



PROFESSOR DATUK RIFAAT AHMED ABDEL KARIM

 4^{TH} RECIPIENT OF THE ROYAL AWARD FOR ISLAMIC FINANCE

A COLLECTION OF SPEECHES AND PUBLIC LECTURES, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ROYAL AWARD 10TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY









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ESTABLISHED IN 2010, THE ROYAL AWARD IS A BIENNIAL JOINTLY ORGANISED BY Bank AWARD MALAYSIA SECURITIES COMMISSION AND THE MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL UNDER THE MALAYSIA ISLAMIC FINANCIAL CENTRE (MIFC) INITIATIVE TO RECOGNISE AND HONOUR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE EXCELLED IN ADVANCING ISLAMIC FINANCE GLOBALLY THROUGH THEIR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS.



The Royal Award recipients are Tan Sri Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz, former Governor of Bank Negara Malaysia (2018); **Professor Datuk Dr. Rifaat Ahmed Abdel Karim, CEO of the Capital Market Authority of Sudan (2016)**; Dato' Dr. Abdul Halim Ismail, founding member of Malaysia's first Islamic bank (2014); Mr Iqbal Khan, CEO of Fajr Capital (2012); and the late Shaikh Saleh Abdullah Kamel, founder of the Dallah al Baraka Group (2010). The Royal Award in 2010 also recognised the late Dr. Ahmad El-Naggar who was often referred as the 'Father of Modern Islamic Banking', with a posthumous honourable mention.

TAN SRI MUHAMMAD BIN IBRAHIM

FORMER GOVERNOR, CENTRAL BANK OF MALAYSIA CO-HOST OF THE ROYAL AWARD FOR ISLAMIC FINANCE It is my pleasure to welcome the distinguished audience to the Gala Dinner for the Royal Award for Islamic Finance tonight, which is held to honor an individual for outstanding contributions to the growth and development of Islamic finance. Allow me to express our utmost gratitude to His Majesty Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Her Majesty, and His Royal Highness Sultan of Perak Darul Ridzuan, the Royal Patron of Malaysia International Islamic Financial Centre (MIFC) and Her Royal Highness, for gracing tonight's Gala Dinner. Our sincere appreciation to Securities Commission Malaysia, for jointly hosting this dinner with Bank Negara Malaysia, under the Malaysia International Islamic Financial Centre (MIFC) initiative.

Since the introduction of the Royal Award for Islamic Finance in 2010 as a biennial event, it has given due recognition to three individuals. Tonight, another individual will be awarded the 2016 Royal Award for Islamic Finance, for outstanding contributions in the development of Islamic finance. The Islamic finance industry has continued to gain strength and stature, recording robust global growth of between 10 to 12 percent annually over the past decade. Amidst a highly challenging global economic environment, the growth reflects the steady advancement and maturity of the industry in meeting the needs of the economy. As we progress into the new era of growth, our endeavour to enhance the vibrancy of the industry warrants a new way





of thinking in the face of increasing competition and profound changes brought about by technological advancements. In facing these challenges successfully, one of the prerequisites is a pool of talent that is dynamic, adaptable and visionary.

In Malaysia, we have invested substantially in cultivating talents equipped with the required skill sets and knowledge needed to compete, to think and to innovate. Over the last three decades in our journey to develop Islamic finance, a holistic infrastructural ecosystem devoted towards talent development has been conceptualised.

To move forward, we need to continuously create distinct value propositions for Islamic finance to chart into new areas of growth. In the case of Malaysia, the need for a new breed of talent is pressing, as we embark on an ambitious target of 40 percent market share for Islamic finance by 2020. The need is also evident at the global level, as many jurisdictions aspire to develop an Islamic finance centre of their own. It is from this perspective that it becomes even more critical for us to nurture the right talents with the best minds to propel the industry into the future, that is estimated to grow its financial assets to US\$3.2 trillion by 2020.

