of Islamicisation of human knowledge which looks critically at the Western social sciences, humanities and the philosophical assumptions and ethics of the modern natural sciences.

By revisiting the meaning and implications of the Qur'anic vision of integrated knowledge as represented by the term *Ulu'l-Albab* and the term *al-'ulama'* we will be able to internalize the nature of the mind of God-fearing intellectuals, scholars and professionals in this most challenging era of human history when corruption, fraud, deception, crime and vices are so widespread and so rampant.

THE DEFINITIONS OF ULU'L-ALBAB (henceforth UA)

Before going into the definitions of UA, it is useful to bear in mind that the term is a beautiful Qur'anic metaphor of a unified intellectual and educational mission of the true believer, embodied in the Divine

imperative of "IQRA' B'ISMI RABBIKA ÒLLADHI KHALAQ... (Q. 96: 1), a mission and a Divine way of what we in I.I.U.M. now call Islamization or Islamicisation of human knowledge.

The word *albâb* in Arabic is the plural of *lubb* which means 'aql (intellect or reason) or the purest and best part of any substance. The expression "*lubb al-rajul*" (the purest part inside a man) means "the intellect that is set in his heart" (*maju'ilâ fâ' qalbihi min al-'aql*) (Lisân al-'Arab, 1: 729; al-Ùabarî, *Jami' Bayan* : 120). The 'aql is the essence of a human (*khulasat al-insan*), and when it is cleansed of the influence of desire (*hawa*), or negative imagination, it becomes the most special part of the intellect, the *lubb* (al-Zabâdâ, *Taj al-'Arus* : 475; al-Qurtubî, *Tafsir al-Jâmi' li-Ahkâm al-Qur'an*)

The commentators of the Qur'an are generally unanimous in defining UA briefly as "possessors of intellect" or "people of intelligence". Al-Ùabari says in his commentary (p.470) that UA means "the possessors of great minds" (*ashab al-'uqul al-kabirah*). Al-Zamakhshari says that UA, among other things, means "those who acted in accordance with the dictates of their intellects, then they observed and reflected" (*al-Kashshaf* : 494). Al-Razi observes that the term UA is an expression of praise and appreciation which Allah (S.W.T.) applies to those who use their intellects in the best possible way. To him the UA can be understood briefly as "the possessors of intellects" (*ulû'l-'uqul*), or to be more precise as "those who possess complete consummate intellects" (*dhu al-'uqul al-kamilah*) (*al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr* : 145, 155).

The expression, according to him, reflects great honour (*al-sharâf al-'azim*) and high esteem (*al-martabah al-'Eliyah*) conferred upon those who possess sound intellects.

An interesting and insightful interpretation is given by al-Razi when he compares verse 164 of surah al-Baqarah which ends with the expression "*li-qawmin ya'qilun*" (for people who use their reason) with verse 190 of surah Al 'Imran since both verses contain a similar message, although the former is more elaborate, in the sense that "people who use their reason" is precisely the fundamental attribute of the UA mentioned in the latter. He explains that the term UA is used in verse 190 of Al 'Imran although the theme is the same because the intellect has two aspects - an outward (*Dâhir*) dimension and an inner dimension which is the *lubb*. He opines that the reasoning at the initial stage is ordinary intellection ('aqlan) while at a more perfect stage it becomes profound intellection (*lubban*). But his humility and intellectual modesty make him say, with caution, "this is what comes to my mind, while Allah knows better the secrets of His great, munificent and wise Words" (*fahadha ma khatar bi al-bal wa Allah a'lam bi-asrar kalamihî al-'aDim al-karîm al-hakîm*) (*idem* , p.110).

Ibn Kathir in his *Tafsîr al-Qur'an al-Karîm* explains the meaning of *albab zakiyyah* as "pure and consummate intellects" which comprehend things and their realities in the clearest way" (www.al-islam.com/tafsîr_14.htm, acc. 14 October 2009). He elaborates that "those who understand, reason, and ponder over the meanings of things in their true nature are only those who possess sound intellects and correct

understandings (*al-'uqul al-salimah wa al-fuhum al-mustaqqimah*) (www.altafsir.com/
Tafsir, acc. 21 October 2009).

