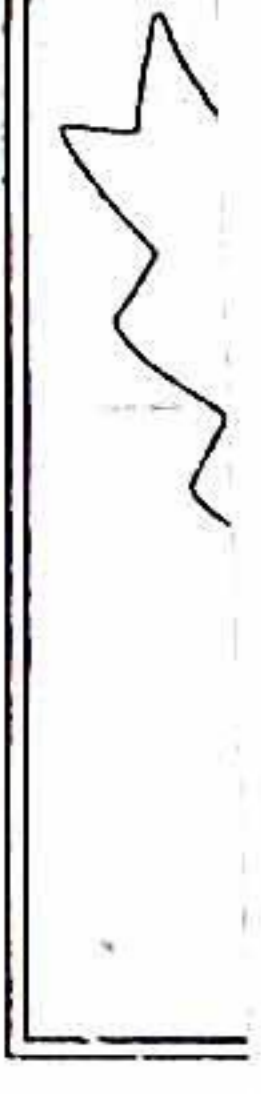




Muslim Ummah in the Modern World Challenges and Opportunities

**Collected Papers and Speeches
presented at an International Conference
held in Karachi, Pakistan
3-5 September 2004
sponsored by
Hamdard Foundation Pakistan**



DATA ENTERED



Hamdard Foundation Pakistan



شوری ہمدرد پاکستان
Hamdard Thinkers' Forum

Muslim Ummah in the Modern World Challenges and Opportunities

Collected Papers and Speeches
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FOREWORD

We have great pleasure in presenting this collection of the papers and speeches delivered at the International Conference on Muslim *Ummah* in the Modern World – Challenges and Opportunities, sponsored by Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and held under the auspices of Shura Hamdard at Karachi on 3-5 September 2004.

Although ideally much more time should have been devoted to the planning and organizing of the Conference than what could be devoted in the circumstances, the participation in and the contributions to the Conference turned out to be quite varied and substantive. The collection clearly represents this variety and substance.

As readers will note, we have not produced this volume as a record of proceedings as such of the Conference. In other words, it is not a sequential session-by-session account of what happened at the Conference, rather; it is a compact presentation of the themes and concepts as emerged. By the same token, the volume has kept the evolution of themes as the main presentational guideline rather than the personalities of the authors and speakers.

Right after the Summit of the OIC member States in Malaysia, we in Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and in Shura Hamdard – the think tank of the Foundation – felt strongly that, independently of what OIC might itself propose to do, a follow-up was needed as quickly as reasonably possible so that the basic concerns expressed at the Summit could be explored further and substantiated, essentially by scholars and professionals, for future consideration and action in the Muslim world. This is in fact one reason why we proceeded rather headlong, if we may say so, in organizing the Conference.

In the extremely difficult times the Muslim *Ummah* is going through, especially since the 9/11 tragedy, any analysis or suggestion that may help the *Ummah* in surmounting its difficulties or finding out avenues of progress should be welcome. We are hoping that this volume would present considerable food for thought for the Muslim world for action on private, national and international levels. It might not be an exceptional addition to the relevant literature and available material, but if it is helpful in generating even a modest positive action by someone somewhere, we would think our efforts and the efforts of our collaborators and contributors were rewarded.

A venture of such an international nature can never come to fruition without the collaborative effort of many at many levels. I would, however, not in this note express my deep personal gratitude for this collaborative effort. Thanks have been expressed elsewhere in the volume, but actually the work and the outcome are beyond all thanks.

(Sadia Rashid)

President

Hamdard Foundation Pakistan

PREFACE

The International Conference on Muslim *Ummah* in the Modern World – Challenges and Opportunities was held on 3-5 September 2004 at Karachi. It was sponsored by Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, and organized by Shura Hamdard. The former is an institution of repute in Pakistan devoted to multi-directional social development, particularly in the fields of education, health and medicine, and known for pursuing important Islamic causes as well. The latter is the Foundation's thinkers forum having an enviable record of regular deliberations spread over many years on subjects of immediate concern at the national and international levels.

As the Coordinator of the Conference, I had invaluable cooperation and support of the learned and vastly experienced members of the Organizing Committee, for which I am deeply indebted to them. However, it is basically a tribute to the active institutional support of the Foundation and the Shura as a whole that the Conference was successfully organized and conducted, and has led to a worthy outcome, in our view, in the form of this volume of Collected Papers and Speeches. It is no less a tribute to the memory of Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said, who founded these institutions and nurtured them over a long period to their present level of maturity and excellence.

The Conference was organized essentially as an independent private follow-up of the OIC Summit held at Malaysia. In selecting its title, the organizers purposely desired the focus to be on Muslim *Ummah* as a whole and not Muslims in a particular country or in a specific region. Additionally, the focus was to be not in isolation but in the context of the modern world to provide the immediate relevance.

The Conference was intended to find out the challenges being faced by the *Ummah*, but was intended also to explore the opportunities for further cohesion, conformity, diversity and development that the *Ummah* could avail itself of, while meeting the challenges. Thus, analysis was to be combined with action orientation and rays of hope were to be looked for in the twilight zones.

Well attended by participants and audience throughout, the Conference had an Inaugural Session, four Working Sessions and a Concluding Session. Unfortunately, several of the participants invited from abroad could not attend the Conference, for one reason or the other, despite having promised to attend. Still, reasonable international participation can be seen in the Collection as being presented.

The focus of this Collection is on the substance of the various themes and subjects discussed, and therefore it has not been produced as a record of proceedings but has been conceived as a book. However, we have not omitted the pleasantries and introductory remarks in the papers and speeches, wherever they occur, in order to retain the flavour of the on-the-floor deliveries rather than on-the-desk compositions.

We have taken care to refer the transcriptions of speeches back to get them endorsed and vetted by the speakers. At the same time, we have taken the usually understood and allowed editorial liberty of making minor corrections and changes in the texts and titles of the papers and speeches where necessary, for one thing to maintain the presentational consistency and linkages. Despite that, we have ensured that no change is made anywhere that might result in a change in the original intent and meaning.

As a token of tribute to Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said, we have included one of his earlier thoughtful papers, the like of which he would have contributed had he been alive to organize and conduct the Conference himself.

Our earnest hope is that the conclusions and pointers emanating from the Conference and contained in this volume

would be read with close interest and would receive serious attention by individuals, organizations and governments in the Muslim world. Overall, a modest contribution it might be, but it certainly deserves not to be taken lightly, particularly when the *Ummah* is on the lookout for measures that may help it surmount its present difficulties.

(Ghulam Umar, Maj. Gen. Retd.)
Conference Coordinator

would be read with close interest and would receive serious
attention by individuals, organizations and governments in the
Muslim world. Overall, a modest contribution to world peace but it
certainly deserves not to be taken lightly. particularly where
leadership on the lookout for measures that may be taken to
the present difficulties.

