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SEASONAL PROGRAM
> Udhiya/Qurbani 2010
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Assalamu alaykum, Peace and Blessings.

Many years ago while visiting a cemetery in Turkey, a gravestone caught my attention. Not the stone itself, but what was written on the stone, made me take notice, reading it over and over in order to understand the message it was trying to convey. On the gravestone was written, “If I will not burn, if you would not burn, if they will not burn (i.e. sacrifice), how is it possible to bring light to the darkness of oppression (Dhulm)?”

It seems as if this is exactly what happened in the Arab world. Someone has to light a candle in order to lighten darkness. Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian street vendor, set himself on fire on December 7, 2010 in protest of the confiscation of his wares. This act of desperation and helplessness sparked deadly demonstrations that ended a 23 year old oppressive regime.

The fall of the autocratic regime in Egypt followed that of Tunis. The revolution brought tyranny to its knees. While we are writing this article, social upheaval is continuing in the Arab world. Corrupted regimes are in fear, now that the people have left fear and are standing up for what is just and right. For many years, these regimes held on to power with iron fists. But iron fists cannot help them anymore. Social, economic, and political injustices reached a level that drove people to desperation. Fear will not and cannot force desperate masses into submission. Change will come one way or another. It is difficult to predict the course of events but these regimes must take the wishes of the revolting masses into consideration. They must know that without freedom, justice, transparency, and accountability they will not be able to stop new revolutions. It is our firm belief that only economical, political, and social justice can bring about peace, equality and prosperity to the Middle East and to the world.

As an American Muslim humanitarian organization, we hold on to our American values. We believe in freedom, democracy, equality, social justice and peace. We stand for the human dignity. We believe human dignity must be respected, here at home and anywhere else in the world!

Peace and blessings,
Khalil Demir, Executive Director
Natural Disasters Continue to Affect Haiti

Distributing Food Packages to Victims of Hurricane Tomas

In early November 2010, the people of Haiti gripped themselves for the crippling affects of Hurricane Tomas. The Hurricane hit Haiti with less intensity than was expected. The rains and heavy winds did not do much damage to the capital city of Port au Prince, yet the Hurricane's force was truly felt in a town called Leogane, approximately twelve miles west of the capital.

Leogane was at the epicenter of the January 2010 earthquake that destroyed nearly every house and building there. At least 30,000 of its residents died as a result of the earthquake. When Hurricane Tomas struck the town, an estimated 90,000 people were still living in tent camps. Many of these camps were completely flooded as the storm waters submerged the town.

In the wake of the storm, access to food and clean water became a vital priority for the people in Leogane. Zakat Foundation of America’s (ZF) representatives on the ground in Haiti traveled to the flooded area and distributed food packages to the victims. The families expressed their gratitude to ZF for remembering them at such a crucial time.

ZF is committed to staying in Haiti long-term. It provides emergency relief when necessary, while also implementing programs that help Haitians rebuild better futures.

Local Community Unites Once Again to Assist Flood Victims

Zakat Foundation Sends $150,000 in Aid to Pakistan

In order to maintain hygienic standards when distributing Udhiya/ Qurbani meat, Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) and its partners ensure that all meat is packed into bags. The students at ZF’s Sewing School in Hubli in the state of Karnataka, India have taken a step further by creating eco-friendly bags. Instead of using non-degradable plastic bags, they stitched together cloths that are reusable and eco-friendly for our beneficiaries.

As the worldwide campaign against environmentally destructive plastic bags gathers momentum, ZF is setting an example amongst charity organizations by tackling this critical issue. Worldwide, only one percent of plastic bags are ever recycled. The rest, once discarded, live in landfill for centuries or take flight littering fields, trees, and waterways. Plastic material does not biodegrade and is made from either petroleum or natural gas. The ink used on some of them also contains toxins such as lead.

In comparison, the eco-friendly bags produced by ZF students in India are durable and made with the intention to be reused for the long-term, Insha’Allah. They are made from recycled and biodegradable materials and have very little impact on the environment. Even when they are thrown away, the eco-friendly bag will, over the course of time, break down into non-toxic, biodegradable pieces.