Al-Alusi says in his *Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani* that UA are "those who possess unadulterated intellects (*al-'uqul al-khalisah*) which are freed from any kinds of blemished sentiments or imaginations" (www.altafsir.com.tafsir, acc. 21 October 2009).

Al-Shawkani defines UA as "those who have sound intellects which are freed from defects of deficiency" (*al-'uqul al-īahihah al-khalisah 'an shawa'ib al-naqs*). In another paragraph he defines *albab* as "intellects which are pure (or uncontaminated)" (www.altafsir.com, acc. 19 October 2009).

Ibn 'Ashur in his *Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir* uses the expression "perfect minds" (*al-'uqul al-kamilah*) (www.altafsir.com, acc. 19 October 2009).

Sayyid Qutb in his *Fî Zilal al-Qur'an* describes UA as "those who possess sound comprehension" (*ulu al-idrak al-sahih*) (vol. 2: 188).

HAMKA translates UA in his *Tafsir al-Azhar* as:

- a) "orang-orang yang mempunyai inti fikiran "
- b) "orang-orang yang mempunyai fikiran dalam "
- c) "orang-orang yang berfikir "
- d) "orang-orang yang berakal "
- e) "orang-orang yang berfikiran dalam "

Shaikh Abdullah Basmih, the Malaysian translator of the Qur'an, *Pimpinan al-Rahman*, gives

the following translations:

- a) "orang-orang yang menggunakan akal fikiran " (p. 87)
- b) "orang-orang yang berfikiran " (p. 96)
- c) "orang-orang yang berakal fikiran " (p. 55)

- d) "orang-orang yang berakal
(yang dapat memikir dan
memahaminya) (p.62)

In English commentaries of the Qur'an, UA is translated as "men of understanding" by Abdullah

Yusuf Ali (*The Holy Qur'an*), Marmaduke Pickthall (*Holy Qur'an*), Zafar Ishaq Ansari (tr. *Tafsir al-Qur'an* of Mawdudi) and Muhammad Muhsin Khan (*The Noble Qur'an*), while Muhammad Asad (*The Message of the Qur'an*) is the only one who translates UA as "the ones endued with understanding".

It should be pointed out the translation of UA as "men..." is not quite accurate as UA includes both male and female genders.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FULLY INTEGRATED MINDS OF UA

From a study of the 16 verses in which the term UA is used in the Qur'an it is possible to summarise the quality of the character and the mind of the UA - the mind which manifests the Qur'anic paradigm of the truly integrated knowledge and integrated intellectuals - as follows:

1. In looking back at the life struggles of Prophets and Messengers of Allah (S.W.T.), the UA draw moral and spiritual lessons for them to internalize. (Q. 12:111)

2. In dealing with verses of the Qur'an which are regarded as allegorical (*mutashabihat*) or open to several interpretations, the UA's attitude is one of unquestioning acceptance of the Qur'an as a whole as the words of Allah (S.W.T.) and not allowing their base desires, intellectual arrogance or satanic impulses to influence them negatively with regard to any injunctions of Allah (S.W.T.). The true Islamic intellectuals also adopt the attitude of the UA vis-a-vis the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (S.A.A.S.). (Q. 3:7, 2:269, 14:52).

3. The UA believe, know and are always cognizant of the fact that whatever was taught or enjoined by the Prophet (S.A.A.S.) was the truth that came from Divine revelation. (Q. 13:19, 38:29, 39:9).

4. In responding to advice, views or opinions coming from external quarters, the UA weigh carefully and sincerely those ideas or propositions; anything that comes from Allah (S.W.T.) or is in conformity with Allah's injunctions or norms will be chosen and followed by them. (Q. 39:18).

5. The stories relating the sufferings of Allah's Prophets (such as Ayyub (A.S.) and others will be given serious thought by the UA in order to derive useful lessons and wisdom in facing the tribulations of life in this world. (Q. 38:43).

