

AlMusharaf Addresses Issues of Reform and Transformation

On the evening of Tuesday, Rabie AlAkhar 7th, 1431AH corresponding to March 23rd, 2010, Althulatha Cultural Forum in Qatif received Jasim AlMusharaf, a writer and researcher, to deliver a lecture entitled "Culture of Reform and Will of Transformation". Zaki AlBaharnah, a member in the Forum's Organizing Committee, moderated the program, and introduced the lecturer who was born in Alahssa and holds a master degree in Arab Literature and Criticism. He is a member in several cultural and literary societies and institutions, and has published six books in the fields of literature and culture, besides ten unpublished works.

AlMusharaf talked about transformation as it is a norm in life, and confirmed that routine and acceptance of reality with all of its problems are the most dangerous issues that threaten the character of human beings. He referred to the Qur'anic verse "Verily! Allah will not change the good condition of a people as long as they do not change their state of goodness themselves", and said that transformation correlates between the personal reality of an individual and its influence over the group through reshaping the mentality and making changes in values and views.

The lecturer said that transformation has a variety of synonymous terms like transition, substitution and evolution because it occurs voluntarily or through coercion. He, also, emphasized the possibility of directing transformation to the way that serves achieving the desired goals. He referred to some obstacles that hinder transformation such as lack of overall view, confusion in the order of priorities, emotional rush, focusing on mistakes of others and ignoring of self-criticism.

AlMusharaf cleared how transformation contributed in the formation of the contemporary world through the great universal revolutions whether agricultural, industrial or digital revolutions which influenced the globe and led to its development. The agricultural

revolution contributed in the settlement of human beings and formation of new values in human relationships and consequently led to the development of civilization; whereas the industrial one led to the increase of production and replacing human power with machines which caused a huge imbalance in the relationships between different social classes. As for the digital revolution, it contributed in developing the world about five times more during the past twenty years, and indicators of transformation increased rapidly.

The speaker, also, talked about the most prominent issues that concern our current world, and emphasized the importance of individuals' interaction with the existing transformations and evolutions. He explored the problem of climate changes referring to its dangerous impacts and consequences that cause drought of agricultural lands and icebergs melting. Such consequences endanger human beings, and expose them to famine and floods. Moreover, he indicated the problems of hunger, poverty, and the increasing gap between poor and wealthy states and individuals as well as the difficulty of keeping pace with scientific challenges and the digital world.

In a comparison between the Arab states conditions with other states in the world, the lecturer said that there is a huge difference in level of development. He believes that, during the few past decades, many states had developed remarkably whereas the Arab states are still controlled by the narrow-minded discourse, insufficient support for carrying out scientific researches and absence of freedoms and democracy. The speaker reviewed Malaysia and Turkey some successful transformation experiences in some states such as in referring to the factors that led to such success and development.

AlMusharaf addressed the requirements of transformation stressing its social and national dimensions. He explained that there are several essential intellectual demands; most prominent of which are correcting ambiguous concepts that are related to transformation process like limits of personal freedoms, restructuring priorities, reviewing educational curricula and renewing cultural and informational discourse in order to promote the culture of coexistence and acceptance

of others. As for the social aspect, the lecturer confined transformation requirements in activating the role of civil society institutions, involving the youth in decision-making process, enabling women as real partners in development and spreading the culture of claiming individual and public rights. As for political aspects, the speaker emphasized the importance of restructuring political systems to achieve more liberty, public participation and equality between citizens.

The attendance agreed with AlMusharaf upon the significance of individuals' role of participating in different global issues. They, also, confirmed the importance of coexistence, openness and communication between various social groups for constituting a harmonized national identity that is capable of overcoming challenges. Sa'eed AlKhabbaz believes that transformation philosophy does not develop only for the better, and focused on the necessity of encouraging capabilities and talents of youth in the society.