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The Chairman's Message: The World Organization for Al-Azhar Graduates

Shaykh Prof Dr Abbas Shoman
Chairman of the Board



No one doubts that Al-Azhar is the greatest scholarly institution that has served Islam, its sciences, and its people throughout the ages, from its inception to the present day. Indeed, perhaps history does not mention a scholarly institution that has brought together the people of the East and the West in such remarkable harmony as Al-Azhar has done and continues to do.

Throughout history, Al-Azhar has represented the true Islamic approach with its moderation and balance, and its rejection of intellectual extremism and religious and sectarian fanaticism. Those near and far have recognised Al-Azhar and its graduates from all over the world as defenders of moderation and balance, and as the first line of defence against extremism, radicalism, and terrorism.

By the grace of Allah Almighty, his Eminence the Grand Imam, Professor Dr Ahmad al-Tayyeb Shaykh Al-Azhar, established the World Organisation for Al-Azhar Graduates. Under his leadership, the organisation has worked from the outset to develop the necessary programmes and plans to disseminate Islamic knowledge and moderation, confront extremist thought that threatens the true image of Islam, and protect Muslims throughout the world—to the best of its capabilities and the tools at its disposal—from deviant trends. This effort has been achieved by organising numerous scientific and cultural activities in Egypt and abroad.

The organisation has worked to develop the academic performance of Al-Azhar graduates worldwide through the cultural courses and activities it organises, both at its headquarters in Cairo and at its branches around the world. The goal is to provide them with a sound understanding of the Islamic approach, one that is consistent with contemporary reality and

emerging issues in their societies. This goal is also to enhance the performance of Al-Azhar graduates at all levels and in all activities, enabling them to fulfil their role as ambassadors of Al-Azhar around the world.

Perhaps, having assumed the chairmanship of this venerable entity, by assignment from his Eminence the Grand Imam - may Allah protect him - I need not emphasise that it is an authentic Al-Azhar entity, operating in accordance with Al-Azhar's vision and approach, and following its Grand Imam in his plan to elevate the word of Islam and correct its image throughout the world.

It is sufficient to mention the initiatives undertaken by the organisation's branches within the Arab Republic of Egypt include to build awareness among youth, instil the values of citizenship, and enhance the cultural and artistic development of our children.

Similarly, the organisation's branches abroad are undertaking commendable efforts and continuous work, particularly in supporting women's concerns, promoting the Arabic language, and combating extremist ideas and terrorist groups. Nevertheless, we still need to intensify our efforts and join hands.

The organisation has been keen to prioritise quality and quantity, rather than quantity alone, to achieve its desired objectives. Therefore, it has established key standards for all its activities, including articulating the desired objective with utmost precision, whether long-term or short-term; studying the mechanisms required to achieve this objective and select the most appropriate ones given available resources; paying attention to the content presented to the public, whether scientific, cultural, or even entertainment; relying on experienced and competent personnel in planning and implementation while highlighting young talents to leverage their energies; evaluating performance against the established objectives, working to assess and correct errors, if any, and envisioning possible development in subsequent activities.

Today, as we celebrate the anniversary of the founding of this active Al-Azhar entity, and after all the tireless work we have mentioned, we continue to aspire to the best. We ask Allah Almighty for success and guidance, and that He crowns our efforts with success. May Allah Almighty bless our Master Muhammad, his family, and his companions.

- *Abbas Shoman, Chairman of the Board*



Al-Azhar Alumni UK

Eaton Hall, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 0PR
England, United Kingdom

www.azharalumni.uk
info@azharalumni.uk