DERIVE FROM THE LESSONS OF HISTORY. HISTORICAL **EVIDENCE SHOWED THAT** ISLAMIC CIVILISATION WAS DRIVEN BY VISIONARY THINKERS AND THEIR PROPENSITY AND ABILITY TO **ENGAGE IN VIGOROUS** INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSES. INDEED, MANY OF THE BREAKTHROUGH THINKING. CONCEPT AND IDEAS WERE ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THE CONDUCIVE **ENVIRONMENT THAT** EMPHASISED INTELLECTUAL RIGOUR. THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS WERE IMMEASURABLE. THEIR WISDOM AND FORESIGHT WERE UNSURPASSED AND FAR SUPERIOR TO OTHERS. IN MANY CASES THEY WERE A FEW HUNDRED YEARS AHEAD OF THEIR TIME. IBNU Sina, Ibnu Rushd and Al JABIR WERE AMONG THE MANY LEGENDARY THINKERS WHO NOT ONLY EXCELLED IN ONE SPECIFIC AREA OF STUDY, BUT IN MULTIPLE AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE SUCH

AS PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY.

There is much we can

The great thinkers of the past have indeed demonstrated exemplary intellectual qualities for us to emulate. The current highly competitive and demanding operating environment requires present-day Ibnu Sina, Ibnu Rushd and Al Jabir to formulate and develop solutions to the challenges faced by the ummah. Today, the definition of Shariah scholars is often understood in a narrow context where recognition is largely attributed to one's proficiency in the field of Islamic theocracy. However, the nature and challenges faced by society today demand a broader of scholarly endeavours necessitate a new cadre of Islamic finance scholars.

Such scholars, not only excel in their depth of Shariah knowledge and wisdom, but also possess knowledge in other related disciplines such as economics, finance and law.

The combination of technical knowledge and Shariah wisdom, together with a strong understanding in other disciplines would produce great thinkers who are able to translate theoretical reasoning into practice.

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These thinkers could contribute to the society with their contemporary innovative solutions, starting from even small ideas that could potentially bring incremental changes with bigger positive impact over the long run. Great thinkers of yesteryears were known for the audacity to think beyond the sphere of conventional wisdom to shift into a new paradigm that molded civilisation into the next leap forward.

A high standard of professionalism, laced with strong ethical values and integrity also form the prerequisites to create a new cadre of Islamic finance scholars. The pursuit for intellectual diversity and professionalism among scholars is best demonstrated through Shariah interpretations and lines of reasoning that evolve with peculiarity of circumstances, demonstrating a high degree of tolerance and respect of other Shariah school of thoughts. It is only by having talents with these ingrained ethics and characteristics that we could elevate Islamic finance to greater heights in our endeavour to improve the wellbeing of the ummah.

Tonight, as we commemorate this prestigious award, let us celebrate this year's and past years' winners for their contributions to drive the Islamic finance agenda forward. It is not just their academic and working credentials that merit them this award, but it is also their relentless pursuit of al-falah (success) through their drive, knowledge and wisdom.

I BELIEVE THAT THIS YEAR'S ROYAL ISLAMIC FOR ISLAMIC FINANCE WINNER AND PAST WINNERS HAVE PAVED THE PATH FOR FUTURE TALENTS OF ISLAMIC FINANCE TO EMBARK ON BREAKTHROUGH IDEAS AND THINKING. IT IS FOR THIS VERY REASON, THAT THIS YEAR'S AWARD IS CONFERRED TO THE VISIONARY TALENTS THAT HAD MADE IMPACTFUL AND SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO ISLAMIC FINANCE.

On that note, I would also like to take this opportunity to record my appreciation to all steering committee members and the panel of jury of the Royal Award for Islamic Finance 2016, led by Yang Amat Berbahagia Tun Musa Hitam for their unwavering support and commitment.

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SPEECH BY CO-HOST



Tan Sri Ranjit Singh

FORMER CHAIRMAN,
SECURITIES COMMISSION
MALAYSIA
CO-HOST OF THE ROYAL
AWARD FOR ISLAMIC
FINANCE

It is a great pleasure and distinct honour for me to welcome such distinguished guests here this evening to the 4th Royal Award for Islamic Finance Gala Dinner and Award Presentation Ceremony. I am also delighted to see that once again the guests represent a truly international cross section of industry stakeholders. We are especially honoured that Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agong has graced this occasion and consented to confer this prestigious award to the deserving recipient later this evening.