The book is a very good one and it is a pleasure to read it.
I hope it will be widely read and that it will be a
contribution to the peace of the world.



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

MAZHAR ALI KHAN ARIF*

SUMMARY

General Scheme of Presentation

In this volume, as the Table of Contents shows, the actual collection of the Conference Papers and Speeches, presented at the International Conference on Muslim *Ummah* in the Modern World – Challenges and Opportunities, has been divided into three Chapters: the first giving the overall perspective of the challenges and opportunities; the second discussing the religious, social and political challenges and opportunities; and the third bringing out the economic development challenges and opportunities. Within the Chapters, the papers and speeches delivered in the various sessions have been so grouped as to let the themes develop and emerge more or less in a structured manner.

The first Chapter of the collection, consistent with its nature, contains only a Message, the Welcome Address and the Keynote Address.

The second Chapter consists of fourteen papers and speeches. Among them, the first eight deal with the religious,

*Member of Shura Hamdard and of the Conference Organizing Committee. Served as Stage Secretary at the Conference.

social and political challenges and the needed responses, more or less in their totality as seen by the writers and speakers. The next six are more specific: two explaining extremism and terrorism, the other two dealing with aspects of political systems and governmental setups, and the last two describing some international linkages and initiatives.

The third Chapter includes eleven papers and speeches. Of them, the first five deal with economic development challenges, issues and needed responses in a relatively collective way; the remaining six cover specific aspects and areas. Among these latter six, one relates to science and technology, one to infrastructure and commercial ventures, one to trade relations, one to the role of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry, two to the role of women, and the last one to the need for an Islamic TV channel.

Challenges and Opportunities – Overall Perspective of Muslim *Ummah* in the Modern World

Giving the overall perspective of challenges and opportunities being faced by the *Ummah*, the first Chapter befittingly opens with a message (pages 37-38) from **General Pervez Musharraf**, President Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Extending warm wishes and felicitations to the organizers and participants, the President refers to his proposed strategy, termed as 'enlightened moderation', towards solving the problems of the Muslim world in the present tumultuous times. As described by him, the two prongs of the strategy are: (1) Muslim world shunning militancy and extremism and adopting the path of socio-economic uplift; and (2) the West, particularly the US, aiming at resolution of all political disputes with justice and assisting in the socio-economic uplift of deprived Muslim world. The President also underscores the necessity of further strengthening of the OIC.

In her Welcome Address (pages 39-42), **Mrs. Sadia Rashid**, President Hamdard Foundation, highlights the primary need for the *Ummah* to develop itself in tandem with the world

in an atmosphere of peace and amity. She then stresses that the key to ensuring sustained progress and prosperity is building up of the inner strengths and values. She laments the situation that the *Ummah* does not demonstrate the integrity and cohesion that may be expected from such a large body of people, so singularly bound by distinct concepts, values and traditions. Another paradox pointed out by her is that despite vast material and human resources, the *Ummah* as a whole is far behind the West in economic, educational and technological development. She calls for a balanced view of and approach to the problems that should involve both looking inwards and looking outwards. While collective efforts and corrective actions are required for which organizations such as the OIC should take the lead, no less important in her view is the contribution required from the statesmen, the educators, the intellectuals, the professionals, the technocrats –in fact the individuals and groups of individuals in every walk of life among Muslims all over the world.

The Keynote Address (pages 43-52) by **Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad**, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, provides a thought-provoking overview of the basic challenges faced by the *Ummah*. Dr. Mahathir identifies the fundamental problem of the *Ummah* emanating from the fact that a single, simple and forthright religion has been fragmented into many hostile-to-each-other sects and sub-divisions. The other basic fault, in Dr. Mahathir's view, is the neglect of the prime injunction of Islam to acquire knowledge. He goes on to trace the cherished history of Muslims when knowledge reigned supreme and its acquisition did not put a bar against any source whatsoever. Yet another development that has restrained the progress of Muslims, according to Dr. Mahathir, is the introduction of priesthood that was non-existent in the original framework of Islam. Recognizing that Islam is a way of life, and politics, social affairs and economic affairs cannot be separated from religious affairs, Dr. Mahathir asserts that this does not mean that the State must necessarily be ruled only by those well-versed in religion. He emphasizes that Islam is a religion for all times to come, but this does mean that

the environment of the 7th Century be necessarily created, because this would negate the relevance of Islam to the present times.

In Dr. Mahathir's view, the true challenge being faced by the *Ummah* is that it has strayed from the original and fundamental teachings of Islam. Observing that the ignorant Arabs built up, under the miraculous guidance of Islam, the greatest civilization of the world, Dr. Mahathir poses a question as to how can it be that we being already Muslims are seemingly incapable of building a greater Islamic civilization. In answering the question, he thinks the seemingly impossible is possible through unity, adherence to the fundamental teaching of Islam and acquisition of knowledge and skills. Dr. Mahathir ends on a qualifying, albeit optimistic, note that if we admit that it is our fault and not the fault of our religion that we are backward and then strive to move forward, we would certainly make progress since we are endowed with the brains and the brawns as everyone else.

Religious, Social and Political Challenges and Opportunities

The second Chapter, dealing with the religious, social and political challenges and opportunities, opens with a paper by **Hakim Mohammed Said** (pages 55-63) offering an incisive probe into the Islamic perspective of man and the future of civilization. Although written towards the close of the 20th Century, the paper provides a surprisingly correct vision of the world's then existing setup and of the things to come, in particular those in relation to Muslims, and that is one reason why the paper has been included in this collection.

The main dilemmas that Muslims face, according to Hakim Said, are:

- how to reconcile the modern concept of nationalism with the concept of *Ummah*;
- how to achieve material progress since both the capitalist system and the socialist alternative do not conform with Islam's own social and economic systems; and

- how to deal with the stiff resistance encountered in the prevalent setup of the world at large to Islam's legal system and the moral values of Muslims.

However, all these dilemmas, says Hakim Said, pale into insignificance before the menace of hostility of the West towards the Muslims and Islam, mainly resulting from a deliberately distorted image of the religion and its adherents.

Some of the suggestions given by Hakim Said for ameliorating the situation are:

- achieve prosperity, progress and power, mainly through strengthening the moral fibre and reinitiating an interest-free economic system;
- work for more unity and organized cooperative effort through a stronger OIC;
- strive for the removal of anti-Muslim myths and feelings through dialogue, aiming at better understanding, while avoiding vehement and emotional confrontation and protests and condemnation of the West on every issue;
- pursue the Islamic concepts of equality, brotherhood, justice and peace as the foundations of individual life, social order and international dealings;
- nurture the democratic system and promote consultation and accountability which are the bases of the system; and
- endeavour for an international system in the 21st Century in which each and every society should have the freedom to develop its own version of relations with others, so that narrow, parochial, ethnic, national and religious frictions and their dreadful outcomes could be avoided.

