



EMIR ABD EL-KADER AWARD

FOR THE PROMOTION OF LIVING TOGETHER
AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AROUND
THE MEDITERRANEAN AND IN THE WORLD



REPORT



Djanatu al Arif



AISA
ONG Internazionale



Programme MED 21



Mostaganem



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An International Event

The **Emir Abd el-Kader Award** Ceremony on 21 September 2016 at the Headquarters of the Djanatu al-Arif Foundation in Mostaganem was attended by nearly 3,500 participants. An exceptional event by its nature, scope and message.

Coming from all regions of Algeria and abroad, the attendees were a cross section of society in the presence of the Minister of Culture, seven former Members of Government, a Secretary of State and Minister of Belgium, Several Ambassadors and Consuls, Generals, Walis, Sheikhs of Tariqas (Sufi Orders), as well as the Mayors of Mostaganem and the City of El Kader in the USA.

A Magical place to host the event: the Headquarters of the Foundation Djanatu Al Arif

The first edition of the **“EMIR ABD EL-KADER AWARD FOR THE PROMOTION OF LIVING TOGETHER AND PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN AND IN THE WORLD”** was held in this magnificent location.

For nearly two weeks preparations were in full swing with numerous volunteers from Djanatu al-Arif Foundation and AISA ONG Internationale actively involved creating the best conditions for the ceremony and welcoming a very large public. Everything: gardens, roads, buildings, animal pens (horses, cows, goats, etc), ponds, fountains, all had to be in perfect working condition.

Two large marquees seating more than 1000 attendees were installed and equipped with a stage and giant projection screen. Most of the guests had chairs, while the right part of the stage was covered with carpets for the tolbas who would recite the Qur’an for a spiritual tribute to the Emir. A large Bedouin tent (Khayma) was installed in the garden to welcome personalities during the dinner.



Aerial view of the headquarters of the Djanatu al-Arif Foundation, site of the event

In a Festive Atmosphere

From the beginning of the afternoon, attendees of all ages enjoyed the gardens, accompanied by family and friends in an ambiance of joy, fraternity and love in honour of the Emir Abd el-Kader who's thought and values continue to inspire and enrich us through time.

In tribute to the Emir, rider emeritus and a great lover of horses, mounted traditional riders greeted the attendees on their arrival. Bands playing traditional music brightened the atmosphere with the sounds of guitar and drums

This atmosphere accompanied the attendees throughout the afternoon until the evening meal shared with friends or family on the lawns.



Arrival of the Dignitaries and Visiting the Exhibitions

Numerous dignitaries coming to participate in the ceremony, arrived from abroad and Algiers together with the Wilayas of Mostaganem and Oran, meeting at the Hocine El Mansour, a stud farm near the headquarters, for lunch offered by the Wali of Mostaganem. A moment of meeting and exchange in a convivial atmosphere.

From 3pm, official vehicles started arriving at the Foundation Headquarters continuing to do so for over an hour. Before taking their places in the Marquees, already filled by an overflowing public, the dignitaries were invited to visit the banners of the Sufi Orders of the region of Mostaganem and an Exhibition of the personal belongings of the Emir Abd el-

Kader in the main building. The visit was conducted by **Sheikh Khaled Bentounes**, spiritual guide of the Tariqa Alāwiyya and Honorary President of AISA International NGO and the Djanatu al-Arif Foundation.

The numerous dignitaries present then headed towards the marquees to take their seats. Let us name a few of the diplomatic, political and cultural dignitaries who honoured us by their presence: **Mr Azzedine Mihoubi** Minister of Culture of the Algerian Government, **Mrs Fadila Laanan** Minister of the French-speaking Brussels Government, **Mrs Safira Mashrusah** Indonesian Ambassador-Plenipotentiary, **Ms Isabelle Roy** Ambassador of Canada, **Mr Sam Reda Amiry** Ambassador of Iran, **Mr Pierre Gillon** Ambassador of Belgium, **Mr Andrijazevich Marin**, Ambassador of Croatia, **Mr Alejandro Polanco** Ambassador of Spain and **Mr Driss Jazairi** retired Ambassador.

Also present were the General Consuls of Morocco, France and Spain, representatives of the Embassies of Palestine and Holland, and **Ms Dominique Poirier** Head of International Relations City of Montreal and Representative of the Mayor of Montreal and **Mr. Joshua Robert Pope**, Mayor of the city of "El Kader" in the department of Clayton, Iowa, United States.