Since the idea for this auspicious Royal Award was first mooted in 2009 - which led to the inaugural biennial Award being conferred in 2010, the Islamic finance industry has nearly doubled in size from approximately US\$1 trillion as at end-2009 to US\$1.88 trillion at the end of last year. Notably, this growth has been achieved despite the challenging global economic and market conditions.

Indeed we meet today Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, against a backdrop of significant volatility in global financial markets and a period of continuing uncertainty on many fronts which have amplified risks and affected market sentiment and economic activity. Arguably, this period of unprecedented volatility that we are witnessing is not just a result of the recent developments in the US or the UK but a



phenomenon that has continued to linger since the Global Financial Crisis of 2008.

The erosion of confidence, the excesses that had been observed and the perceived decoupling of the world of finance from the real economy and society at large have manifested themselves in pockets of sentiments that continue to affect financial markets. It is therefore imperative for all of us in finance to continue working towards addressing the issues at hand and finding solutions to bridge the divide.

IN MANY WAYS, ISLAMIC FINANCE IS UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO OFFER A PROPOSITION THAT LINKS REAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY TO THE WORLD OF FINANCE AND PROVIDE INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS THAT WILL FURTHER DRIVE EFFORTS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CAPITALISM AND **DEMOCRATISATION OF** FINANCE INCLUDING ACCESSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE YOUNGER DEMOGRAPHY. BUT IN ORDER TO DO THIS. WE MUST CONTINUE TO

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WORK COLLECTIVELY AND COLLABORATIVELY ACROSS BORDERS AND SCHOOLS OF THOUGHTS TO GENERATE RESOLUTIONS THAT WILL HAVE A BEARING ON THE WAY THE FUTURE OF FINANCE IS SHAPED. THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN VIEW OF THE GROWING INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF MARKETS AND **JURISDICTIONS THAT IN** TURN DEMANDS UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED AND PRACTICABLE SOLUTIONS THAT ARE ALSO INCREASINGLY REQUIRED TO BALANCE COMMERCIAL WITH SOCIAL OUTCOMES. WHICH IS AN INHERENT FEATURE OF ISLAMIC FINANCE.

Recognition of the criticality of motivating such innovative ideas and thought leadership is a key driving consideration for this Royal Award for Islamic Finance initiative. Furthermore, the Royal Award is as much about honouring the pioneers who have played such a role as it is about inspiring the current and emerging leaders to chart the future of the Islamic finance industry.

The selection of the Award recipient from among the global-wide nominations received was ably undertaken by an international and independent jury comprising eight eminent personalities and chaired by Yang Amat Berbahagia Tun Musa Hitam, former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia. Please allow me at this juncture to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the jury members for their contributions, dedication and extensive deliberations in the selection process for this year's recipient of the Royal Award for Islamic Finance.

Before I conclude, I would like to express my appreciation once again to all our distinguished guests for honouring us with your presence here tonight. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Royal Award Secretariat team and other staff of the Securities Commission Malaysia and Bank Negara Malaysia who have worked tirelessly for many months to administer the Award recipient nomination and selection process earlier as well as organise this Gala Dinner and Award Ceremony.

Tun Musa Hitam

CHAIR OF JURY

I am deeply honoured and privileged to stand before you tonight, as I did in the previous three cycles – 2010, 2012 and 2014, as a chair of the jury to this Fourth Royal Award for Islamic Finance.

My first role is to record our thanks and appreciation for making tonight's event the success it apparently is. A commendation is highly deserved to Bank Negara Malaysia and the Securities Commission Malaysia for spearheading this Royal Award initiative. Special thanks are due to the steering committee for giving us, the jury, their support and most importantly, their full impartiality in the decision making process.

I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the secretariat team for their technical and administrative support. As chair of the jury, I would like to express my most sincere appreciation to my fellow jurors for their eminent contributions during the whole course of the selection process. And finally, let me thank all of you present here tonight, including those from overseas, for your presence to make this Royal Award night such a memorable occasion!

Let me now perform my second role that is the highlight of the evening...

Ladies and gentlemen;

When the call-for-nomination for the Royal Award closed on 14 December 2015, we received 24 nominations comprising players from within the Islamic finance industry and

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from various backgrounds, gender and religion.

