

Conference Reports

Islam and Higher Education

Aiming at addressing various issues relating to contemporary and future needs in Muslim higher education and to arrive at some of the solutions to the problems and challenges now confronting the global Muslim ummah, International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) organized the Third International conference on Islam and higher education (ICIHE) which was held on 1-2 October 2012. The theme chosen for the 3rd ICIHE was “The Role of Awqaf (“Endowments”) in the Development of Islamic Higher Education: The Past, the Present and Future Prospects.”

The objectives of the 3rd ICIHE were to create a better awareness and understanding among Muslims on the general importance of the Islamic institution of awqaf to the development and progress of the ummah in various areas of societal life; to better understand the various facets of institutional interactions between awqaf and education in Muslim societies, both in the past and the present; to derive useful lessons from past practices of awqaf in higher education in various Muslim communities; to harness the great potentials of the awqaf institution to serve as assets to Muslim higher education in the 15th century AH/21st century CE; to formulate an ummatic approach to the development of the awqaf institution in the service of Muslim higher education; and to help strengthen the identity of the Muslim ummah through the empowerment of the awqaf institution.

The Sub-Themes of the 3rd ICHIE were: The meaning and significance of awqaf as a religious and socio-economic institution in Islam; The historical development of awqaf in relation to education; Important lessons to be learnt from past practices of awqaf in Muslim societies; Case studies and aspiring models of educational institutions founded on awqaf; Awqaf and contemporary Muslim higher education: problems and challenges; Transforming major mosques into Muslim institutions of higher learning; and The future role of awqaf in the development of Muslim higher education.

Participants and speakers were invited from all institutions of higher learning, public and private, Ministries of Higher Education, government agencies, non-governmental organizations and civil society groups from all over the world and more than 300 veteran educationists took part in 3rd ICHIE. This series of ICIHEs owes its origin and development to the close and steady collaboration between IAIS Malaysia, the Pahang State Foundation, and IKIP International College, which have worked hard to make this series a reality. Undoubtedly, however, it is the personal interest and commitment of Dato’ Seri Diraja (Dr.) Adnan Yaakob, the Menteri Besar of Pahang, who is also the Chairman, Pahang State

Foundation to the development of Muslim higher education among the ummah, and the generosity of the Foundation that have made this series possible.

The Conference started on Monday the 1st October 2012 at 8.00 am with the registration followed by session-1 under the theme: Awqaf and Education: Philosophical, Religious, and Socio-Economic Perspectives. Welcoming speech was given by Emeritus Professor Dato' Dr. Osman Bakar Chairman, 3rd ICIHE organizing committee. In the first session, three papers were presented and Professor Dr. Karim Douglas Crow, Principal Research Fellow, IAIS Malaysia moderated the session. Emeritus Professor Dato' Dr. Osman Bakar, (Chair/Professor, Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Centre for Islamic Studies (SOASCIS), University Brunei Darussalam, delivered a paper on "The Place and Role of Awqaf in the Development of Islamic Knowledge Culture: An Overview". Professor Dr Mohammad Hashim Kamali, Founding Chairman/CEO, IAIS Malaysia spoke on "Waqf in Shari'ah and Its Contemporary Applications". Finally, Tan Sri Muhammad Ali Hashim, President, Malaysian Islamic Chamber of Commerce. He spoke on "Corporate Waqf and Its Relevance to Higher Education Institution in the 21st Century".

The opening ceremony of the Conference took place at 11.00 am where YAB Dato' Seri DiRaja (Dr.) Haji Adnan Bin Haji Yaakob, Menteri Besar (Chief Minister) of Pahang delivered the key note speech and declared the opening of the Conference officially. An MOU Signing Ceremony between Pahang State Foundation, IKIP International College and International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) and Balkan's Students Scholarship Certificate Giving Ceremony were added in the opening ceremony.

The second session of the Conference began under the theme: Awqaf and Higher Education: The Historical Dimension and the Ottoman Legacy. Mr Abdul Karim Abdullah (Canada), Assistant Research Fellow, IAIS Malaysia moderated the session and three papers were presented respectively by Dr. Ahmad Nabil Amir on "The History of Waqf Institution in the Muslim World: A Case Study of Al-Azhar University, Cairo", Professor Dr. Muammer Koc on "Awqaf in the Universities in Turkey: Past, Present, and Future" and Professor Dr. Mesut Idriz spoke on "Ottoman Waqf Educational System in the Balkans in the Light of the Ijazahs".