Among the Algerian personalities were former Ministers of the Algerian Government, Messrs **Ali Haroun**, **Mustapha Cherif**, **Ahmed Benbitour**, **Nacer Mhel**, **Bouabdellah Ghoulamallah**, as well as several Generals, Elected Representatives of the National People's Council and the Ummah Council, some Presidents of the local Councils and of several Wilayas, some Representatives of Political Parties and the President and Secretary of the Emir Abd el-Kader Foundation.



Showcase of objects that belonged to The Emir Abd el-Kader

The Press Conference

In front of a wall of National and International journalists the organizers, **Sheikh Khaled Bentounes**, **Mr. Mohamed Aziza** the President of MED 21, **Mr. Hamid Demmou** the President of AISA International ONG and **Mr. Nassredine Mouhoub**, spokesperson of the Djanatu al-Arif, presented the event and answered questions from numerous journalists.

Sheikh Khaled Bentounes began by recalling the importance of this day by naming it "Akbarienne". He then explained the Award by emphasizing that the message of the Emir was just as relevant today and was much needed in our present world. **Professor Mohamed Aziza** stressed the importance of the Award and the logic of its integration into the whole of the MED 21 Program.



H. Demmou, Prof. Aziza, Sheikh Bentounes and N. Mouhoub answered questions from journalists

The Award Ceremony

Initiated by AISA International ONG, Djanatu Al-Arif Foundation and the International Med 21 program, the Award was given to three personalities: **Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi**, South Shore Laureate, former Algerian Foreign Minister and former Deputy Secretary General of the League Arab States and the United Nations, **Mr. Federico Mayor**, North Shore Laureate, former Spanish Minister and former Director-General of Unesco and **Mr. Raymond Chrétien**, Laureate for the Rest of the World, former Ambassador of Canada and President of the International Mayors' Observatory on Living Together. The profiles of the laureates perfectly illustrate the level that the organizers wished to have for this Award, in line with the exceptional figure of the Emir Abd el-Kader.

The ceremony began with the Algerian national anthem and was followed by the speeches of the Wali of Mostaganem **Mr. Abdelwahid Temmar**, **Mr. Azzedine Mihoubi**, Minister of Culture, **Sheikh Khaled Bentounes** and **Professor Mohamed Aziza**. The Minister greeted the assembly by pointing out that it is uncommon for so many people to attend this type of ceremony. He then stressed the urgent need to commit all efforts to the Culture of Peace and Living Together and emphasized the fact that this Award is an important step in this direction. The personality of the Emir was at the centre of all the speeches. **Sheikh Khaled Bentounes** recalled the importance of education to the Culture of Peace and Living Together for today and for generations to come.



LAUREATE SOUTH SHORE: Mr Lakhdar Brahimi

The Award for the South Shore was given to **Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi** by the Minister of Culture and **Sheikh Bentounes**. In his address, **Mr. Brahimi** began by paying tribute to **Sheikh Al-Alawi**, founder of the Sufi Alawi order and originator of the site of the event. Also to all those who followed him and have worked for the service of the order and this place.

He then requested that we *“not leave the field open to intolerance, amalgamation and mixing of types”* before adding *“that it is not permissible to conceal the origin of the conflicts that bloody some of our countries, the flood of millions of refugees ... was foreseeable, and was foreseen.”*



Sheikh Bentounes and the Minister of Culture present the South Shore Award to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi

LAUREATE NORTH SHORE: Mr Federico Mayor

Mr. Federico Mayor, unable to travel for health reasons, was represented by His Excellency **Mr. Alejandro Polanco**, Ambassador of Spain, to whom the North Shore Award was presented by **Mr Idriss Jazairi** and **Mr Hamid Demmou**, President of AISA International NGO.

Mr. Mayor wanted his recorded video message to be shown and it was displayed on the giant screen. He mentions that *"the key word is sharing,"* and adds *"Emir Abd el-Kader is a symbol of tolerance and fraternity that today's world has need of and we must use it to inspire ourselves in our daily behaviour";* then he noted *"We tried to substitute the G6, G7, G8, G20 for the United Nations. How can a few groups of countries have the governance of the world in their hands? We must rebuild the United Nations system to prevent the horror of war for future generations."* It will end by rejecting the saying *"if vis pacem, para bellum", "if you want peace, prepare for war"* by affirming the contrary, *"if you want peace, prepare for peace and I pledge to work in favour of Peace"*.

During the Awards ceremony, the Wali of Oran, **Mr. Abdelghani Zaalane** and the Wali of Mostaganem, **Mr. Abdelwahid Temmar** accompanied by **Mr. Bouras Elketroussi**, President of the People's Assembly of Wilaya and **Mr. Abdelhamid Smain**, Mayor of Mostaganem handed out gifts to all the laureates from the Wilaya and the city of Mostaganem.