In the second paper appearing in this Chapter (pages 64-82), Prof. Saiyid Hamid outlines the reasons for the decline of the Muslims and outlines the steps required for their resurgence.

Some of the more prominent reasons in the elaborate list given are:

- a simple and easily intelligible creed;
- stress laid on equality, equity and justice;
- top priority to pursuit of knowledge;
- freedom of thought and speech;
- democratic principles and humanitarianism;
- moral discipline;
- no discrimination on grounds of colour, country, creed and caste; and
- good and just governance.

Among the causes of decline, Prof. Hamid cites an advent of ritualism and an ebb in the quest of knowledge as being the uppermost. Disunity, inflexibility, literal interpretation of religion, insularity and withdrawal are some of the other important causes cited.

In suggesting steps to redress the situation, Prof. Hamid lays stress on going back to the fountain-head of the faith—the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* – and eschewing superficial sectarian differences. Pointing out the established correlation between education and progress, he emphasizes modern education focused on science, mathematics and technology. Among other attributes to be achieved are, according to him, health and fitness, avoidance of extravagance, discarding feelings of fatalism, proper management of institutions, reasonable emancipation of women, more liberal attitude towards the modern economic systems, proper exploitation and use of the available resources, and dissociation from every semblance of terrorism.

The Chapter's third paper (pages 83-90), authored by Prof. N. Islam also deals with the overall challenges and opportunities of the *Ummah*. After describing what is meant by Muslim *Ummah*, Prof. Islam raises a question whether Muslim *Ummah* exists as such. In his opinion, after the first four Caliphs,

Muslim *Ummah* has never been a compact unified body as it was intended to be; there was a hope that the establishment of the OIC would lead to such a compact unified body but the hope was not fulfilled and the conspicuous divergence still remains. Prof. Islam then refers to the political turmoil among the Muslim countries, the creation of artificial barriers, the predominance of rituals and the unfortunate and unjustified linkage of the religion of peace to the practice of terrorism. He still hopes that the OIC would be revitalized to help the *Ummah* achieve its goals. Some of the suggestions given by him for action in the Muslim world, particularly through the OIC, are:

- organizational strengthening for the promotion of science, education, technology and culture;
- a federation of the entire Arab-speaking region;
- an Islamic Common Market;
- an Islamic Common Defence Pact;
- prudence in the exploitation of oil by its producing Muslim countries since it is an exhaustible resource;
- an Islamic Security Council;
- relaxed visa system;
- self-sufficiency in agricultural and industrial outputs; and
- better utilization of the vast manpower resources.

In his paper appearing next – the fourth serially – (pages 91-97), Mr. Javed Jabbar feels there is a need for redefining a number of terms associated with Muslim *Ummah* and commonly used today. This is necessary in his view since these key words and their connotations have been distorted by the West to suit its own designs. Mr. Javed Jabbar then reflects on three terms, namely, “Muslim *Ummah*”, “enlightened moderation” and “secularism”.

The term “Muslim *Ummah*”, he goes on to say, implies a comprehensive similarity and unity which in fact does not exist and is unlikely to emerge in the near future. Thus in his view, it

is important to acknowledge the diversity and to use it to the Islamic world's advantage. Regarding "enlightened moderation", he thinks "moderation" is redundant since enlightenment is a condition on which there should be no moderation. Moreover, moderation can itself not be unqualified; he gives an example that resistance to extremism and violence must never be "moderate". As for "secularism", the usual meaning assigned to the term is "atheism" or "Godlessness" which in his view is not correct, since secularism actually means that religion and the State function separately.

He refers to the *Misaaq-e-Madinah* as an example how a Muslim-dominated State could also be a secular State. He enumerates seven different kinds of States prevailing in the Muslim world and thinks that before attempting to restructure the OIC, the Muslim States should initiate internal restructuring to make their political systems more participative. He feels there is a need for *Ijtehaad*, through candid, tolerant debate, on Islam and secularism as well as other on similar subjects related to the *Ummah*.

The fifth paper in the Chapter (pages 98-111) is by **Admiral (R) Iftikhar A. Sirohey** which calls for throwing a bold challenge to the challenges faced by the Muslim *Ummah*. Making detailed historical references dating back to the time of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself, Admiral Sirohey describes how the grave challenges of the past were met by the Muslims. In the post-9/11, post-Afghanistan and post-Iraq context, Admiral Sirohey lists the following desired actions, among others:

- hold fast to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* as the eternal guide;
- try to banish illiteracy from the *Ummah*;
- restart thinking and deliberating on the Universe and on our own God-given powers as divinely ordained;
- establish own financial and banking institutions and create own currency;

- rename and reorganize OIC to reflect its political power better and leading to joint foreign policy of the *Ummah*;
- devise means and methods of collective security for the *Ummah* and an effective mechanism for the resolution of disputes within;
- insist on a determined number of votes to adopt any Resolution in the UN Security Council, until the *Ummah* acquires a right to veto; and
- make the Islamic court of justice effective.

In his Address to the Conference, listed next (pages 112-115), **Justice (R) Haziqul Khairi** describes peace and freedom in the Muslim States as the necessary condition for national and international cohesion. Political stability in his view is the starting point to be followed by a re-examination of Muslim thought and values in the fast changing world. Only then, he thinks, could a unifying framework emerge to bind the Muslims together in their present diversity, which is indicative of the reality that started taking shape right after the times of the first four Caliphs.

Justice Khairi talks about the supreme importance attached in Islam to the acquisition of knowledge which cannot be ever neglected. In this context, he refers to the misdirected scholarship in some religious schools wherein terrorism is preached as a vehicle of *Jihad*. At the same time he stresses that the world should also realize that state terrorism is the worst kind of terrorism and should be avoided at all costs. Justice Khairi underscores the important role that the OIC can play as a vehicle of unity and cohesion and a conduit of friendly relations and better understanding between the Muslim world and the world at large.

In the paper appearing next (pages 116-120), **Mr. Mahdi Masud** suggests some responses to the challenges being faced by the *Ummah*. Highlighting the context, Mr. Masud describes how the US has exploited the situation emerging from the 9/11

incident for its high-handed actions against the Muslim countries in a uni-polar world. The OIC, despite its imposing representation, has not been taken seriously at all. Nevertheless, in Mr. Masud's view, the *Ummah* shares today a commonality of security and political interests, and it is only by bringing into play the combined diplomatic, economic and political leverage that further aggression in the Muslim world can be discouraged. In addition to new actions required, Mr. Masud thinks the OIC should pay due attention to the implementation of past decisions, and towards this end constitute a high-powered monitoring mechanism. He urges that the restructuring of the OIC must be taken in hand immediately. Together with political initiatives, the OIC has to take initiatives on other fronts as well; he suggests steps towards economic cooperation, trade development investments in regional defence industries. On the religious front overall, *Ijtehaad*, in Mr. Masud's view, should be brought to bear on the burning contemporary problems and issues of the Muslim world.

