

庭野平和財団 理事長

Chairman, The Niwano Peace Foundation

長沼基之

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庭野平和財団では宗教的立場から、平和への努力の必要性から「庭野平和賞」を設け、昭和58年に第1回贈呈式を挙行して以来、本年で5回目を迎えることができました。これも皆様のご助言とご支援の賜と深く感謝申し上げる次第でございます。

過去4人の受賞者は、その後も平和社会実現のために宗教的情熱をもって行動されておられる様子を伺い、敬服致しますとともにますますのご活躍を祈念申し上げたいと存じます。

今回、第5回の選考を実施するに際しましては、121カ国794の方々に推薦をご依頼申し上げ、ご推挙賜りました70名の候補者につき、厳正なる審査を行いました。審査にあたりましては、世界の諸宗教から6人で構成される審査委員会にて慎重なる検討の結果、本年は「世界イスラム協議会」に決定致しました。

イスラム圏から、しかも初の団体の受賞となりましたが、世界の平和を考えますとき、イスラム教は世界の代表的宗教として重要な役割を果たすものと考えます。

「世界イスラム協議会」は1926年に設立されて以来、混迷した世界の状況の中で、「イスラムの統一と結束」「イスラム概念の普及」そして「諸宗教との対話」等に尽力してこられました。

イスラムと申しますと、日本ではまだまだ理解不足があると伺いますが、この平和賞の贈呈式を機会により理解を深め、世界の平和をめざして一層の協力を促進する所存でございます。何卒諸賢のご教示ご助言を賜りますようお願い申し上げ、報告とさせて頂きます。

## On the Selection of the Recipient of the Fifth Niwano Peace Prize

The Niwano Peace Foundation established the Niwano Peace Prize in recognition of the necessity to make efforts for peace from a religious standpoint. The prize was presented for the first time in a ceremony in 1983. This year, we are pleased to be able to observe the fifth presentation ceremony. We have been able to accomplish this because of the advice and support of all concerned, for which I want to express my deepest gratitude.

I have been told that the four people who have received past prizes have continued working with as much religious enthusiasm as ever toward realization of a peaceful society. I admire them and pray for them and that they continue their activities vigorously in the future.

In order to select the Fifth Niwano Peace Prize winner, our Foundation solicited nominations for candidates from 794 people in 124 countries. Seventy candidates were nominated and scrutinized with strict fairness. Through a careful screening by a six-member committee consisting of representatives of various religions, the Foundation decided to award this year's Niwano Peace Prize to the World Muslim Congress.

The World Muslim Congress is the first winner of the Niwano Peace Prize from the Islamic world and it is also the first organizational recipient of the award. As a major world religion, Islam plays an important role in striving for world peace.

Since its establishment in 1926, the World Muslim Congress has worked for "the unity and solidarity of Islam", "the dissemination of Islamic concepts" and "dialogue with other religions" to alleviate the confusion existing in the world.

Although Islam is not yet sufficiently understood in Japan, I hope that the presentation of this Peace Prize will enhance understanding of the Islamic religion by the Japanese people and promote further inter-denominational cooperation for world peace. In conclusion, I pray for the success of your work and ask for your advice and suggestions.