

Chief Missioner's Welcome Address & Reflections on the Conference Theme



The Overstretched Missionary: *Burnout, Boundaries, and Sustainability in Da'wah Work*

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A Welcome, and a Dual Purpose

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

"My respected brothers, scholars, energetic and vibrant NASFAT Missioners and servants of Allah..."

This address serves two purposes:

- 1 A warm welcome to this gathering of NASFAT Missioners.
- 2 To set the stage for the conference theme: ***"The Overstretched Missionary: Burnout, Boundaries, and Sustainability in Da'wah Work."***

A note before the theme

Before addressing the theme, the Chief Missioner reflects on a new feature of this year's conference: the Pre-Conference Capability Assessment Test administered to all registered participants — reflecting a commitment not only to discussing capacity development, but to measuring, reflecting on, and acting upon it.

Muḥāsabah: Holding Ourselves Accountable

“Hold yourselves accountable before you are held accountable, and evaluate yourselves before you are evaluated — for the Reckoning will be easier upon you tomorrow if you hold yourselves accountable today.”

— Sayyidinā ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (RA)

A patient who hides important information from a medical doctor only delays his own healing.

ON HONESTY WITH THE PROCESS

An assessment becomes valuable only when the responses are truthful. When we deceive the assessment, we do not deceive the framework — we only deny ourselves the opportunity to improve.

ON SELF-DECEPTION

Sincerity is the first step toward excellence.

ON INTENTION

WHY THE ASSESSMENT

The Economic Reality Facing Many Imams and Missioners

One reason for the assessment is often overlooked — the economic wellbeing of the Missioner.

- Irregular income
- Health-care expenses
- Children's education and school fees
- Rising cost of living
- Retirement insecurity
- Large family responsibilities
- Limited institutional support

“That you leave your inheritors wealthy is better than leaving them dependent, begging for what people have.”

— Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī

QUESTIONS OF STEWARDSHIP

Every Missioner Should Ask

Not merely financial questions — questions of amānah, stewardship, and responsible leadership.

1

What will sustain my family if I die today?

2

What happens when I can no longer actively preach?

3

What income will sustain my family?

4

What assets am I intentionally building today?

5

Am I preparing for sustainability, or merely surviving from one invitation to another?

NOW, TO THE CONFERENCE THEME

Not Every Missioner Is Overstretched

Before concluding that every Missioner is overstretched — let us honestly reflect.

- Some are genuinely overstressed and overstretched.
- Some are working sustainably and effectively.
- Others, if we are honest, may actually be performing below their potential.

That is why each of us must engage in sincere self-assessment.

SELF-EXAMINATION

Five Questions for Every NASFAT Missioner

1

If I reduced my current Da'wah activities by half, would anyone in my community notice the difference?

2

Am I physically exhausted because of serving Allah, or simply busy with personal, social, or non-Da'wah activities?

3

How many meaningful Da'wah activities have I personally initiated or led in the past three months?

4

When I say I am 'too busy,' is it true overload — or have I not prioritized Da'wah effectively?

5

On the Day of Judgment, if Allah asked whether I utilized what He gave me in His service — would I confidently answer 'Yes'?

Where the honest answer points to under-engagement rather than overload, the remedy is not rest — it is renewed, better-prioritized impact.

Busyness Is Not the Same as Productive Da'wah

If the honest answer is 'No' to reduced impact being noticed...

...you may not be overstretched — you may need to increase your impact and engagement.

If you struggle to name several initiatives from the past three months...

...your challenge may be under-engagement rather than overwork.

Honest reflection on priorities...

...often reveals whether the problem is overload or misplaced focus.

The Same World That Praises Can Later Ridicule

A REMINISCENCE

The Chief Missioner recalls his illness of 2009 — and a sarcastic comment made by a member in its wake, offered as a lived example of how service can be misread once strength runs out.

A YORUBA PROVERB

“Ohun ti araiye ba so eniyan da ni won o fi bu.”

The very condition the world reduces you to is the one it later uses to ridicule you.

The world may call you dedicated, tireless, indispensable — but if you collapse from exhaustion, the same people may ask, ‘Why didn’t you take care of yourself?’

CLOSING REFLECTION

Two Questions Every Missioner Must Keep Asking

“Am I doing so much that I risk burning out?”

“Or am I doing so little that I am burying the talents Allah entrusted to me?”

The goal of Islamic leadership is neither exhaustion nor comfort — but consistent, sincere, sustainable excellence (Iḥsān) in the service of Allah.

“The most beloved deeds to Allah are those that are consistent, even if they are small.” — Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī

THE REAL QUESTION

How Do We Serve Allah Faithfully Without Destroying Ourselves?

That we should serve Allah was settled the day we answered His call to Da'wah. The real question is how.

How do we remain passionate without burning out, neglecting our families, or compromising our health?

How do we establish healthy boundaries without becoming complacent?

How do we sustain our Da'wah so we are still serving with strength, wisdom, and excellence 10, 20, even 30 years from now?

Our mission is not merely to start well — it is to finish well.

IN CONCLUSION

Not to Reduce Our Commitment — But to Make It Sustainable

We are here to ensure our zeal is guided by wisdom, our service strengthened by balance, and our sacrifice sustained by proper stewardship of the body, mind, and soul Allah has entrusted to us.

JazakumuLlah khayran to Dr Salaudeen Jibreel, our distinguished resource person, for honouring this invitation to guide us through the causes, consequences, and practical solutions relating to burnout, healthy boundaries, and sustainability in Da'wah work.

May this conference not merely diagnose our challenges but equip every Missioner with the spiritual resilience, practical wisdom, and sustainable strategies to serve Allah with excellence for many years to come.



**May Allah (SWT) continue to strengthen
NASFAT and its leadership.**

اللَّهُمَّ أَخْلِصْ نِيَّاتِنَا، وَبَارِكْ فِي أَعْمَارِنَا وَأَوْقَاتِنَا، وَأَعِزَّنَا عَلَى حُسْنِ الْقِيَامِ بِالدَّعْوَةِ دُونَ غُلُوٍّ وَلَا تَقْصِيرٍ
اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا مِفْتَاحًا لِلْخَيْرِ، وَمَفَاتِيحَ لِلرَّحْمَةِ، وَارْزُقْنَا الْحِكْمَةَ فِي الْمُوَارَاةِ بَيْنَ حَقِّكَ، وَحَقِّ أَنْفُسِنَا، وَحَقِّ أَهْلِيَّتِنَا،
وَحَقِّ دَعْوَتِنَا

آمِينَ

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