Placed next is a paper (pages 121-152) by **Dr. Abdul Matin** that examines at some length the present conflict and confrontation between the West and the Muslim *Ummah* and explores the scope and measures towards bringing about a conciliation. Explaining the background of the major emerging forces such as Globalization, Westernization and Western Adventurism, Dr. Matin goes on to discuss various associated factors like the choices open to the role players, the significance of the desired revival of the *Ummah*, the stakes involved, the leadership crisis and the core issues and approaches. Dr. Matin acknowledges that the emerging forces are causing a variety of stresses and strains to the *Ummah*. These forces, however, Dr. Matin asserts, represent respective interests and values that have both divergent and overlapping elements.

On the *Ummah* side, Dr. Matin maintains that a revival of orientation, objectives and attitudes is necessary on the personal, social and governmental levels, and the elements involved he describes in some detail. As regards the conflicts with the West,

he believes it is possible to analyze the problems and issues and have sincere and meaningful consultations and negotiations at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. In his view, no useful purpose would be served to either party by random discrediting and provocation, and it is imperative for both the sides to identify sound choices and to continue the process of dialogue in order to reach a civilized conflict resolution.

Dr. Matin points out that a lot of preliminary work has already been done towards straightening inter-civilization relations through declarations such as those from the platforms of Bandung Conference, NAM, OIC and UN. This work should proceed further, Dr. Matin recommends, in the light of the overall recognition and guideline that mankind is after all bonded by reason, morality and spirituality.

Appearing next is the discourse (pages 153-167) by **Mr. Karamatullah K. Ghor** in which he talks about the myth and reality of extremism and the exploitation of religion in power politics. Referring to the 9/11 tragedy and its aftermath, Mr. Ghor raises a question: why is it that the Muslims have, *en masse*, been condemned and put in the dock? The answer in his view is that the aggrieved party has, unilaterally and unjustifiably, linked extremism to terrorism and has thus branded Muslim *Ummah* as being the culprit.

Mr. Ghor describes extremism as a product of inequality, injustice and a variety of discriminations. The resulting frustration, when it reaches the extreme, explodes, in Mr. Ghor's view, in the form of terrorism. Tracing its history, Mr. Ghor maintains that extremism was thrust upon the Muslims in the name of religion through concepts such as 'holy war' and deliberate use of religion for political ends, while the Islamic concept of *Jihad*, so maliciously maligned by the West, is in fact an instrument of self-defence in response to aggression. He cites cases of what he terms as State terrorism and imperialist expansionism under the cover of which the Palestinians, the Kashmiris and the Chechens have all been dubbed as terrorists.

To be able to meet the emerging challenges, the Muslim *Ummah* will, according to Mr. Ghori, have to start with a massive house cleaning. Democracy, human rights, fundamental freedom and civil liberty – some of the well-known attributes of Islam – have to be brought back into the present States, so proud to call themselves as Muslim States but wanting in these attributes. Adversity on so many fronts and open hostility from the other camp have, in Mr. Ghori's view, brought the *Ummah* at a juncture where it can chart a clear map for its emancipation and salvation – and this is the biggest challenge faced and the biggest opportunity as well.

In the next paper (pages 168-173), Mr. Afzaal Mahmood focuses on terrorism in relation to Muslim *Ummah*. Citing the context of revolutions and movements, Mr. Mahmood maintains that national heroism and terrorism are in fact the matters of definition, depending largely upon success or failure. While he admits that overt causes such as poverty, illiteracy, deprivation, social injustice, foreign occupation and so forth are important causes of terrorism, he thinks it would be an oversimplification to say that they alone contribute to the growth of extremism, fanaticism and terrorism. In his view, the resentment and rage resulting from the exploitation by and opulence of the West have also played a role. The reasoning behind the perception, Mr. Mahmood thinks, is faulty: instead of inquiring "where did we go wrong?" the Muslims ask the wrong question "who did this to us?". According to Mr. Mahmood, the larger crisis of Muslims is neither political nor economic; it is the crisis of a civilization that has become aware of its inadequacies but is too confused or fearful to walk the path of reason and initiate reforms and changes that are imperative to moving forward. Thus, while the outside world can help in eradicating the extraneous factors, the intrinsic ones, in Mr. Mahmood's view, can only be dealt with by the *Ummah* itself, to which the religious scholars and intellectuals in the Muslim world should turn to in right earnest.

In his paper appearing next (pages 174-180), Senator S.M. Zafar has focused on the question whether democracy is necessary for the Muslim polity. Recognizing that Islam today is the fastest growing religion and represents a sizeable population in a large number of countries, Senator Zafar highlights the poor showing of the Muslims in terms of economic and political power. He maintains that in the past, while consolidating the growth of their civilization and acquisition of territories, the Muslims committed the political sin of not complying with the Qur'anic mandate requiring to decide their affairs by mutual consultation, and thus failed to evolve into a full-blown and vibrant democracy. Enumerating the ingredients of democracy and referring to the early political history of the Islamic government, Senator Zafar points out that Muslims for various unfortunate reasons departed from the path set for them. As democracy is both natural and necessary for the development of Muslim *Ummah*, Senator Zafar maintains that for the solution of their problems the Muslims, instead of waiting for a deliverer, should take a quantum jump towards mutual consultation at every stage of governance.

More on the ideal political setup is provided in the paper that follows (pages 181-190) in which Dr. Javid Iqbal presents Allama Muhammad Iqbal's concepts of nationality and State according to Islam. At the start, the point is made that the overall sovereignty of Allah does not interfere with the sovereignty of the State. As for the methodology of governance, Allama Iqbal's view given is that a modern Islamic State can be established through a democratic/republican political order, that is to say, through election. Dr. Javid Iqbal then goes on to explain various related concepts like *Imam*, *Bai'at*, *Shura*, *Ijma'a* and *Ijtehaad*. Although the Allama was not specific about those fields of Islamic law where re-interpretation was required through *Ijtehaad*, indication has been cited from his writings that he was in favour of legislation on family planning and prohibition of polygamy.

In the paper there is also a mention that in the Allama's view the State should enforce not only the human rights but also

the rights of God. As indicated by Dr. Javid Iqbal, the Allama lays more stress on legislation for the eradication of poverty and ignorance than on the imposition of *Hudood* punishments, because in the Allama's view the economic backwardness of the Muslims is the real cause of the spread of numerous crimes in the Muslim society.

