



## WRITTEN STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT

### Ian McEwan, Author

"In past centuries, Arabic learning was a source of great riches for the Western intellectual tradition. It is a cause for celebration that this major translation initiative is able to offer riches in return."

### Milan Kundera, Author

"J'ai toujours été fasciné par le monde arabe. Fascination d'autant plus grande qu'elle était accompagnée par le reproche de mal le connaître. J'admire votre initiative de traduire en arabe les grandes œuvres de la littérature. J'espère qu'elle va provoquer une initiative semblable de notre côté européen à l'égard de la littérature arabe."

"I have always been fascinated by the Arab world and all the more so for not knowing it very well. I admire your initiative of translating major literary works into Arabic. I hope this will encourage a similar initiative on the European side towards Arab literature."

### Yann Martel, Author

"Over a thousand years ago, in their quest to understand the marvelous world created by God, the Arabs sought out all forms of knowledge and translated them into Arabic. Passing traders, Prometheus-like, carried some of these hot embers of wisdom to Europe and we know what happened next: the Dark Ages were lit up by a Renaissance that profoundly transformed the West.

Is it not time that the West return some of that great light? In gratitude, should the world not show to the Arabs what we have done with their gift? We have songs and science that are worthy, once again, of being translated into Arabic. With Kalima as our camel, let us trade with the Arabs in the greatest of all goods: words and ideas."

### Phil Rosenzweig, Author

"It is a wonderful honor for The Halo Effect to be among the first business books to be translated into Arabic by Kalima. The Halo Effect is an unusual business book, as it challenges conventional thinking and calls for managers and researchers to think critically and clearly. I am delighted that Kalima is making it possible for the ideas in my book to reach an audience across the Arabic speaking world, and, more broadly, I wish them every success in their very valuable endeavors."



### **Jim Crace, Author**

"I am greatly supportive of the Kalima initiative. When I lived in the Sudan during the late 1960s, I was soon captivated by the beauties of the Arabic language and saddened that Sudanese writers of my acquaintance -including Tayeb Salih and El Sir Hassan Fadl- were translated and readily available in English but not in their mother tongue. Now that I am a novelist myself, almost every book I write owes a great debt of gratitude to the rhythmic cadences of Arabic, so it is a regret that thus far, that incomparable, hospitable, musical language is not one of the twenty-eight into which my books have been translated. But I live in hope, as do many of my writing colleagues. Now that Kalima -with the generous and far-sighted backing of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi- has announced its plans to translate important works, writers in English and perhaps other languages can aspire to being read by Arab-speaking audiences - and citizens of the Arab world can engage imaginatively with the thoughts and aspirations of their friends and cousins abroad. This can be nothing but wonderful news. And so timely. The arts -especially literature- can sometimes bring together and mend those regrettable rents and tears caused by politics and cultural misunderstandings."

### **George Saliba, Professor of Arabic and Islamic Science, Columbia University**

"No civilization has experienced a renaissance in its history in one form or another without that renaissance being preceded or coming contemporaneously with a translation movement. Whether it was ninth century Baghdad or Europe during the Middle Ages and later during the Renaissance, in all instances the translation movements ushered in remarkable periods of cultural upsurge."

### **Philip Seib, Professor of Journalism and Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California**

"Books serve as bridges between civilizations, and the Kalima initiative will be a great builder of bridges. This project takes an invaluable step toward removing needless barriers between cultures."

### **Roger Allen, Professor of Arabic Language and Literature, University of Pennsylvania**

"As we face an era in which the world grows ever more complex and cultures seem to move further apart, translation becomes a crucial means whereby to prevent the worst effects of those unfortunate trends that fail both to recognize the wealth of human diversity and the need to develop a more altruistic vision for the future. Kalima seeks to provide a bridge whereby different cultures may remain in contact with each other through their cultural life and intellectual contributions. In the past, and in particular through the wonderful example of Islamic Spain, the value of those cultural transfers was obvious and widely recognized. We need to make it so again."

### **Chris Doyle, Director, CAABU (Council for the Advancement of Arab British Understanding)**

"When the Arab civilisation reached its peak, it owed a great deal to the manner in which scholars, scientists, and others borrowed from other cultures and civilisations, and then built upon their progress. A massive role was played by translators who were highly prized for their skill. Today, a key element in helping the Arab world develop further will be to invest in this sort of programme that will help enrich academic centres around the region with the latest works from all fields.

Translation is not just some base skill but a key to a glorious treasure of thinking, ideas and invention from all around the world that can provide a platform for more advances".



**Khaled Hroub, Director of the Arab Media Project, Cambridge University**

“The shocking statement that Spain translates in one year the number of books that have been translated into Arabic in the last 1,000 years, cited in the 2002 UNDP report on Arab human development, has awakened many Arabs to a bitter fact, and incurred deep wound in Arab intellectual psyche. Yet with the launch of Kalima and its remarkable project of translating hundreds of foreign books into Arabic every year, any re-use of the UNDP statement would become invalid. Kalima’s ambitious initiative will certainly bridge a gap that has stubbornly not only kept the industry of Arabic translation lagging behind others but also deprived Arab societies from coping with the diversity of the ever-increasing modern knowledge and ideas.”

**David Mack, US Ambassador (retired), Vice President, Middle East Institute**

“It is ironic that the Arab world publishes relatively few translations of serious books from other languages. Arab and Western historians alike have documented the role played by translators working under the patronage of the Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad. Their translations into Arabic of classic works from ancient Greece, Persia, India and elsewhere were critical in developing an Islamic civilization which became the culturally richest in the world for centuries. This intellectual wealth laid the foundation for economic prosperity and scientific achievements. Eventually, Europeans emerging from the dark ages of their history turned to collections of Arabic books in the various centers of Islamic civilization from Iraq to Andalusia for the intellectual capital to revive European civilization and spark the Renaissance. The tool they used was translation from Arabic to European languages. It is thus that civilizations enrich one another in the progress of mankind.

My wife and I congratulate the sponsors in Abu Dhabi of the Kalima initiative. We will follow this development with great interest and hope for a new flowering of intellectual life in the Arab world.”

**Robert Irwin, Author and Middle East Editor, The Times Literary Supplement**

“The project driving Kalima is quite wonderful. It has the potential to enable major advances in Arab culture and society.”