6. The history of the struggle between Moses (A.S.) and the Pharaoh which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the latter, because of his arrogance, over-confidence, selfishness, injustices and denial of the sovereignty of Allah (S.W.T.) becomes a source of guidance (*huda*) and reminder (*dhikra*) to the UA. (Q. 40:54).

7. The UA keenly observe the natural life cycle of vegetation beginning with the initial growth leading

eventually to lifeless rubble on earth, and understand this process of rise and fall in the natural world as conveying deep lessons and wisdom for them and for mankind as a whole. (Q.

39:21).

8. The intellect that is pure and uncontaminated, as in the minds of the UA, is ever in need of consciousness of *taqwa* to Allah (S.W.T.) - the deep consciousness of the presence and sovereignty of Allah (S.W.T.) such that the believer is always mindful lest any of his/her actions, thoughts or behavior would incur the displeasure or wrath. It is this spirit of *taqwah* that will lead the believers as well as UA to *al-Falah*. *Taqwa* then becomes a necessary ingredient in the formation of the mind of Islamic intellectuals, leaders, scholars, professionals and the ordinary believers. *The principle of taqwa becomes the common spiritual core value in the development of the life of the individual, the family, the institutions, the community, the nation, and the civilization.* (Q. 5:100, 10:65). Scholars, leaders, intellectuals and professionals of this Age of Turbulence, global crises and rampant corruption are in greater need of *taqwa* than ever before.

9. The mind or intellect of the Islamic intellectuals derive their knowledge of the One True God and of His power, wisdom, mercy and presence not from one source, i.e. the written book of Allah (S.W.T.) but from two sources, the other being the unwritten and observable book of the Cosmos and the world of nature. In several places the Qur'an urges the "people who use their reason" (*qawm ya'qilun*) to study and contemplate on the multitude of Allah's creation in nature, on the wonders in nature and on their usefulness and indispensability for the physical sustenance and wellbeing of human life, with the condition that human beings show their gratitude (*shukr*) and their dependency (*tawakkul*) on the infinite grace and blessings of the One Living Lord and Sustainer. (Compare Q. 2: 164 and 3: 190).

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF DIVINE REVELATION IN THE QUR'AN AND DIVINE REVELATION IN THE COSMOS AND NATURE

Following from the above paragraph no. 9, we shall now focus on the resultant mind-set and behavior of the Islamic scholars, professionals and intellectuals who are exposed to the wonders of Allah's creation in the cosmos and the truths revealed by Him in the Qur'an. Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi has studied this issue in his book *Al-'Aql wa al-'Ilm fi al-Qur'an al-Karim* (1996) in the chapter on

"*Ishadat al-Qur'an bi uli al-albab wa al-nuhu*". He refers several times to the interpretation of al-Biq'a'i of UA as "*al-'uqul al-safiyah wa al-afham al-nayyirah al-khalisah*" (p. 23).

The UA , according to him, deserve to be given wisdom (*hikmah*) by Allah (S.W.T.) because "they know where to put things in their proper places and to give everything their rights" (p.24). After studying and analyzing all the meanings in the 16 verses in which the term UA is mentioned, al-Qarālawī arrives at the following important conclusion:

Those verses show very clearly the intellectuality of this Qur'an and the intellectuality of its message

(*'aqlaniyyat hadha al-*

Qur'an wa 'aqlaniyyat

risalatiḥ

- p.28). Similarly the meaning of *ulu al-*

nuha (Q. 20:53, 54, 128) is the same as UA and it is used in the context of interacting with the world of nature and drawing benefits from the natural resources of the earth, water and domesticated animals. (p. 29)