With respect to economic and financial aspects, it is stated that the Allama was against the adoption of either the capitalist or the socialist system. Instead, he favoured establishment of a welfare state of the middle class. Being aware that such a state could not be established without adequate resources, the Allama was of the view that to encourage, among other things, the development of free market economy, bank interest did not fall in the prohibited category of *Riba*. Dr. Javid Iqbal adds a frank, albeit sad, observation at the end that the Iqbalian model of welfare State still exists on paper only.

Entering into the realm of international relations, the Chapter at this point includes the remarks of **Dr. Abdullah Abu-Eshy** (pages 191-193) on behalf of the Muslim World League (MWL). Dr. Abu-Eshy points out several steps by MWL towards meeting the challenges that the *Ummah* faces from within:

- adoption of an Islamic Declaration, prohibiting acts of terror and branding the perpetrators as criminals;
- intention to form a Supreme Council of Prominent Muslim Scholars of the Muslim World to focus on measures to remove the disunity and fragmentation among Muslims;
- working out of a definition of terrorism in order to remove the distorted image and ensure justice and security and protect the legitimate rights of all the people; and
- plan to establish an International Forum for Dialogue – a non-profit organization concerned with strengthening the means of understanding, peace and coexistence among followers of the main world cultures and religions.

The final paper of the Chapter (pages 194-203), by **Dr. Dietrich Reetz**, explains the initiatives taken by Germany towards dialogue with Islam. The paper gives considerable details about the Muslims in Germany as well as of the problems they face and some of the measures to address those problems. One bone of contention mentioned is the religious education; different groups of Muslims could not agree on a common curriculum which has delayed the first state-sponsored Islamic instruction in Germany. The headscarf controversy has also reached Germany from France and it has been left to the states within the country to pass appropriate laws in this respect. The Berlin city government has proposed a law which is more even-handed since it targets all religious symbols.

Interest in information about Islam has been increasing in Germany. Among other things, about 30 internet portals have emerged seeking to inform Germans about Islam and Muslims. The German government has also created a separate office of a Commissioner for dialogue with the Islamic world, essentially to improve mutual understanding and strengthen tolerance. The office also administers a Special Fund for the European-Islamic Dialogue (EID). At the end of the paper, Dr. Reetz asserts that it is important to widen the thought horizon and broaden the perspective so that the peoples of the world would look at their common abode not only through the eyes of one section of population but also from the perspective of those with whom that particular section of population is connected.

Economic Development Challenges and Opportunities

The first discourse in this last Chapter of the Collection (pages 207-213) is by **Dr. Ishrat Husain**. Building up the context of the economic development needs, Dr. Husain demonstrates with the support of statistics that Muslim countries are rich in income but poor in human development. He then talks about the prevailing fallacy in the Muslim world that establishing more and

more institutions and holding more and more conferences is a solid achievement. He suggests that we should turn instead to measurable and achievable objectives which we would have to attain, and he maintains that these objectives cannot be attained without the acquisition, retention, production and dissemination of modern knowledge.

Dr. Husain argues for the Muslim *Ummah* remaining a responsible member of the international community and remaining committed to utilizing the vast opportunities provided by the globalization and financial integration for the benefit of its population. At the same time, he lauds the Islamic economic system which combines the good features of both the capitalist and the socialist systems. However, for the Islamic economic system to succeed the requirements are integrity, honesty, truthfulness and transparency—elements which are all but missing in the Muslim countries. The superiority of the Islamic economic system is that its foundation is a balance among market, family, society and state. He sums up by saying that to participate in the tough challenges of the globalized world requires competition and for competition, he reiterates, we not only require acquisition of knowledge and skills but also constant updating of knowledge and skills.

In the paper following (pages 214-221), Mr. Ahsan Iqbal begins with a comment that the present times are witnessing changes that are unprecedented in human history and progress, and these changes therefore bring in quickly new challenges and opportunities. To meet these challenges and exploit these opportunities, Mr. Iqbal points out, new knowledge and approaches are needed all the time. In this context and given the political tragedies the *Ummah* has been facing, Mr. Iqbal notes widespread feelings of depression and frustration among the Muslims. It should not be so, he asserts; there are several factors indicating the brighter side as well, e.g.:

- the large population which is more than one-fifth of the world's;

- large important economic resources;
- visible signs of political emancipation in all countries;
- emerging models of success; and
- establishment of new institutions and instruments in the international market.

These positive signs do not mean, he adds, that the *Ummah* should ignore the deficiencies. Mr. Iqbal cites various statistics to show that despite good human and material resources the Muslim countries are far behind others in development. Clearly the Muslims were too slow in embracing new technologies, lagged behind in intellectual progress and failed to take notice of the industrial revolution. The main reason for this, in Mr. Iqbal's view, has been being fed with a finite set of information rather than how to use their own judgment, exercise their critical faculties and experiment, in spite of the clear injunctions of the Qur'an. Mr. Iqbal hopes that the Muslims would not miss the knowledge revolution as they missed the industrial revolution. Positive steps are therefore needed, Mr. Iqbal believes, towards creating a dynamic environment that breeds inquisitiveness, creativity, inquiry and reflection by undertaking a sizeable educational reform.

The next discourse (pages 222-231) is by **Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh** which focuses on the needed initiatives towards greater economic cooperation and development. Dr. Shaikh gives statistics as examples of both the richness of resources and the deficiencies in economic development in the Islamic countries. Dr. Shaikh finds the overall situation depressing; he notices that most of the income of the 57 members of the OIC is generated by only six countries and 22 of the 57 countries are least-developing countries of the world. Dr. Shaikh questions this situation despite the presence of many networks in these countries. His answer is that these countries do not possess network fitness, that is to say, they have weak human development, weak connectivity, weak investment policy regimes and anti-private-sector bias. The most important initiative needed, according to Dr. Shaikh, is the

communication and knowledge sharing initiative under which seven ideas could be developed:

1. create in-depth online information exchange feasibility studies;
2. fund think tanks to develop commercially viable products and initiatives;
3. fund private sector research and training;
4. strengthen and support business association, e.g., Islamic Chamber of Commerce;
5. encourage private sector initiatives and business-to-business dialogue;
6. create an association of investment agencies; and
7. create a mechanism for infrastructure growth and development.