Mr. Idriss Jazairy and Mr. Hamid Demmou present the North Shore Award to His Excellency Mr. Alejandro Polanco representing Mr. Federico Mayor, laureate of the North Shore Award.

LAUREATE REST OF THE WORLD: Mr. Raymond Chrétien

The Rest of the World Award was given to **Mr Raymond Chrétien** by **Mrs Fadila Laanan** and **Mr Mohamed Aziza**. **Mr. Chrétien** took the floor and said that *“whatever the country from which we come, whatever our race, whatever our religion, whatever our language and our values, the inexorable evolution of our little blue planet will force us, in the years to come, to invent a thousand and one ways to learn to live better together.”*



Ms. Fadila Laanan and Professor Mohamed Aziza present the Rest of the World Award to Mr. Raymond Chrétien

SPECIAL MENTION Award to the Chair “Emir Abd el-Kader”

The ceremony continued with the presentation of the Special Mention Award which was given to the promoters of the Chair “Emir Abd el-Kader” of the University of Algiers. That is **Professor Tahar Hadjar**, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, represented by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Higher Education, **Mohamed Saleh Seddiki** and **Dr Issam Toulbi**, Director of the Chair.



Sheikh Bentounes and Mr. Nasserredine Mouhoub present
The Special Mention Award of the Emir Abd el-Kader Chair to Mr. Mohamed Seddiki and Mr. Issam Toulbi

Speeches of the Presidents of the meeting

This award ceremony was presided over by **Mrs Fadila Laanan**, Secretary of State and Minister of the French-speaking Government of Brussels (Belgium) and His Excellency **Mr. Idriss Jazairi**, Ambassador and Executive Director of the Geneva Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights, Man and Global Dialogue.

Mrs Laanan insisted in her speech on the importance of building bridges at all levels and expressed her willingness to strengthen relations between Brussels and Mostaganem and between Belgium and Algeria.

Mr. Idriss Jazairi concludes his speech with the following words: *“So let us all, to the north and south of the Mediterranean, pay attention to this call of the Emir to tolerance, I would say more, to convivence, Not only to tolerate each other but to mutual appreciation. Also to take pleasure in the beauty of the diversity that enriches our societies”.*



Speech by Mrs Fadila Laanan, Secretary of State and Minister of the French-speaking Brussels Government (Belgium)



Address by Mr Idriss Jazairi, Executive Director of the Geneva Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights and Global Dialogue

Giving the Key of the City of Mostaganem to the Mayor of El Kader (USA)

The last speaker of the day was a special guest **Mr. Joshua Robert Pope** Mayor of the only city in the world that bears the name of El Kader, Clayton County seat, Iowa, United States. He came especially for the occasion when he discovered the country whose founder had given the name to his City.

In his emotional speech, he was proud to represent the City that bears the name of this illustrious personage and he mentioned the history of the birth of the City. It was in 1846 that three Americans, John Thompson, Timothy Davis and Chester Sage, decided to name their small camp which would become the City of El Kader. Emotion was at its height when the Mayor of Mostaganem symbolically handed the Key to the Town of Mostaganem to Mr. Pope who told us that it will be exhibited in his office at the Town hall of the City.



Mr J.R Pope Mayor of the City of El Kader (USA) receives the Key to the city of Mostaganem from the Mayor of Mostaganem.

Late Evening Dinner

Everyone was invited to share a meal in an atmosphere of fraternal joy on the lawns. Invited personalities meet under the great Bedouin tent (Khayma) for a traditional dinner.



Sharing dinner on the lawns of the Djanatu al-Arif Foundation garden.



Farewell dinner in the Bedouin tent (Khayma)

Conclusion

What to remember about this event and this Award dedicated to a man who marked his century and bequeathed the prosperity of this message: *"If Muslims and Christians had wanted to lend me their attention, I would have put an end to their quarrels; They would have become externally and inwardly brothers"*.

We hope that this Award will be the founding stone of **the Foundation of the Culture of Peace and of Living Together** in his country on this memorable day and that future generations see beyond their racial, cultural or religious affiliation and will build their future, one with the other and not one against the other. Together, each according to their means and abilities, in their turn humbly bringing to this initiative their share to build the abode of peace in order to reconcile the human family.





AISA ONG Internationale

www.aisa-ong.org
contact@aisa-ong.org

Fondation Djanatu al-Arif

www.djanatularif.net
contact@djanatularif.net