It is clear that verses 191-194 of surah Al 'Imran reflect the Tawhidic and *taqwa* -inspired attributes of the UA. The uncontaminated mind or intellect *a la* UA integrates in a harmonious way the attitude of *dhikru'Llah* which is present in all situations and activities of the people of reason, and the activity of deep thinking, research, scientific investigation and empirical analysis of the secrets of nature in the heavens and on earth. The attitude expressed in the four verses - 191, 192, 193, 194 - testify to the recognition of the existence of Divine purpose in the whole of this wondrous cosmos. The deep study and analysis of the workings and intricacies of the world of nature together with faith in the One Creator and Sustainer leads the sincere and humble intellects to the awareness of the End and the continuity of human life in the eternal abode of the Hereafter, the knowledge of which is given by the Prophet (S.A.W.) to mankind and to the believers. This implies that believing "scientists" imbued by the spiritual value of *taqwa* realize that if they were to misuse the knowledge of the workings of nature which constitute great benefits for human beings, or if they were negligent, ungrateful to the Creator, or strive with the blessings they obtained from their mastery of natural resources to cause injustice, suffering, oppression, imbalances and to dominate over others, to perpetuate their economic or political hegemony over weaker or poorer people, they know that they would meet the wrath of their Master in the Hereafter, and that would be the height of ignominy and shame (*khizy*) for these servants of Allah (S.W.T.)

Al-Qaradawi explains at great length that the Qur'an wants human beings to master a variety of knowledge, and that it is erroneous to assume that the branch of knowledge that is lauded in the Holy Book is only religious knowledge. The verses in Q. 6:97, 30:22, 29:43, 35:27, 28, 10:5, 27:50-52, 7:32,28 and others point to this assertion. Even the term "*al-'ulama'*" which occurs in verse Q. 35: 7-28 does not imply only the scholars of religious knowledge. Al-Qarālawī asserts along with Sayyid Qutb that the "scholars" or people of knowledge referred to in the verse are "not scholars of religion and experts of Divine Law, although they possess great virtues and important position". The content and the context of the verses point to those who study the signs of Allah (S.W.T.) as contained in the natural phenomena. This requires the specialised knowledge of geology, astronomy, mathematics, biology, chemistry, earth sciences, life sciences, anthropology and others. (*Al-'Aql wa al-'Ilm* : 151).

In the world today, Muslims have been and are being exposed to at least five major systems of education:

1. The completely secular system as in many non-Muslim countries, where only the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities are taught, to the exclusion of religion.
2. The predominantly religious educational system where a few subjects of worldly knowledge are taught, but they are a small part of the curriculum and are taught without any reference to religion or metaphysical

perspectives.

3. The predominantly worldly educational system where some aspects of religious knowledge are taught, but they are also isolated, marginalized or compartmentalized, as if religious knowledge has no relevance to the knowledge of the world of nature, society or culture.

4. The system which offers both the religious and the worldly sciences, but they only coexist; there is no interpenetration between the two spheres of knowledge. Religious knowledge is not enriched by or made relevant to worldly knowledge, or reformed to be kept abreast with contemporary changes, while the worldly knowledge is not constructed in accordance with the worldview of TawílEd. The dominant paradigm of knowledge is the secular and the conventional.

5. The fully integrated model of education in which the two streams are brought into meaningful and dynamic and symbiotic interaction with one another to enrich and complement each other and produce at the end of the educational process; A) the religiously informed and God-fearing scientist, engineers or doctors on the one hand, and; B) the scientifically informed religious knowledge specialists who understand the contemporary realities and changes, and know how those changes impinge on moral, ethical, theological and spiritual values and norms. This system will be able to produce the so-called "intellectual-ulama'" and the "ulama'-intellectual" as they say in Indonesia.

Given the scarcity of the fifth model, we would argue that what the Muslim community needs more and urgently - in meeting the contemporary challenges accruing from the moral decay of secular education and civilisation -- are more experts in natural and applied sciences or technology who are people of deep faith, with moral integrity and *taqwa*, and more experts in religious disciplines who are also knowledgeable in some branches of scientific knowledge. This product no doubt requires the implementation of the system of unified Islamic education based upon the principle of "Combining The Two Readings, i.e. the Open Book of God in the Cosmos and the Written Book of God in The Qur'an". A further study and research into the contemporary significance and applicability of the UA model of integrated knowledge and education is most relevant towards enhancing the collective efforts to achieve the ideal model of Islamic education in the 21 century and to reconstruct the holistic, balanced and integrated Tawhidic civilisation.

SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR ISLAMIC NGOs (INGOs) IN MALAYSIA IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TRUE ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF COMPREHENSIVE JIHAD

General Aspects

1. In view of the threat of global warming, natural disasters and depletion of fossil fuels in Southeast Asia region, INGOs should popularise **THE JIHAD AGAINST ECOLOGICAL DEGRADATION**, through activities which highlight the urgency of recycling, finding alternative and renewable energy resources, green technology, replanting, reforestation, protection of forest reserves, monitoring of illegal exploitation of natural resources, etc. The use of the five or more Objectives of the Divine Way (*Maqasid al-Shari'ah*) and the values of gratitude (*shukr*) to Allah (S.W.T.) and accountable vicegerency (*istikhlaf*) should be emphasised in educating the masses.

2. In view of the threat of outbreak of contagious diseases such as H1N1, AIDS, epidemics affecting the less privileged citizens of the country, or long periods of drought or deprivation causing hardship to the poor people, irrespective of religions or races, INGOs should popularise **THE JIHAD FOR COMPASSIONATE BEHAVIOUR AND ACTION** by initiating the giving of assistance that would ameliorate the pain and

suffering of the victims, regardless of their religious affiliations or ethnic origin.

3. In view of the necessity of the Muslim community to be strong, freed from the burdens of domestic or international debts, and self-reliant economically, particularly in times of economic or financial crises, INGOs should popularise **THE JIHAD FOR ECONOMIC WELLBEING AND BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS** as promoted by Tan Sri Ali Hashim of Johore Corporation (*Business Satu Cabang Jihad*, 2003). The goal is also to assist the poor Muslims to break through the poverty cycle, achieve some degree of economic wellbeing integrated with the values of *halal*, *'adl*, *amal salih*, *ihsan* and *taqwa*.

4. In view of the widespread cancer of corruption, frequent abuse of power, fraud, cheating, immoral ways of earning a living becoming more entrenched in Malaysian society from the top to bottom, due partly to the pressures of economic difficulty and partly to the erosion of ethics in an increasingly materialistic and permissive environment, INGOs should urgently embark **THE JIHAD AGAINST THE EROSION OF INTEGRITY CULTURE** by instilling and practicing the Islamic values of honesty (*amanah*, *ikhlas*, *istiqamah*), fear of severe punishment in the Hereafter and *taqwa* of Allah (S.W.T.).

In addition, the principles of good governance, justice and transparency based on deep faith in Allah SWT, and adhering to the high moral values of the holistic leadership model of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and The Rightly Guided Caliphs should be upheld to avert INGOs from becoming victims of entrenched vested interest, egoism, cronyism, nepotism and authoritarianism.

5. In view of the persistence and spread of the phenomenon of acute social ills and disgusting immoral and inhuman acts involving drug abuse, casual and abnormal sexual relations, gambling, consumption of liquor, and prostitution, INGOs as well as Da'wah organizations should emphasize **THE JIHAD AGAINST SOCIAL ILLS AND MORAL DECADENCE** through the media and other channels of mass communication in a society currently inundated by the waves of cheap entertainment culture, imitation of secular permissiveness by the youth, and the big business promoting and legitimizing the forbidden sensate pleasure.

6. In view of the increasing phenomenon of cyber crimes and vices of all sorts, the easily available pornography from all over the world, abundance of filth, libel and slander, misinformation and deception, and Internet addiction affecting millions of people, the most vulnerable being the younger generation, it is urgent that INGOs work together in **THE JIHAD AGAINST CYBERSPACE VICES** to rescue our youth from a wide variety of sophisticated traps set up to de-moralise and de-Islamise and corrupt the innocent, the ignorant and the weak in faith.

7. In view of the existence of threats coming from Muslim religious extremists and radicals on the one hand, and the secular fundamentalists as well as the so-called "Liberal Muslims" which form an influential movement in Indonesia -- thanks to the support of certain mainstream media, influential thinkers and intellectuals, not to mention the generous contributions of Western liberal movements -- INGOs must popularise **THE JIHAD AGAINST RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR EXTREMISM** by spreading the message of true Islamic moderation (*al-wasatiyyah*) as taught by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and by combating the misinformations and distortions coming from both extremes, engaging in sincere inter-religious dialogues, and disseminating enlightening literature from authoritative mainstream sources of religious knowledge.