In the next paper (pages 232-243), **Dr. Rafique Ahmad** examines the possibilities of solid economic ties through joint infrastructural and commercial ventures. Despite the geographical compactness and physical contiguity, the potential in the Islamic world for a viable economic bloc or sub-groups of this bloc remains, Dr. Ahmad maintains, largely unutilized. The major reason in his view is the absence of stakeholders to undertake mega inter-state infrastructural and commercial ventures, although the scope for such ventures is vast. Dr. Ahmad points out that after the collapse of communism, a new corporate capitalist global culture has come into existence which has thrown two challenges to the developing countries: (1) the onslaught of globalization; and (2) the emergence of multilateral or transnational corporations. The unequal distribution of gains from trade and investment between the developed and the developing countries has strengthened the sentiments for regionalism, and there is justification, as well as room, for the OIC countries to promote regional or sub-regional economic and trading blocs. The primary reasons for these countries for not having made progress in this direction are, in

Dr. Ahmad's view, two: (1) non-development of basic infrastructural relationship; and (2) shyness to establish a workable free trade area. Dr. Ahmad calls for serious thought to be given to joint infrastructural ventures, particularly in the fields of gas, oil and transport.

Another vital area in Dr. Ahmad's view is setting up of an OECD-type research and development organization for stimulating economic cooperation among Muslim countries with the help of a network of professionals and experts in relevant areas. Dr. Ahmad thinks a common market is difficult to achieve because it will require fundamental redesigning of the socio-economic and financial structures, but a beginning can be made by forming a free trade area on selective basis, if not covering the entire spectrum of the commodities being produced.

Appearing next (pages 244-254) is a joint paper contributed by **Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary** and **Ms. Shamsun Nahar Khan** which makes out a case for developing science and technology in the Muslim world. The paper first places the Muslim *Ummah* in the context of the world, bringing out both the brighter and the darker sides, but essentially highlighting the marked contrast visible when the situations at the two ends are compared. Referring particularly to GDP growth, education, brain drain and investment in science and technology, the paper emphasizes the fact that the gaps continue to enlarge with time. The paper, therefore, recommends as follows:

- a commitment that every Muslim country would spend at least 1.5 per cent of its GDP on higher education and science and technology;
- setting up of a Pan-Islamic Fund for Science and Technology to help create science and technology infrastructure and develop human resources;
- strengthening of existing centres of excellence in science and technology;

- establishment of world class centres of excellence in frontier fields of science and technology; and
- increasing mobility of scientists and researchers in the Muslim world.

In the paper that follows (pages 255-265), Mr. A. Razak Dawood makes a plea for improving trade relations among the Muslim countries. Mr. Dawood notes that efforts are being made towards globalization, regionalism and bilateralism side by side across the world and trade blocs exist within the Muslim world as well. At the same time, Mr. Dawood sees a North-South interdependency in the pattern of global trade, in which the South enjoys a comparative advantage in primary products and sustains its foreign exchange reserves through the export of natural resources, and the North is a net exporter of capital intensive consumption and investment goods.

Among the Muslim countries, the first logical step towards realizing the potential benefits of regional trade, in Mr. Dawood's view, should be removal of the tariff walls and quota restrictions. A step-by-step integration process is necessary, according to Mr. Dawood, that should be guided by mutually beneficial economic incentives and not purely parochial interests. Development of a reliable database and advancement of basic research are needed towards this end. A lot of scope exists, in Mr. Dawood's view, for the Muslim countries for increasing trade and economic links with South East Asian and East Asian countries. Another benefit of gradually moving towards a larger free trade area, Mr. Dawood thinks, would be in terms of greater access to markets which otherwise would be monopolized by the developed countries. Flow of investment to the Muslim countries would increase, in Mr. Dawood's view, but to boost it these countries would have to improve their existing institutions, in particular those that enforce the rule of law and reduce excessive bureaucratic regulations.

At this point we find the remarks (pages 266-270) made by Mr. Aqeel A. Al-Jassem, bringing out the role of the Islamic

Chamber of Commerce and Industry in promoting development in the OIC member countries. While stating that the overall conditions for the private sector participation in the economic development have improved over the years, Mr. Al-Jassem admits that several constraints exist and further improvement is needed. It is also imperative for sustained economic growth, in Mr. Al-Jassem's view, that the public and private sectors complement each other in the overall development effort. Among the activities of the Islamic Chamber, Mr. Al-Jassem mentions holding of private sector meetings, investment and privatization conferences, workshops on small and medium enterprises, training programmes, exchange of trade delegations, holding of exhibitions and development of database. He has also listed various initiatives of the Chamber at the international level in the then near future.

Placed next are the remarks (pages 271-275) made by **Prof. Humayoun Ihsan** in which he refers generally to many approaches needed on many fronts and endorses some of the views expressed earlier. Prof. Ihsan emphasizes a serious and realistic stock-taking by the Muslims of their failure and resulting deficiencies. The education system being a key to a march towards progress, Prof. Ihsan suggests enlightening the students with scientific concepts leading later to specialization. In the political arena, Prof. Ihsan pleads for fairness and justice; he gives an example of the atrocities committed by Saddam Husain but cites at the same time the unacceptable sanctions by the West that resulted in non-provision of medicines to Iraqi children and a large number of deaths as a result.

The paper next (pages 276-282) is by **Dr. Talat Ayesha Wizarat** highlighting the changing role of the Muslim women in the modern world. Dr. Wizarat refers to the various injunctions of the Qur'an that have established and enhanced the status of women in the society, but asserts that over time this status has been allowed to degenerate. Dr. Wizarat holds feudalism and tribalism, supported by colonialism, responsible for this

degeneration. However, the emergence of liberation movements, in Dr. Wizarat's view, has helped in considerably enhancing the status overall in the recent history. Dr. Wizarat cites encouraging cases of Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine and Turkey in this respect. Her overall conclusion is that Muslim women are definitely playing a more active role as elements of human resources and as participants in economic development.

Supplementing Dr. Wizarat's observations, the remarks following (pages 283-292) by Ms. Shameim Kazmi essentially provide selected comparative male/female data in Muslim countries. Demonstrating that Muslim women are far below par than Muslim men in economic activities, Ms. Kazmi describes Muslim women being in a conflict situation, searching for their identity in the face of – somewhat partial – interpretation of the Qur'an and Islam by the politicians, dictators, fundamentalists and extreme groups. Injunctions against women, Ms. Kazmi feels, are readily forthcoming while protective laws are fewer and less forceful. In conclusion, she calls for a conscious speeding up of development of women in all Muslim countries to mobilize them to generate resources and contribute increasingly to economic development.

Lastly in the Collection, there is a paper (pages 293-296) by Mr. Burhanuddin Hasan in which he makes a case for an Islamic TV channel. Mr. Hasan points out the high-handedness with which the matters in Afghanistan and Iraq were dealt with in the recent history, which the OIC failed to appropriately condemn, mainly due to the internal compulsions of the member countries. The Muslim world, in Mr. Hasan's view, can still unite and cooperate in many areas keeping its linkages and national interests intact. Mr. Hasan thinks that only the OIC and the Arab League can effectively fight the menace of terrorism by preaching the real message of Islam, which is the unity of the *Ummah*, peace and religious tolerance. Mr. Hasan emphasizes that in this age of satellite communication, this message can be preached to the

world through a multi-lingual Satellite TV Station that can also combat the negative propaganda against Islam brought out through malicious charges of fundamentalism and radicalism.

