

2011

**A speech by His Excellency the esteemed Sheikh Minister in Oxford photos Gallery
In The Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful**

Honored Guests,

The Oman Gallery entitled (religion and society through the eyes of Anglo American) organized by Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs through the photographs of the Sultanate of Oman for more than fifty years, deserves interest and appreciation for several reasons as follows:

First: The persons who have made the journey and photographing are not normal photographers, but they are also great artists have knowledge of anthropology, history, sociology, Orientalism, Arabs and Muslims, so these photos are not random but it represents the development and change throughout fifty years.

Second: the gallery goes on in Oxford which has close relationships with Oman through several ways such as Tisghar's papers and documents about Oman and Arabian Peninsula existed in St. Anthony. Through over a hundred year or more, Oman hosted many of Oxford scholars, intellectuals, diplomats and travelers who performed their service in Oxford and returned back recording their notes, memories and ideas about Oman and Arabian Peninsula.

Third: this gallery will be held in the fortieth anniversary of taking over the reins of power by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said (may Allah protect him). These short four decades of age were rich with a rare experience in politics, governance, community and human development which contributed historically in changing awareness and fact as well as achieving symmetry between the need for progress, development and the ability and empowerment of that.

Dear honored Guests,

Omani horizon has expanded in the past few decades in all aspects. From this point, I return to Oxford also, there are several initiatives by His Majesty Sultan of Oman (May Allah support him) towards this ancient university and Center of Islamic Studies, and there are several agreements conducted by him with the university's institutions and outside.

Gallery of the photos and its contents explain in elegant expressive ways the story of the great effort exerted in the last forty years to achieve progress in and around Oman, in addition to spread dialogue, tolerance and understanding ideas in Arabic and Islamic worlds and over the larger world. Here we are accomplishing this valued gallery in Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs in collaboration with our colleagues in US, UK and others countries, but I single out St. Antony's College and the Institute for American Values.

In conclusion, I would like to thank every of those who contributed in establishing this event, and who helps in its success including the photographers and others, especially I thank Mrs. Reina Blankenhorn and Mr. David Blankenhorn who followed this idea throughout implementation until achievement but also issued a wonderful book about it. Also, I thank the officials in St. Antony's College, the deep rooted college which provided all other possibilities for this success, especially warden/ Macmillan. To all these bodies, including employees of Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, and I express my appreciation, respect and thanks to Dr. Abdul Rahman Al Salmi and Dr. Muhammad Al Maamari.

We are so proud of the attendants today and the advanced development experience in the Sultanate of Oman during reign of His Majesty, Sultan Qaboos bin Said (May Allah supported him). We hope that this gallery is seen by persons in interest and devotees of our country, and we hope to benefit from notes and reviews in the new horizons that we go towards the next two decades in the Sultanate as in our small and large world alike.

Thank you all for presence and listening, Al-Salam Alaikum.