The production of the bags also offers the opportunity for ZF’s Sewing School students to develop diverse stitching skills and techniques that may help them later in the job market.
## Udhiya/Qurbani 2010 Distribution

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>SHARES</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>TOTAL COST</th>
<th>FAMILIES</th>
<th>INDIVIDUALS</th>
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<td>$100</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**: 4,969 beneficiaries in 37 countries received fresh meat in celebration of Eid ul-Adha

**496,900 beneficiaries in 37 countries received fresh meat in celebration of Eid ul-Adha**

## Udhiya/Qurbani Program Reaches Poor and Needy Around the Globe

**496,900 Benefited from ZF Meat Distribution Program**

During the 2010 Udhiya/Qurbani season, donors and supporters of Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) were able to provide fresh meat to approximately 99,840 hungry and needy families in 37 countries. From blockaded Gaza and famine-stricken Niger, to Kashmir and Pattani, Thailand, all of ZF’s beneficiaries enjoyed the blessing of meat, some for the first time in years. Through careful planning and partnership, ZF was able to ensure that the cows, sheep, and goats dedicated to the noble Udhiya/Qurbani sacrifice were healthy and well maintained. ZF has enacted its Udhiya/Qurbani program since the establishment of the organization in 2001.

“Each year, we look to strengthen our presence in some of the world’s poorest communities, while forming relationships with local farmers and community leaders. Our intention is to facilitate the religious obligation of Muslim donors and to share their sacrifice with the poor, while promoting local, sustainable farming so that a community may grow in a positive direction” shares Khalil Demir, Executive Director of ZF.

In these times of alarming increase in starvation and economic strife, it has been even more important to give the poor and hungry a portion of fresh meat, as we follow the tradition of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him). It is our hope at ZF that generous and compassionate individuals will continue to fulfill the human obligation to give to the poorest and neediest communities around the world.

Winter 2011
As we celebrate Eid-ul Adha with our families, in our dining rooms, choosing from among a variety of delicious food to serve ourselves, many of our Muslim brothers and sisters in Kenya are not only missing food, but are also missing hope to have food on their tables.

Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) was informed through its local partners that the family of Khadija Ikhuta, a 76 year-old blind widow with 21 family members, including many orphans, had been living on sugarless porridge for three days before Eid-ul Adha.

Khadija was one of the many who were issued our meat beneficiary card. According to Khadija, upon receiving her beneficiary card, she was not able to sleep and sat waiting for distribution day. On distribution day, she woke up very early in the morning and asked her granddaughter, Shamimu to lead her to the distribution center. Normally, ZF delivers food packages to the homes of Muslims with special needs like Khadija, but when we arrived at the center, she was there waiting, expressing her anxiety and the urgency of receiving the meat package. Khadija who is not able to see, could feel and smell the meat and could not believe her senses. She wanted to get home right away to make a meal for her family, which her family has not had in a very long time.

Khadija tells us that she developed an eye problem a couple of years ago and was admitted to a hospital for treatment. She was later discharged from the hospital when her family was unable to pay the medical bills. The lack of treatment and medication has caused Khadija to become blind.

Khadija also lives in a small old house with six orphans. The environment that Khadija and her family live in is susceptible to many infectious diseases. As mentioned before, she receives her meals through well-wishers, which are not reliable sources, since she and her family go without meals for days at a time.

Khadija’s granddaughter Shamimu tells us that she always prays to Allah (swt) to help her become a doctor so that she can treat her grandmother. She wants her grandmother to be able to see her. She hopes to one day build her grandmother a house, buy her clothes, and deliver food to her table every day.

**PERSONAL STORIES**

**Khadija Ikhuta: Blind Grandmother Cares for Orphans**

Khadija Ikhuta is a blind grandmother who cares for orphans. She lives in a small old house with six orphans in Kenya. Khadija is one of the many who were issued our meat beneficiary card. On distribution day, she woke up very early in the morning and asked her granddaughter, Shamimu to lead her to the distribution center.

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**Musa Wattako: Blind Man Caring for Orphans at 94**

Musa Wattako lives with twelve orphans and other children, who are under his care. When we visited him, we found him struggling to chew boiled maize and beans.