This is a very positive reflection of the diversity of stakeholder groups in Islamic finance, including Shariah, academia, market practitioners, financial institutions, research institutions, government agencies and NGOs. Also interesting to note is that the nominations come from around the world – namely the Middle East, Europe, Africa, North America and the Asia Pacific region – which, again, is a clear reflection of the global reach and acceptance of Islamic finance today.

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The selection criteria for the Royal Award encompass both qualitative and quantitative aspects, which assesses the candidates' contribution and reach in the development of Islamic finance globally. The jury considered financial innovation and pioneering work, adoption and acknowledgement of their contributions within the industry, exceptional leadership, inspiration and influence towards future progress and development. With this in mind, it is my supreme pleasure to announce that the winner of the fourth Royal Award for Islamic Finance is...

Professor Datuk Rifaat Ahmed Abdel Karim.

Professor Datuk Rifaat enjoys an international reputation as a leader and respected authority figure in the Islamic financial services industry at both the professional and academic sectors. He has pioneered the development of Islamic finance for the last several decades.

Professor Datuk Rifaat's leadership in the formation of governance, regulatory and Shariah standards, as well as in the development of financial instruments to facilitate liquidity management for Islamic financial institutions, has been instrumental in strengthening the position of the Islamic financial services industry within the broader global economy. Professor Datuk Rifaat has served as the inaugural Secretary-General at both Accounting and the Auditing Organisation for Islamic Financial Institutions from 1996 until 2003 and the Islamic Financial Services Board from 2003 until 2011. During his tenure at the Accounting and Auditing Organisation for Islamic Financial Institutions and the Islamic Financial Services Board, Professor Datuk Rifaat played a key role in the conception and development of standards and guidelines for the Islamic financial services industry.

Among the innovations that he had contributed includes conceptualising the idea of setting up an international standard-setting body of regulatory and supervisory agencies that have vested interest in ensuring the soundness and stability of the Islamic financial services industry, spearheading Islamic Financial Services Board as the inaugural Secretary-General and pioneering the idea of having a bank of international settlements-type institution for Islamic finance industry, a body to regulate the industry by issuing standards and pronouncements.

In October 2012, Professor Datuk Rifaat assumed the position of Chief Executive Officer of the International Islamic Liquidity Management Corporation (IILM), an international organisation established in October 2010 by central banks, monetary agencies and a multilateral development organisation to facilitate liquidity management for Islamic financial institutions.

Under Professor Datuk Rifaat's leadership, the IILM has successfully issued the first tradable, Shariah-compliant, US dollar-denominated highly rated sukuk with a tenor of under one year. The IILM sukuk, which are rated A-1 by Standard and Poor's (S&P) rating services, represent a new class of assets in the Islamic financial services industry. These sukuk are intended to assist Islamic financial institutions in mitigating the disadvantages they have been facing in managing liquidity, compared to their conventional counterparts. As of October 2016, a total of US\$21.14 billion value of sukuk have been issued and reissued at maturity.

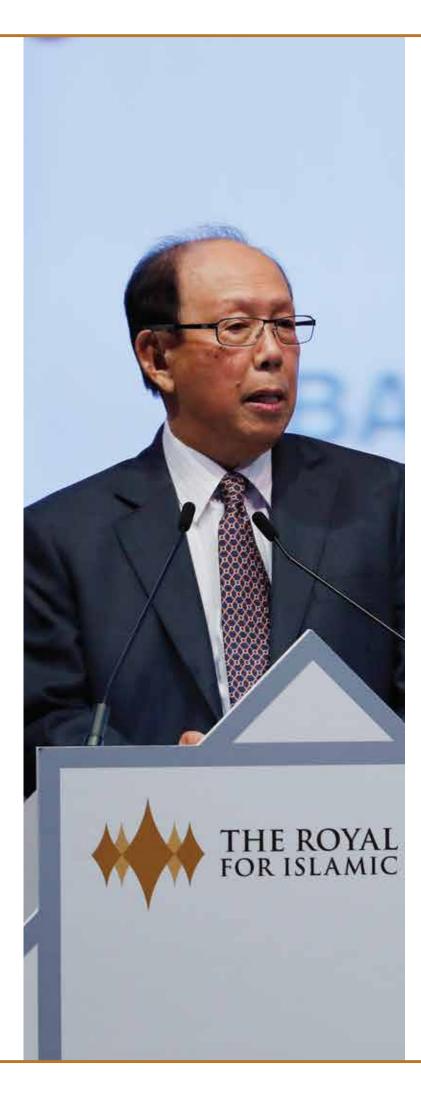
Through serving as the CEO of the IILM, Professor Datuk Rifaat still works on many key public and private initiatives in developing framework and guidelines for countries keen to develop and enhance their Islamic finance agenda. In parallel to strengthen the Islamic finance industry globally, Professor Datuk Rifaat continues to dedicate his time and effort in fulfilling this worthy cause.