8. In view of the continual intransigencies, injustices, defiant flouting of international laws and false propaganda spread by Zionist or pro-Zionist centres of power in Israel and outside, INGOs must not waver in

promoting a concerted and collective campaign for **THE NON-VIOLENT JIHAD AGAINST THE PERPETRATION OF INJUSTICE TOWARDS THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND AGAINST THE SYSTEMATIC JUDAISATION OF JERUSALEM QUIETLY ENDORSED BY THE SUPER POWERS.**

9. In view of the inherent weakness of human beings to succumb to all kinds of temptations as well as the influence of base desires (*shahawat ammarah*) , *hawa* , *nafs*) that have been proven to be effective in undermining or eroding the bonds of Islamic unity and brotherhood, and in diluting the faith in everlasting life in the Hereafter and the *taqwa* of Allah SWT, it is absolutely necessary that **THE JIHAD AGAINST THE NAFS** should always be given priority by INGOs and Muslims under whatever circumstances. It is useful to remember that the Prophet (S.A.W.) has prophesied that the two causes of Muslim malaise in the future - among other things -- are "love of worldly pleasures" and "the dislike of being reminded of the end of human life". Strengthening the spiritual fibre and nurturing the desire for the pleasure of Allah (S.W.T.) and the love of the Prophet (S.A.W.) must remain the pillar of Islamic identity and personality formation. Needless to say, the collapse of moral, political, economic, intellectual and professional integrity is also due to the erosion, dilution or absence of true faith and *taqwa* of Allah (S.W.T.). Remember one of the frequent commandments of Allah (S.W.T.) is "O you who believe! Instil the constant mindfulness of fearing the displeasure of Allah as He ought to be in the full sense of the word, and do not die except in the state of complete submission to His will" (Q. 3:102)

Specific Aspects

There are other dimensions of peaceful and non-violent JIHAD which could be operationalised, implemented and popularised by INGOs in Malaysia to promote the cause of Islam in the most reasonable and attractive ways, bearing in mind that JIHAD FI SABILI'LLAH (striving to one's utmost in the path of Allah with one's self and wealth) is an essential quality of all true believers in Islam (Q. 49 :15; 61:11; 8:72; 9:20) and that the propagation of Islam (*da'wah bi'l-hikmah*) has to be conducted in the best and most appealing of ways. This is becoming more relevant and urgent in light of the negative stereotyping that Islam has been painted by the biased Western media, films and journals, and the misrepresentation of the concept of JIHAD by both Muslim militants and anti-Islamic propaganda. In this regard, **THE EDUCATIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL JIHAD** is , in our view, the second most important aspect of JIHAD after the SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION JIHAD mentioned above, because this is the greatest weakness of the Muslim world and the universal UMMAH. Below are some of our humble proposals related to the issue of holistic and integrated knowledge for the consideration and attention of the INGOs:

1. In view of the increasing interest in Muslim countries towards the vision and mission of developing and constructing human knowledge on the basis of Islamic creed ('*aqidah Allah fi al-kawn*), values and norms - after witnessing the futility and the folly of Muslims blindly following the spiritually bankrupt secular paradigms in the social sciences, humanities and the natural sciences - INGOs could consider establishing or adopting the holistic ULU'L ALBAB model of education in which science and religion are studied in the framework of Tawhid and are seen as two sides of the same sacred coin, the former as a means of understanding and utilizing the Signs of Allah SWT in the Physical Universe (*ayat Allah fi al-Qur'an*) while the latter as a means of understanding and internalizing the Signs and Guidance of Allah SWT in the Written Book (*ayat Allah fi al-Qur'an*). INGOs focusing or specializing in the field of **THE EDUCATIONAL JIHAD** could consider introducing this new integrated and unified model at the kindergarten, primary school and the secondary level. The immediate challenge is, no doubt, the availability of suitable and competent teachers as well as teaching materials. If such INGOs could cooperate with one another, efforts could be coordinated to produce or secure those materials which have been or are being

developed by other Islamic organizations in other countries. The issue of training good teachers for this model can also be centralized or coordinated by some faculties of education in Malaysia or elsewhere, or by some state religious departments interested in this holistic model. This model would be a further improvement or upgrading of the existing model of teaching religion side by side or parallel to the so-called "academic subjects" including basic or elementary science subjects which are taught from a secular perspective.