Maize and beans is the most popular meal among the poorest people in the region. It is cheap, easy to cook and can serve many family members at once. However, this meal is also known for causing stomach cramps and bloating. Musa also struggles to chew his food, because of his old age, so upon receiving the meat, he requested for it to be boiled immediately so that he could drink the broth of the meat that he has not drank in a very long time.

Musa and his family try to make the best out of their present situation by eating sugar cane for breakfast. His grandsons pull sugar from the Sugar factory. They then chop the sugar into small pieces and give it to their grandfather who struggles to chew the crushed sugar canes as he breaks his fast.

Musa is a part of hundreds of beneficiaries who received meat packages from the Zakat Foundation of America through its Kenyan partner. The distribution targeted Muslims in Kakamega and Bungoma counties in Western Kenya. The two counties are the second and third most populated counties in Kenya, respectively after Nairobi with Kakamega having a population of 1,660,651 and Bungoma with a population of 1,630,934 people.

Muslims account for 40% of the total population in each of the counties. Western Kenya has the highest percentage of Muslim reverted since Islam is still spreading in the region. This is contrary to Coastal, Nairobi and North Eastern parts of Kenya, where Islam is highly concentrated. The region also has the highest number of poor and marginalized Muslims unlike other regions where Muslim organizations and well-wishers are concentrated.

By the grace of Allah (swt) and the support of our dearest donors, ZF has managed to bring hope this year through our local partners.

For more information about how you can sponsor an orphan visit our website at zakat.org.

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**Story of a Little Girl Named Ma Lan**

Ma Lan is a seven-year old girl who lives in Lan Zhou City, which is the capital city of the Gansu Province, in Northwestern China. Ma Lan is not able to attend an official government school since her family migrated from a village in the Kangle County, and have no formal residence permits to live in the city. Instead, she receives some schooling from a center that is called a “teaching point.”

ZF brought packages of Udhiya/Qurbani meat to this center. The meat was distributed to the children so that they may share it with their families, who happen to be the working poor of Lan Zhou City.

Ma Lan’s family face more challenges than most since her mother suffers from many disabilities and her stepfather is seeing-impaired. The family of five (Ma Lan has a brother and sister) live mostly from funds that are sent by her father each month as support, which is only about $23 US dollars. Ma Lan’s family rarely have food on the table, so they were especially touched to have received the gift of Udhiya/Qurbani meat this year.

ZF is proud to be there for Ma Lan and others who need our support and generosity, during these hard times.

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**MATCHING GIFT**

**WHERE YOU CAN DOUBLE YOUR DONATION**

Corporate matching gift programs are a great way to maximize your generous donations. Employees from companies like Microsoft, AT&T, and General Electric have taken the initiative to double their donations. Here is how you can maximize your donation:

1. Contact your employer’s human resource department to see if the company participates in matching gift programs.
2. Request a matching gift form and review the program guidelines to see if the Zakat Foundation qualifies.
3. Mail completed form to the Zakat Foundation and we will handle the rest. If approved, your company will send its matching donation directly to the Zakat Foundation.

If your company does not currently support matching programs, please ask for it to do so.

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**www.zakat.org**
Davud used to walk for hours everyday to reach a water source. After Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) established a water well in Ethiopia’s Barbare District, Davud and others no longer have to walk far to fetch water for their families. Davud’s experience with water scarcity was very painful. When water is hard to obtain, the value of each drop of water increases into a drop of gold in the eyes of Davud and others who face water scarcity.

The water scarcity in Ethiopia has had a rippling effect throughout its entire society. Conflicts develop amongst people over the limited access to the clean water that is available. Waterborne diseases are chronic issues for those whose only available water is contaminated. Children, who are often sent to fetch water for the family, have to prioritize obtaining water over their schooling. As a result, many young individuals are behind in their studies or have dropped out of school all together.

By the Mercy of Allah (swt), a generous ZF donor came forward to build a well for a needy community in Ethiopia. Since the establishment of the well in Ethiopia’s Barbare District, fresh and easily accessible water has been readily available to the pastoralist community in that area. The well will benefit at least 200 households, approximately 1,500 people, and the animals that are crucial to the Ethiopian livelihoods.

