



# GLOBAL NEWS


*Easing The pain ... Sharing the Gain*

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### *From the Executive Director*

 I cannot find the words to express our gratitude and thanks to those without whom we could not have done much. With the grace of Allah, then with the support of our donors and the network of more than 130 volunteers in North America, it has been a very productive year. As we enter our sixth year of continuous giving, I would like to emphasize the fact that we cannot do our part if you do not do yours. It is a combined team effort amongst us all. And now, having the maturity and experience of five years on our side, we aspire to give more. Let us together, hand in hand, continue our effort towards "Easing the Pain" and together in the Hereafter we shall be "Sharing the Gain" insha'Allah. That is what we are all about.

## **Historical Meeting of Leading Muslim Charity Organizations Paves the Way for More Cooperation**



*From left to right: Soliman Ahmer, Operation Manager of BIF; Shukri Abubaker, Executive Director of HLF; Khalil Jassam Chairman of IRA; Mohamad Chehade, Executive Director of GRF; Anas Alhaider, Fundraising coordinator of Mercy Int.; Mohammad Bashir, President of IARA.*

It is good news for Muslims in the blessed month of Ramadan. On October 26, 1996, seven leading Muslim charity organizations met to study the idea of establishing a council for American Muslim Charities. Senior representatives from Benevolence International Foundation (BIF), Global Relief Foundation (GRF), Holy Land Foundation (HLF), International Relief Association (IRA), International Relief Organization (IRO), Islamic African Relief Agency (IARA), and Mercy International-USA met to discuss such forum in order to coordinate, cooperate and share resources. The advantages of forming the council are enormous. Some of them are to establish codes of ethics, standards and requirements

for Muslim charities, and to coordinate the work based on geographic designation by empowering charities working on specific countries while cutting down on redundancies. In addition, the council aims at sharing and cooperating on major projects that require large budgets. Finally, the participants affirmed the necessity of such council stressing Allah's order: "Help you one another unto righteousness and pious duty, but help not one another unto sin and transgression" (Al-Ma'idah: 2). ■

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### **Ramadan: Your Yearly Opportunity!**

Like every year, the blessed month of Ramadan is an opportunity for everyone of us. It's the month of repentance and worship. As we perform our fasting, we must not forget to spend our Zakat as it is the third pillar of Islam. Although Zakat can be given at any time once a Hijry (lunar) year, most people pay it in Ramadan as it is the month when righteous deeds are rewarded many times over. It is the month when we feel the pain of others by fasting and we share with them our wealth for the sake of Allah.

To help you calculate accurately your Zakat, GRF has prepared a simplified Zakat worksheet that has been reviewed and approved by Muslim Scholars. For clarification or fiqh questions about Zakat, please call toll free **1-888-ALNAJDA**.