Ladies and gentlemen;

Before I conclude, let me reiterate that the jury had observed a most diligent and objective selection process, and tonight's award reaffirms that Professor Datuk Rifaat's contribution towards the development of Islamic finance will not be forgotten. I have no doubt that he serves as an inspiration for the next generation.

Congratulations, Professor Datuk Rifaat Ahmed Abdel Karim!







Profile, Achievement and Global Contribution

PROFESSOR DATUK RIFAAT AHMED ABDEL KARIM

Professor Datuk Rifaat's vision and passion for Islamic finance, and his in-depth understanding of both conventional and Islamic finance, has enabled him to pioneer many frontiers and set standards which are instrumental to the exponential growth of Islamic finance globally.

Professor Datuk Rifaat's leadership qualities contributions to and exemplary development of the Islamic financial services industry include his instrumental roles in the establishment international two standardsetting bodies - the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) and the Financial Services Board (IFSB). He is the first Secretary General of the IFSB, a post he held since the IFSB started operations in 2003 until 2011. Under his stewardship, the membership of the IFSB expanded from nine founding members in 2003 to almost 200 members in 2010 which include supervisory and regulatory authorities responsible for the banking, capital market and insurance sectors in 41 jurisdictions and 6 international inter-governmental organisations namely the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Bank for International Settlements (BIS), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD) and The World Bank.

Professor Datuk Rifaat is also recognised for his global impact contributions in the prudential and accounting standard setting fronts particularly in areas of soundness, stability and transparency of the Islamic finance industry. The IFSB became a member of the Core Principles Group of the Basel Committee during his tenure.

In 2012, Professor Datuk Rifaat assumed the position of CEO of IILM, an international institution established by central banks, monetary authorities and multilateral organisations with the primary objective of issuing short-term Shariah-compliant tradable financial instruments denominated in major reserve currencies to facilitate cross-border liquidity management amongst Islamic banks globally.

He successfully garnered the support and commitment from participating central banks and regulatory authorities to issue the world's first tradable US-dollar denominated sukuk with tenure of less than one-year in 2013. This sukuk is one of the major breakthroughs and represents a new class of assets in the global Islamic financial services industry.



Professor Datuk Rifaat has garnered strong support from diversified markets including the Middle East and Asia Pacific in mainstreaming Islamic finance into the global financial space. He is recognised as a world-renowned expert in the Islamic financial

services industry. His contributions to the global Islamic finance industry can be clearly identified through his numerous awards in the field.

- Literati Network Awards for Excellence 2011, Outstanding Academic Paper Award Winner: Supervisory, Regulatory and Capital Adequacy Implications of Profit Sharing Investment Accounts in Islamic Finance, Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, UK
- Islamic Business & Finance Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Industry, December 2010
- Islamic Development Bank Award for Islamic Banking and Finance, June 2010
- Royal Malaysian Honorary Award of Darjah Kebesaran Panglima Jasa Negara (P.J.N.) which carries the title 'Datuk', June 2010

- World Islamic Banking Conference Award for Industry
 Leadership, November 2010
- Islamic Business and Finance Award "Contribution of Excellence in Islamic Finance", 2005
- Euromoney "2004 Outstanding Contribution in the Development of Islamic Finance", Inaugural Recipient
- "American Finance House LARIBA Award for Excellence in Faith Based LARIBA Banking and Finance (Academic Division)", 2003
- "Lifetime Achievement Award in Islamic Banking and Finance" awarded by the Islamic Banking and Finance Forum, in Bahrain, 1998