Through its Sadaqah Jariyyah program, ZF matches donors funding interests with a poor community’s need for a life-changing development project. The project lessens the hardship for the communities, such as Davud’s village, while providing the donor with long-term rewards.

Each Drop of Water is Like a Gram of Gold
ZF Completes Construction of Well in Barbare District of Ethiopia

Safeguarding Haiti’s Future through Sustainable Development

Haiti Farm Cooperative Assists in Rebuilding Haiti from the Ground Up

Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) and millions of Haitian farm families know that farming is the means by which Haiti can rebuild itself from the ground up. One of the many projects that ZF has embarked on, since the January 2010 earthquake that ravaged and destabilized the country, is one that supports a farm cooperative in rural Haiti.

In April 2010, ZF began helping the Haiti Farm Cooperative, which is located in the town of Thomonde in the Central Plateau area of Haiti, and covers 60 acres of land. With the support provided by ZF, the cooperative purchased a second tractor that was greatly needed, dug a well to help ensure that crops would survive during the dry season, and purchased seeds for planting.

A total of twelve thousand plantain trees, potatoes and yucca (cassava) were planted on the farm shortly after ZF’s contribution. Plantains and cassava are high in nutrients and make up an important part of the Haitian diet. Mangoes and peppers were also planted later in order to expand on the crops grown. Months later, it is now possible to see that the assistance offered by ZF has literally, “born fruit.”

Historically, most of rural Haiti was made up of farming communities. Over the years, these communities have become more fragmented due to poverty spurred by the poor return on crop yields and/or lack of market value in home grown crops, caused by cheap imports from abroad.

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Ghani Muhammad: Raising Future Leaders in Afghanistan
ZF Supported Rumi School Provides a Bright Future for Afghan Refugees

Ghani Muhammad is a good example of how Rumi International School is playing a vital role in the lives of Afghan immigrants in Kharipur, a city located in the Northwestern province of Pakistan.

"Since the time my family and I immigrated from Afghanistan to Pakistan, we have withstood several major hardships such as war and forced immigration. My family now depends on the remittance of one of my brothers, who is only 14-years-old and works in Kabul, Afghanistan. I also tried to work as a laborer to help my family, but after an accident that left two of my fingers crushed, I was unable to continue my work. I am a full time student at Rumi International School now," - Ghani

Since 2003, Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) has been supporting Rumi International School in Pakistan. The approximately 700 students that attend Rumi International School are children from Afghan families who have sought refuge in Pakistan, due to the instability that has dominated their country for the last few decades. Although many Afghan refugees have returned home, approximately 2 million refugees still remain in Pakistan, where they attend school and work.

Ghani and the other children who attend Rumi International School receive quality education using the English language as the medium. The school curriculum is designed to fulfill the requirements of both the Pakistani and Afghan school systems. Upon graduation, the students receive diplomas that are accepted in both counties. This is done to facilitate the ability for students to continue their studies in either country.

In addition to the children's educational needs, Rumi International School tends to other needs, including the children's physical and emotional development through appropriate extracurricular activities that include music and tailoring classes.

InshaAllah with the educational opportunities now available to Ghani, he will be able to provide a bright future for himself and for his family. ZF is able to support students such as Ghani with the help of our Lord (swt) and generous donors.

There are a few moments in our lives that we will never forget. One unforgettable moment for a group of Universal School Students was taking a trip to Istanbul. With the contribution of Zakat Foundation of America (ZF), approximately 14 students and two teachers from Universal School, a Bridgeview, Illinois based school, were able to take a trip to Istanbul in June 2010.

During their trip, they visited a few sites that are a must-see for their beauty and history. A few places that were visited by the group include: Topkapi Palace, Sultanahmet (Blue) Mosque, Grand Bazaar, Egyptian Spicy Market, and the 1453 Panorama Museum.