2. In view of the existence of uncoordinated efforts by some Islamic intellectual organizations and institutions of higher learning in USA, UK, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sudan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Jordan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Morocco in pursuing the mission of Islamicisation of human knowledge at a higher level of education, those NGOs or private Islamic Foundations which are financially better endowed than others could consider **SPONSORING INTELLECTUAL PROJECTS** or programmes which would contribute to **A) better knowledge management; B) systematisation and evaluation; C) better coordination and networking across the world; D) globalisation and marketing of Tawhidic paradigms of development, holistic and integrated human knowledge, etc., to the non-Muslim communities or organizations; E) publication, dissemination and popularization of the new Islamic intellectual discourses at the level of the masses; F) a more effective training of potential good scholars, activists, publicists and communicators of Islam in the language and idiom of the contemporary era of ICT, to address the issues of climate change, gender equality, human rights, animal rights, Allah's rights, economic disparities, acute poverty, corruption, social ills, cyber crimes, religious pluralism, good governance, democratic laws and systems, commercialisation of education, national unity and Ummatic solidarity, leadership and managerial qualities, appropriate political cultures, living as Muslims in non-Muslim majority countries, the plight of Muslim minorities, the spiritual diseases in contemporary society, etc.,etc.**

3. In view of the dearth of leaders of integrity at the highest levels of leadership and societal management, and the scourge of corruption in Muslim countries, INGOs could

INSTITUTE EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP MODULES using a combination of traditional and modern techniques, designed to develop, nurture and produce the future Islamic leaders of integrity, piety, humility and competency based on the vision of comprehensive Islam (*shumuliyyat al-Islam al-wasatiyyah al-Islamiyyah*), the method of justly balanced Islamic moderation (*manhaj al-wasatiyyah al-Islamiyyah*), values of deep faith (*yaqin salih* , *ihsan*) in Allah SWT and the Hereafter, good deeds (*'amal salih*), sound knowledge of religion and of the world as represented by the personality and mind of the *Ulu'l-Albab* , and *taqwa* of Allah (S.W.T.).

In the end let us reflect and ponder deeply on the following reminders of Allah (S.W.T.) to all of us regarding the moral qualities and spiritual attitudes of the Islamic scholars and intellectuals:

Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the sky, and We produce therewith fruits of varying colours - just as in the mountains are streaks of white and red of various shades, and others very black. And so among people and crawling creatures and cattle are they of various colours. Of all His servants, it is only those who are endowed with knowledge who truly fear Allah. Verily Allah is All-Mighty, Oft-Forgiving. Verily, those who recite the Book of Allah and perform the prayers, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly - it is they who could look forward to a commerce that will never fail. (Q. 35: 27-29).

And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Allah has power over all things. Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alteration of night and day, there are indeed signs for people who possess sound intellects (*Ulu'l-Albab* ﻋﻠوٰالبّ); those who remember Allah (always and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "O our Sustainer! You have not created all this without purpose. Exalted be You in Your limitless glory. Keep us safe, then, from the torment of the Fire. O our Sustainer! Verily, whoever You admit to the Fire, indeed, you have disgraced him, and never will the wrongdoers find any helpers. O our Sustainer! We have heard the call of one calling us to Faith: "Believe in your Sustainer," and we have believed. O our Sustainer! Forgive us our sins and remit from us our evil deeds, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteousness. O our Sustainer! Grant us what You promised unto us through Your Messengers and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection, for You never fail to fulfill Your promise. (Q. 3:189-194)

Amin, Ya Rabb al-'alamin!

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