The third session was moderated by Dr. Mohammed Farid Ali, and it was under the theme: Awqaf and Islamic Higher Education in the Arab World. The first speaker of the session was Professor Dr. Sultan T. Abu-Orabi ("Awqaf and Higher Education in the Arab World"), Dr. Sami Al-Salahat ("The Role of Awqaf in the Development of Islamic Higher Education: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) as Model"), and the final speaker, Professor Dr. Abdel Naser Mousa Abulel Basal ("Educational Endowment in Jordan").

The fourth and the last session of the day was moderated by Dr. Daud Batchelor of Australia, and it was under the theme: Awqaf and Education in the Indian Sub-Continent. Dr. Abdul-Qayum Mohmand presented on "The Influence of Waqf on the Higher Education of Afghanistan", Mr. M. Azizul Huq, President of BIIT presented a joint paper with Foyasal Khan, Research Associate, BIIT on "Awqaf and Development of Madrasa Education in

Bangladesh: Problems, Challenges, and Future Prospects” and the last speaker of the day Mr. Mohammed Basheer presented his paper on “Empowerment of Muslim Education: The Role of Waqf Properties, an Indian Perspective.”

On Tuesday, October 2, 2012, the fifth session began at 8.30 am and was moderated by Ms. Sheila Ainon Yussof, Senior Analyst, IAIS Malaysia. It was themed: Awqaf and Education in Muslim Africa. There were three presenters in this session. Dr. Aliyu Dahiru Muhammad (“Revitalizing *Waqf* in Northern Nigeria: An Agenda for Poverty Reduction”), Moulana Ihsaan Hendriks with Shaykh Moegamat Ighsaan Taliép presented a paper titled “The Potential for Waqf Development Based on a Sound Legacy of Awqaf in Cape Town, South Africa” and Dr. Suleiman M. H. Boayo talked on “Endowment Funds for Education in Ghana: Problems and Challenges” as the last presenter of the session.

The longest session of the Conference comprising 6 presenters stated at 10.15 am under the theme: Waqf and Higher Education in the Malay-Muslim World. The session was moderated by Mr Airul Amri Amran. This session began with a paper on “Muhammadiyah and Its Socio-Religious-Educational Network”. This presentation was made by Dr Ahmad Syafii Maarif, Founding Chairman, Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity, Indonesia. This was followed by a joint paper “Early Propagation of Waqf and Its Impact on Educational Development of Society” (by Abu Hanifah Haris and Professor Dato’ Dr. Muhammad Redzuan Othman). Dato’ Syed Mohd Ghazali Wafa bin Syed Adwam Wafa spoke on “Development of Waqfs in Institutions of Higher Learning”. Subsequently, Mr Azri Ahmad, CEO, Waqaf Foundation Malaysia talked about “Education Development through Waqf”. The last two speakers were Dr. Hajah Norhazlin Pg Haji Muhammad and Professor Dr. Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil. The presented papers respectively on “Waqf and Education in Brunei Darussalam” and on “Transformation of Education for the Malays in Malaysia through the Instrument of Waqf: UiTM’s Perspective”.

The seventh session commenced at 1.30 pm and was moderated by Professor Dato’ Dr. Abdul Monir Hj Yaakob under the theme: The Future of Waqf: Problems, Challenges, and Prospects. Of the two papers, the first one was presented by Dato’ Seri Idris Jusoh, Chairman of MARA and former Menteri Besar of Trengganu, Malaysia on “Awqaf in the 21st Century: Beyond Education and Towards the Empowerment of Global Humanity”. The final paper was delivered by Dato’ (Dr.) Hamzah Mohd Kassim, President, Institute of Linggi, Malaysia on “Challenges on the Legal Issues of Waqf”.

In the closing session of the Conference, a paper and a report was presented. The paper on “Leadership Deficit and the Future of Executive Education and Leadership Development in the Muslim World” was read on behalf of Dr. Mohamed Moustafa Mahmoud (Dr. 3M), Advisor, Minister of Labor, Saudi Arabia and CEO, Medina Institute for Leadership and Entrepreneurship (MILE), Medina, Saudi Arabia. Emeritus Professor Dato’ Dr. Osman Bakar, Chairman, 3rd ICIHE Organizing Committee presented the Conference Report and officially closed the Conference. The members were informed that the 4th ICHIE will be held

in Medina, Saudi Arabia. The Conference ended with a guided tour of DRB-Hicom Automotive Complex and International College of Automotive (ICAM) in Pekan, Pahang.

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