This is achieved through our representatives in Istanbul. ZF offers these services as a guide and a friend when visitors come to explore the beauty and history of Istanbul's architecture. We are empowered to continue to service our brothers and sisters when they too decide to take a trip to Istanbul or other parts of the world where our office is located.

ZF CANstruction Project Wins Best Meal

Zakat Foundation of America (ZF) teamed up with Islamic Association of Finger Lakes (IAFL) to participate in The 2nd Annual CANstruction Project at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, in the state of New York.

Participants competed to build a unique structure that was made entirely of canned foods. 100% of the canned foods were used for CANstruction, and was donated to the Food Bank to support local hunger-relief efforts.

This year, ZF and the IAFL team built an impressive food pyramid from donated canned foods and won the Best Meal Award. The needy Americans living in six Southern Tier counties in New York, namely, Broome, Chemung, Schuyler, Tioga and Tompkins will benefit from these canned foods.

ZF is a global charity organization that helps generous and caring people reach out to those in need. Its goals are to address the immediate needs and ensure the self-reliance of the poor, in the US and around the world, with the Zakat and Sadaqa dollars of privileged Muslims, as well as the support of other generous donors.
On behalf of Charity Navigator, I wish to congratulate Zakat Foundation of America on achieving our coveted 4-star rating for sound fiscal management,” Ken Berger from Charity Navigator wrote in a letter to Halil Demir, Executive Director of Zakat Foundation of America (ZF).

ZF has been rated as a four-star charity, as a result of our ability to efficiently manage and grow our finances that assists humanity worldwide. Alhamdulillah.

In this competitive philanthropic marketplace, Charity Navigator, America’s premier charity evaluator, highlights the fine work of efficient charities such as our own, and provides donors with essential information needed to give them greater confidence in the charitable choices they make.

As the non-for-profit sector continues to grow at an unprecedented pace, savvy donors are demanding more accountability, transparency, and quantifiable results from the charities that they choose to support with their hard-earned dollars.

Insha’ Allah, this “exceptional” designation from Charity Navigator differentiates ZF from its peers, and demonstrates to the public that it is worthy of their trust.

We wish to thank all of our donors, brothers, sisters, and friends for their continuing support and prayers.

"Isn't the Zakat-Charity Voluntary?"

Islam strongly exhorts the wealthy to donate much in voluntary charity (sadaqah). But as to alms-giving, it does not leave this to their discretion. To place the right of determining charitable minimums in the power of the affluent, is to subjugate the poor to them—a futile program, indeed, to alleviate poverty and its related conditions. Not only does it fail to establish an amount and payment schedule the poor can count on, it provides for no external authority to legitimately compel the rich to turn an assessable wealth-portion over to the needy on an ongoing basis. People left solely to their own consciences can still grow selfish, developing justifications and rationales for not parting with the money and possessions their hearts come to hold dearly, even above all other things. Such is the human propensity in the absence of revealed faith, as Allah describes it in the Quran.

“No indeed! Rather, you [human beings break the covenant of God: You] do not give generously to your rich kinsmen (a) the money and possessions their hearts come to hold dearly, even above all other things. Such is the human propensity in the absence of revealed faith, as Allah describes it in the Quran. (Al-Fajr, 89:17-20)

Yet unlike a tax, Zakat is an obligatory act of worship, the performance of which qualifies one for divine reward and whose deliberate abandonment may result in divine chastisement. The Prophet (saw) said: "Pay the Zakat-Charity so that your Islam becomes complete" (Bazzar). This implies that one’s profession of faith as a Muslim is at least deficient (and possibly insincere) if one fails to pay Zakat. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr Al-Siddig, brought the power of the state to bear on those Muslims, who renounced the due Zakat payment, though they asserted their belief in one God, the Salât-Prayer, and the fast of Ramadan.

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Still, in this competitive philanthropic marketplace, we express our appreciation to everyone who has realized the truth and re-established the relationship of Allah’s People and wealth-portion over to the needy on an ongoing basis. People left solely to their own consciences can still grow selfish, developing justifications and rationales for not parting with the money and possessions their hearts come to hold dearly, even above all other things. Such is the human propensity in the absence of revealed faith, as Allah describes it in the Quran.

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