CONCLUSIONS

Balanced and rationalized as much as possible, the conclusions emanating from the Conference deliberations, are as follows:

The Muslim Ummah –

Identity and Broad Reconstruction Framework

1. *The Muslim Ummah is more than a nation, in the ordinary sense of the word; it is a trans-national body of people spread over the world, singularly bound by one religion, distinct concepts, values, traditions and historical heritage, and represented by 57 member countries of the Organization of International Conference (OIC) having a total population approaching 1½ billion. However, with the prevailing heterogeneous political systems, and the lack of a comprehensive similarity, unity and focus of country interests, it is sometimes questioned whether the Ummah can justifiably be considered, beyond being an ideal and symbolic entity, a really compact body to be reckoned as a formidable force in the world arena.*
2. *As the Ummah has been unfortunately fragmented generally into many hostile-to-each-other sects and subdivisions and this fragmentation considerably dissipates the collective power that it could otherwise wield, the greatest challenge to, and for that matter the greatest opportunity for, the Ummah is to become really united.*
3. *Through this unification, the Muslim world should strive to emulate the true Islam, i.e., by holding fast to the*

Qur'an and the Sunnah as the eternal guide, regain the spirit of the same simple faith and forthright code of life as it has been divinely ordained.

4. *Islam is a religion for all times to come and is a way of life governing political, social and economic affairs along with religious affairs. This, however, does neither mean that an Islamic State must necessarily be ruled only by religious scholars or preachers, nor does it imply that the environment of the 7th Century A.D. be exactly replicated, because, if at all done, this would negate the relevance of Islam to the present times.*
5. *Adherence to the fundamental teachings of Islam and following its primary focus on banishing illiteracy and achievement of knowledge and skills irrespective of the source, made the Muslims rule the world and build up a great civilization. If the same basic approaches are strictly followed, there is logically no reason why the lost glory cannot be regained.*
6. *In its essence, the larger crisis of Muslims in the present day world is neither political nor economic; it is the crisis of a civilization that has become aware of its inadequacies but is too confused or fearful to walk the path of reason and initiate reforms and changes that are imperative to moving forward.*
7. *For the resurgence of the Ummah, both looking outwards and looking inwards are necessary. Mere blaming of the West for its predicaments would not help the Ummah to move forward; a dispassionate assessment of its own faults and shortcomings is equally necessary.*
8. *Thus, while the outside world can help in eradicating the extraneous negative factors, the intrinsic ones can only be dealt with by the Ummah itself. Similarly, while*

for the required collective efforts and corrective actions within organizations such as the OIC should take the lead, no less important is the contribution required from the statesmen, the educators, the intellectuals, the professionals, the technocrats – in fact, the individuals and groups of individuals in every walk of life among Muslims all over the world.

9. Collective efforts and corrective actions towards the Ummah's unification and reconstruction and its appropriate linkages with the modern world have to additionally address the major differences that the Ummah faces with respect to the modern concept of nationalism, with the prevalent major economic systems, namely, the capitalist system and its socialist alternative, and with the non-Islamic legal systems and the moral values.
10. To remain a vibrant and dynamic faith, Ijtchaad should be brought to bear on the burning problems and issues of the Muslims in the context of the modern world.
11. In this overall context, the indicated intention of the Muslim World League to form a Supreme Council of Prominent Muslim Scholars of the Muslim World to focus on measures to remove the disunity and fragmentation among Muslims, and a plan to establish an International Forum for Dialogue, which would be an international non-profit organization concerned with strengthening the means of understanding, peace and coexistence among followers of the main world cultures and religions, are proposed steps in the right direction.

Extremism and Terrorism

12. Extremism and terrorism are two nebulous concepts, distorted in the present day world largely for the

purposes of power politics and associated unjustly to Muslims. Of these, extremism per se is a product of inequality, injustice and a variety of discriminations. Jihad, which is wrongly considered to be the outcome of extremism in the case of Muslims, is in Islam actually an instrument of self-defence in response to aggression.

13. National heroism and terrorism are matters of definition, depending largely upon success or failure. While overt causes such as poverty, illiteracy, deprivation, social injustice, foreign occupation and so forth are important in the context of terrorism, the resentment and rage resulting from the exploitation by and opulence of the West do also play a role.
14. In this context, ongoing or proposed measures by the Muslim World League, such as adoption of an Islamic Declaration, prohibiting acts of terror and branding the perpetrators as criminals, and working out of a definition of terrorism in order to remove its distorted image and to ensure justice, security and protection of the legitimate rights of all the people, are worthwhile and welcome measures.
15. Equally appreciated are measures in the Western world towards promotion of better understanding of Islam. Among them, a welcome action has been taken by the German government in the creation of a separate office of a Commissioner for dialogue with the Islamic world, essentially to improve mutual understanding and strengthen tolerance. The office also administers a Special Fund for the European-Islamic Dialogue (EID).

Political Setup

16. In Islam, the overall sovereignty rests with Allah, but this does not interfere with the sovereignty of the State.

As for the methodology of governance, a modern Islamic State should ideally have a democratic/republican political order. In the past, while consolidating the growth of their civilization and acquisition of territories, the Muslims did not strictly follow the Qur'anic mandate requiring to decide their affairs by mutual consultation, and thus failed to evolve into a full-blown and vibrant democracy. As democracy is both natural and necessary for the development of Muslims, the Ummah should work towards it, ensuring mutual consultation at every stage of the governance.

International Profile

17. *The OIC is the largest representative body of the Muslims, yet it does not as actively and as vigorously pursue the interests of the Muslims as is desirable. There is a strong need for its reorganization to reflect its true political and economic power. The Organization should become a true vehicle of unity and cohesion and a conduit of friendly relations and better understanding between the Muslim world and the world at large. It should devise means and methods of collective security for the Ummah, an effective mechanism for the resolution of disputes within, and an instrument of economic cooperation. Additionally, it should constitute a high-powered monitoring mechanism to ensure that its agreed initiatives are speedily implemented. A view has been expressed that OIC could help develop a joint foreign policy and even work towards a determined number of votes necessary to adopt any resolution in the UN Security Council, until the Ummah acquires a right to veto. Another area where the OIC could be of help is in making the Islamic court of justice effective.*

