You are hereby cordially invited to express your interest and intent to be a participant at the forthcoming 9th Nursi Symposium to be convened 3-5 October 2010 in the cosmopolitan city of Istanbul in Turkey. The Nursi Symposium has become a firm and regular feature on the international conference calendar, having attracted 16,000 participants to its Symposium in Istanbul in 2007. The Symposium promises to be a platform for robust engagement among the conference presenters as it attracts academics from different disciplines from all over the world.

The South African Symposium Secretariat comprises Mr. Yunus Sarioglu and Ms. Nazeema Ahmed. Should you require any additional information to what is contained in this document, please do not hesitate to contact them. Contact details are included at the end of the document.

2. Symposium Scope and Objectives

Scholars today frequently suggest that the problems besetting us stem from moral degeneration and the abandoning of ethical principles. It is, as though, while making giant strides in the worlds of science and technology, humanity has forgotten the fundamental principles underlying existence and has neglected essential human values. People are continuously motivated to live to earn and consume more. In the pace of life the spiritual and moral sides of human nature seem to have been forgotten. Homes have grown larger, but families have grown smaller, and are dispersed. Human beings have journeyed to the depths of space, but have strayed from the paths leading inward to their own selves. As mass communications grows all-encompassing, relations within family and among neighbors are getting more minimal. News channels have multiplied, but truth and reliability have diminished and disappeared. Information technology has been developed to an astonishing degree, but psychological problems, social injustices, global crises, and ecological disasters have also increased. As the world grows smaller, problems grow larger so that they now clearly threaten the material and spiritual future of humanity.

How has all this happened? Science should have brought greater understanding of the human being, nature, and the purpose of creation, and assisted in their fulfillment. Was it that science was misunderstood or misused? Was it utilized solely in serving particular interests and
material needs? Could it be that the source of these problems was the absence of faith and spirituality, which keep humanity from excess and turn them towards doing good? Was it the loss of spirituality that has been the cause of people suffering loneliness and unhappiness and their becoming insensitive and belligerent? These questions need close study, for only then may the answers be found and human beings live with the dignity they deserve. Certainly numerous civil and social organizations work to rectify these problems, but more often than not, they neglect spiritual aspects, offering partial solutions that hinder development.

_The Risale-i Nur_, a contemporary commentary on the Qur’an’s message by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, offers numerous solutions for these problems. Its method is based on acquiring knowledge and harnessing it in the best of ways; that is, as a means of attaining to “belief by investigation,” and on constructing a morality understanding proceeding from these principles. Taking place in the 50th anniversary of Bediuzzaman’s death, The Ninth International Risale-i Nur Symposium is intentionally organized around the above objectives, highlighting Nursi’s main concerns along with suggested remedies for the betterment of humanity. Academics, specialists, and writers of all disciplines from all over the world are invited to explore and examine the contributions of _The Risale-i Nur_ to peace, prosperity, and happiness of humankind, and to present papers on related topics.

3. Subtitles, with reference to the _Risale-i Nur_

- The Contemporary World and Current Situation
- Crises Afflicting Contemporary Societies and Suggested Solutions
- The Nature of Knowledge and its Utilization for Human Happiness
- The Relationship of Knowledge and Faith, and Their Rendering Existence Meaningful
- The Importance of Strengthening Faith in the Face of the Positivist Understanding of Science
- The Dimensions and Facets of Morality Based on Faith and Knowledge
- The Problems of Racism and Social Injustice, and their Solutions
- The Factors Nurturing a Culture of Violence, and their Solutions
- Solutions for Problems Arising from Multicultural Differences
- The Role of Faith in Developing a Sense of Responsibility and Accountability
- Holistic Approaches to Morality and the Future of Humanity
- Nursi’s Method of Service Based on Impotence, Poverty, and Compassion as a Solution for Individual and Social Problems
- Nursi’s Understanding of Mutual Assistance, Compassion, and Solidarity
- The Contributions of Nursi’s Approach to Economics in Solving Human Problems
- Problems Arising from Modernity and the Solutions Offered by the Risale-i Nur
- Problems Caused by Secularization and Views on Their Solution
- Solutions Related to the Manipulation of Political Problems
- Solutions for Problems Related to Consumerism
- The Role of Faith in Developing a Sense of Compassion and Fellow-feeling
- Solutions for Problems Stemming from Religious Differences
4. Important Notes

The Symposium will take place in Istanbul from October 3-5, 2010.

Papers should be submitted to the Symposium Secretariat by the below indicated dates. Late arrivals will not be considered.

Abstracts for the papers, not exceeding 250 words, should be submitted to the Symposium Secretariat no later than 28 February 2010.

Presenters from South Africa should submit their abstracts to the South African Symposium Secretariat no later than 20 February 2010

1. Accompanying the papers should be a CV of applicants not exceeding half a page in length. Both abstract and CV should be in MS Word format.
2. For their study and evaluation by the Secretariat, full papers should be submitted no later than 30 June, 2010. The papers should not exceed 15 pages.
3. The presenters of these papers accepted for presentation will be notified no later than 31 July, 2010. They also will be provided with further information regarding their presentation and accommodation.

Papers should be contextualized within the framework of the aforementioned topics and written with reference to the Risale-i Nur.

Digital copies of the books comprising the Risale-i Nur collection along with a wide variety of documentation related to the Risale-i Nur is available for study on www.nursistudies.com www.nuronline.org www.barlaplatformu.org The Symposium Documentation Centre will assist in providing further material if required.

In addition to reading the English translation of Risale-i Nur by Sukran Vahide, we encourage the participants to consult the following sources:

Serif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (Albany 1989);

Camilla Nereid, In the Light of Said Nursi: Turkish Nationalism and the Religious Alternative (Bergen 1997);

Fred A. Reed, Anatolia Junction: A Journey Into Hidden Turkey (Burnaby 1999),


Presentations will be delivered in Turkish, English, and Arabic and the audience will be provided with simultaneous translation.

5. South African Symposium Secretariat

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