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In the sphere of education, Professor Datuk Rifaat was a Visiting Professor at the International Capital Market Association (ICMA) Centre, Henley Business School, University of Reading, United Kingdom, and was a Member of the governing council of the International Centre for Education in Islamic Finance (INCEIF), Malaysia. He is a prolific writer and has authored a considerable number of academic and professional papers in key areas including accounting, finance, governance, Shariah and regulatory issues to further contribute to the development of Islamic finance. Professor Rifaat has

contributed articles to many publications, including, the Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research, the Review of Islamic Economics and the Journal of banking regulation. He has also worked with various research institutions and renowned universities.

Professor Datuk Rifaat graduated from Khartoum University, Sudan in 1975. He went on to complete his Masters and PhD at the University of Birmingham and University of Bath in the United Kingdom respectively.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

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I am honoured to accept the Royal Award for Islamic Finance for the year 2016. I would like to express my deepest gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to my wife, family, close friends residing in Malaysia and the senior management team of the International Islamic Liquidity Management Corporation for coming to this occasion.

Without my family's support and prayers, I certainly would not have been able to have come this far in my career.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the organising committee at both Bank Negara Malaysia and Securities Commission Malaysia for developing such an award to recognise the contribution of those who dedicate their efforts and time to the world of Islamic finance. This prestigious award serves as an encouragement for me, as well as for students of Islamic finance, to excel further and bring glory to the Islamic financial services industry.

For some of you here who may know or have read my story, Islamic finance is an industry I chanced upon in the early 80s. My early academic work was with the late Professor Trevor Gambling who taught me at Birmingham University where I did my Masters degree. We subsequently published a joint paper in an academic journal, the Journal of Business Finance and Accounting. Though Islamic finance had just surfaced at the time, my passion and thirst for knowledge on the subject matter encouraged me to pursue it further.

PROFESSOR DATUK RIFAAT AHMED ABDEL KARIM

2016 Royal Award For Islamic Finance Award Recipient



As with the nature of people in academia and as a knowledge-seeking Muslim, I continued to research, study and write about Islamic finance because I believed it to be a viable form of finance that could be accepted by many experts and market practitioners in the global financial space — as has indeed turned out to be the case. This has formed the challenge that I have always attempted to address in my career.

I have been fortunate in my many years of being in the Islamic finance industry to have met distinguished people and have served in institutions which were developed to promulgate standards and push out the boundaries of Islamic finance.

IN MY OPINION, THE
ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING
ORGANIZATION FOR ISLAMIC
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
(AAOIFI), ISLAMIC FINANCIAL
SERVICES BOARD (IFSB) AND THE
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC
LIQUIDITY MANAGEMENT
CORPORATION (IILM) HAVE
SIGNIFICANTLY HELPED IN
BUILDING THE ISLAMIC FINANCE
INDUSTRY'S INFRASTRUCTURE.

TODAY, ISLAMIC FINANCE IS MORE ESTABLISHED AND RESILIENT THAN BEFORE AND THE WORLD CAN TESTIFY TO THIS, PARTICULARLY AFTER THE 2008 GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS. I HOPE THAT WITH THE CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS FROM SUCH INSTITUTIONS.THE WORK THAT THE IILM IS DOING, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE BY GLOBAL FINANCIAL HUBS SUCH AS THE MALAYSIAN ISLAMIC FINANCIAL MARKETPLACE. ISLAMIC FINANCE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE ITS MARK IN THE INDUSTRY AND STAND AT PAR ALONGSIDE ITS CONVENTIONAL COUNTERPART.

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Once again, I am indeed grateful to be this year's recipient of The Royal Award for Islamic Finance. I thank you all for your hard work in recognising Islamic finance and I hope that one day Islamic finance will grow to its fullest potential and will not merely be recognised globally, but will receive appropriate institutional support, in all jurisdictions. Have a pleasant evening ahead. Assalamu 'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh. Thank you.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL AWARD FOR ISLAMIC FINANCE 2016

JURY MEMBERS:

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CHAIRMAN, WORLD ISLAMIC ECONOMIC FORUM FOUNDATION

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