

## EDITORIAL

This is the last issue of *AJISS* that I have planned and edited. I have been associated with this journal since we named it *AJISS* and coined the term "Islamic social science." These years have been characterized by a great struggle to define and to develop Islamic social sciences and to identify scholars both here and abroad who were willing and qualified to work for the intellectual reform of the ummah.

Being involved in a movement during its formative period is a great challenge. Now that *AJISS* has been produced for ten years, the vision of Islamic social sciences is much clearer, the potential writers have been identified, prominent scholars in the related fields have been drawn into the debate, and many young researchers are taking a cue for their future projects from the issues raised in *AJISS*. We are grateful to Almighty Allah for granting us success in this mission and hope that the journal will continue to provide a healthy forum for intellectual dialogue. Once again I have been called upon to take up a new challenge. After a decade of mobilizing Muslim intellectuals and involving both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars in a debate about the relevance of Islam to contemporary life, I will be dedicating more of my energies to developing an Islamic vision for North America in my new role as Secretary General of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).

The Islamic Society of North America grew out of the former Muslim Students Association of the United States and Canada (MSA). This latter organization was born and brought up in university campuses and thus has a rich intellectual tradition and a great inherent potential. The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS), the cosponsor of *AJISS*, is one of the affiliates of ISNA, as is the MSA. This makes the pool of Muslim social scientists and students available to ISNA for developing its plans and programs based on an informed analysis and a sound methodology.

In the United States, we are engaged in community formation and the establishment of Islamic educational, economic, social, and other institutions. Muslims are playing a positive and historic role in making Islam understood and relevant through their contributions and presence. The

annual ISNA conventions have been great Islamic events that have brought together thousands of Muslims to deliberate on their Islamic concerns. It is revealing to look at the conventions' themes and to assess the growth, maturity, and seriousness of this community in the West. From the early 1970s, when such themes as "From Muslim to Islam" were discussed, a concern for defining an Islamic identity was clear. In 1993, the theme—"Muslims for a Better America"—reflected a new mood. Several thousand Muslims attended ISNA's thirtieth annual convention at Kansas City, Missouri, to discuss how they could work for a better America.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation and thanks to all those who have cooperated with me during the last ten years to make *AJISS* a respectable Islamic journal. I hope that they will extend this same assistance to the new staff of the journal. I would also like to invite all our writers and readers to participate with me in the new venture to explore the role of Islam in America. The last few years of the last century of the second millennium are going to be very crucial as regards promoting a better understanding of Islam in America and carving out a dignified role for the American Muslim community in its desire to work for a better America. Muslim thinkers will have to play a major role in defining this new vision.

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