

International Peace Award

to

**His Majesty
Sultan Qaboos bin Said**

**The Willard Hotel
Washington, D.C.
October 15, 1998**

**Remarks by Dr. John Duke Anthony
President and CEO, National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations**

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests from the Administration, the Congress, the Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Their Excellencies the Ambassadors to the United States, the many friends of Oman, and all who have gathered for this occasion – on behalf of the 33 honoring organizations, welcome to the presentation of the International Peace Award to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the Sultan of Oman.

Present with us to honor His Majesty are President Jimmy Carter and His Excellency Yusuf bin Alawi Abdallah, Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman.

If there is a common theme to the character of His Majesty and the two international leaders with us this evening, it lies in their pursuit of noble objectives, their dedication to public service, and their having repeatedly demonstrated an impressive range of conviction, commitment, sound judgment, and, above all, courage.

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said

With regard to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, his distinctiveness as a leader can be measured and illustrated in numerous ways. Allow me to cite but a few of the more prominent examples.

Running through a great many of his achievements is the perseverance in his determination to help end wars and facilitate peace.

In the process, he has exhibited the necessary vision and leadership that has made it possible, under what were exceptionally trying circumstances when he began, to lift up an entire generation of his people.

He succeeded in making Oman the first country in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf to have demarcated all its international borders.

He refused to sever diplomatic relations with either Baghdad or Tehran throughout the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, and, as a result, played a pivotal role as mediator in the internationally concerted action that restored the peace between those two countries, thereby helping bring to an end one of the Middle East's bloodiest conflicts.

He insisted that Oman, alone among Arab countries other than Sudan and Somalia, not break diplomatic relations with Egypt in the aftermath of the Camp David Accords.

He was the first Arab head of state to enter into a Defense Cooperation Agreement with the United States, following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, when many feared that conflict, if left unchecked, could endanger stability in the Gulf and, possibly, spread to other nations.

He worked with world leaders, especially those in the United States, to isolate Moscow until, in the end, it agreed to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan.

He played a formative role in the establishment of the GCC – the Gulf Cooperation Council – a regional forum grouping Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

At the GCC's inception, he convinced all the members that their efforts to promote economic and social cooperation would come to little in the long run if they did not also take care to address the need to cooperate in the areas of defense and security.

He provided the leadership in 1995 and 1996, when Oman, as President of the United Nations Security Council, helped enact UN Resolution 986, which provides for food, medical, and humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people.

He insists that Baghdad comply with all relevant UN Resolutions stemming from its having shattered the Gulf's peace.

And last, but not least, he has shown courage in reaching out to the peace and justice communities in Israel to demonstrate that Oman is committed to enhancing the prospects for an early and peaceful end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Arab-Israeli dispute.

President Jimmy Carter

President Jimmy Carter has set his own sterling example of what a dedicated statesman can achieve in the pursuit of peace.

As a Midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy, one of the institutions honoring Sultan Qaboos this evening, he prepared long and hard for a life of service that would require him to face the demands of waging war as well as making peace.

As President of the United States, he protected American national interests through one of the Middle East's most turbulent periods in modern times. In one year alone, 1979, he had to deal with more threats to regional and international security than many other Presidents have faced during their entire White House tenure.

**Beginning that year with the fall of the Shah of Iran,
President Carter:**

- **succeeded in achieving closure on the Camp David Peace Accords between Egypt and Israel;**
- **dealt with the seizure of 52 American diplomats as hostages;**
- **maneuvered through the economic uncertainties occasioned by skyrocketing energy prices following the Iranian revolution;**

- addressed the challenges to regional stability upon the takeover of the Grand Mosque in Mecca by radicals;
- and, in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, crafted and implemented what came to be known as the Carter Doctrine, which, to this day, remains a cornerstone of the U.S. commitment to the defense of the Gulf against external aggression.

Few, if any, leaders can point to a record of having had to confront, in such a short period of time, as many major international crises in one part of the world, each one of them requiring the exercise of steady and principled leadership.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, President Carter's crowning foreign affairs achievement is, of course, his role in having brought about a lasting peace between Egypt and Israel.

Here, one might pause and take note of what a coincidence it is that the very same evening in which President Carter presents the International Peace Award to the Sultan of Oman, two of the Middle East's core leaders who have yet to reach a peace agreement, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Palestine Authority Chairman Arafat, are gathering at Wye Plantation, not far from another site in Maryland where, twenty years ago, President Carter brought together two other Middle Eastern leaders who signed peace accords – the Camp David Peace Accords – that have endured.

In the Gulf region, one of President Carter's most formidable achievements was his signing – with Sultan Qaboos – the first Defense Cooperation Agreement between the United States and a Gulf country.

In so doing, the two statesmen provided a powerful example of what like-minded leaders can achieve in pursuit of peace.

Together, they helped point the way toward a more structured and systematic approach to achieving stability in the Gulf.

In retirement, President Carter has shown that commitment to public service cannot only continue but flourish in private life. Since leaving the White House, he founded the Carter Center at Emory University in Atlanta and, in that capacity, continued in his pioneering search for common ground among Arabs and Israelis who long for peace.

He established Habitat for Humanity, which has grown into a worldwide movement exalting the virtues and values of volunteerism.

In addition, he has repeatedly served as an emissary of peace to conflict-torn and crisis-prone areas in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and elsewhere.

Throughout, he has continued to demonstrate that the opportunities for people helping people are endless, and that the possibilities of one highly-motivated and hard-working individual making a positive and lasting difference in the lives of others are also endless.

His Excellency Yusuf bin Alawi Abdallah

Receiving the International Peace Award from President Carter on behalf of His Majesty will be His Excellency Yusuf bin Alawi Abdallah.

Whereas His Majesty has been the guiding light and driving force behind Oman's pursuit of international peace, His Excellency has been the tireless, effective implementer of his country's foreign policies.

Whether Oman's efforts in pursuit of peace have focused upon Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Palestine, Somalia, or Syria – within the Middle East – or Bosnia, Kosovo, and Rwanda-Burundi – in areas further afield – it is His Excellency who has been and remains His Majesty's and Oman's principal foreign policy representative in regional and international councils.

And last, but not least, since the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council eighteen years ago, it is His Excellency who has helped navigate a course for Oman and its neighbors in the quarterly meetings of the GCC's Ministerial Council, within which GCC policy recommendations, especially those relating to peace, are formulated for decision by the six members' heads of state.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DISTINGUISHED
GUESTS, please join me in welcoming and thanking
President Jimmy Carter and His Excellency Yusuf bin Alawi
Abdallah – two exceptional servants in the cause of
international peace – for their agreeing to be with us on this
memorable occasion.**