Globalization and Economic Cooperation

18. *The major emerging forces such as Globalization, Westernization and Western Adventurism, are causing a variety of stresses and strains to the Ummah. These forces, however, represent respective interests and values that have both divergent and overlapping elements. It is possible to analyze the problems and issues and have sincere and meaningful consultations and negotiations at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. It is imperative for both the sides to identify sound choices and to continue the process of dialogue in order to reach a civilized conflict resolution.*
19. *A lot of preliminary work has already been done towards straightening inter-civilization relations through declarations such as those from the platforms of Bandung Conference, NAM, OIC and UN. This work should proceed further in the light of the overall recognition and guideline that mankind is after all bonded by reason, morality and spirituality.*
20. *The political crises the Ummah has been through or has been facing, have generally led to widespread feelings of depression and frustration among the Muslims. However, there are several factors indicating the brighter side as well, e.g.: the large Muslim population which is more than one-fifth of the total population of the world, vast important economic resources, visible signs of political emancipation in all countries, emerging models of success, and establishment of new institutions and instruments in the international market.*
21. *Being an important part of the international community and remaining committed to utilizing the vast opportunities provided by the globalization and financial*

integration for the benefit of its population, should be the immediate objective of the Ummah. This does not mean that the Ummah should abandon the Islamic economic system which combines the good features of both the capitalist and the socialist systems. The superiority of the Islamic economic system is that its foundation is a balance among market, family, society and state. However, for the Islamic economic system to succeed the requirements are integrity, honesty, truthfulness and transparency—elements which need to be vigorously promoted in the Muslim countries.

22. However, among the advantages of globalization, the Muslim countries would have to keep in mind the attendant drawbacks as well. As an instrument of globalization, the emergence of multilateral or transnational corporations is a particular challenge to the developing countries. The unequal distribution of gains from trade and investment between the developed and the developing countries has strengthened the sentiments for regionalism, and there is justification as well as room for the OIC countries to promote regional or sub-regional economic and trading blocs. The primary reasons for these countries for not having made progress in this direction are two: (1) non-development of basic infrastructural relationship; and (2) shyness to establish a workable free trade area.
23. Despite the geographical compactness and physical contiguity the potential in the Islamic world for a viable economic bloc or sub-groups of this bloc remains largely unutilized, and the Muslim countries should work towards utilizing this potential in the long run. Absence of stakeholders to undertake mega inter-state infrastructural and commercial ventures has been the

main constraint, although the scope for such ventures is vast. Serious thought needs to be given to joint infrastructural ventures, particularly in the fields of gas, oil and transport. Establishing ultimately own financial and banking institutions and own currency for such a bloc could be the ultimate goals.

24. The Muslim countries should as a whole try to consolidate their economic resources, particularly aiming at as much self-sufficiency in agricultural and industrial outputs as possible, and exercising prudence in the exploitation of oil since it is an exhaustible resource.

Human Resources, Science and Technology

25. The Muslims should not miss the knowledge revolution as they missed the industrial revolution. Positive steps are therefore needed towards creating a dynamic environment that breeds inquisitiveness, creativity, inquiry, and reflection, by undertaking sizeable educational reform.
26. Participation in the tough challenges of the globalized world requires competition, and competition in turn requires not only acquisition of knowledge but also constant updating of knowledge and skills.
27. The Muslim countries have many networks but do not possess network fitness, that is to say, they have weak human development, weak connectivity, weak investment policy regimes and anti-private-sector bias. The most important initiative needed is the communication and knowledge sharing initiative under which seven action areas could be developed: creation of in-depth online information exchange feasibility studies; funding of

think tanks to develop commercially viable products and initiatives; funding of private sector research and training; strengthening of business associations, e.g., Islamic Chamber of Commerce; encouraging of private sector initiatives and business-to-business dialogue; creation of an association of investment agencies; and creation of a mechanism for infrastructure growth and development.

28. *In order to properly utilize the vast manpower resources, essentially by making up the knowledge and skill deficiency backlog and through sustaining the future progress in this respect, several concerted efforts are required in the Muslim world, such as the following:*

- *a commitment that every Muslim country would spend, ideally, at least 1.5 per cent of its GDP on higher education and science and technology;*
- *setting up of a Pan-Islamic Fund for Science and Technology to help create science and technology infrastructure and develop human resources;*
- *strengthening of existing centres of excellence in science and technology;*
- *establishment of world class centres of excellence in frontier fields of science and technology; and*
- *increasing mobility of scientists and researchers in the Muslim world.*

29. *An important segment of the strengthening of the manpower resources is development of the womanpower. Various injunctions of the Qur'an have established and enhanced the status of women in the society, but over time this status has been allowed to degenerate, mainly because of the machinations of feudalism and tribalism,*

supported by colonialism. However, the emergence of liberation movements has helped in considerably enhancing the status overall in the recent history, as is evident from the situations in Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine and Turkey. Overall, while it is evident that Muslim women are definitely playing a more active role, a conscious speeding up of their development is certainly needed in all Muslim countries to mobilize them to generate resources and contribute increasingly to economic development.

30. As an adjunct to the needed efforts to promote science and technology, the Muslim countries need, in this age of satellite communication, a multi-lingual Satellite TV Station that can additionally help combat the negative propaganda against Islam.

Trade

31. Another vital area is setting up of an OECD-type research and development organization for stimulating economic co-operation among Muslim countries with the help of a network of professionals and experts in relevant areas. A common market is difficult to achieve right away because it will require fundamental redesigning of the socio-economic and financial structures, but a beginning can be made by forming a free trade area on selective basis, if not covering the entire spectrum of the commodities being produced.
32. In the pattern of global trade, recognition of a North-South interdependency seems to be mutually beneficial, in which the South enjoys a comparative advantage in primary products and sustains its foreign exchange reserves through the export of natural resources, and

the North is a net exporter of capital intensive consumption and investment goods.

33. *The first logical step towards realizing the potential benefits of regional trade among the Muslim countries should be removal of the tariff walls and quota restrictions. A step-by-step integration process is necessary that should be guided by mutually advantageous economic incentives and not purely parochial interests. Development of a reliable database and advancement of basic research are needed towards this end. A lot of scope exists for the Muslim countries for increasing trade and economic links with South East Asian and East Asian countries. Another benefit of gradually moving towards a larger free trade area would be in terms of greater access to markets which otherwise would be monopolized by the developed countries. Flow of investment to the Muslim countries would increase but to boost it these countries would have to improve their existing institutions, in particular those that enforce the rule of law and reduce excessive bureaucratic regulations.*

I

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OVERALL PERSPECTIVE OF MUSLIM UMMAH IN THE MODERN WORLD

President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

MUSLIM UNIVERSITY THE WASHINGTON
OVERSEAS UNIVERSITY
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL PERVEZ MUSHARRAF*

I am very pleased to learn that Hamdard Foundation Pakistan is sponsoring, under the auspices of *Shura Hamdard*, an International Conference on “Muslim *Ummah* in the Modern World – Challenges and Opportunities”, which is being attended by many distinguished participants from Pakistan and abroad.

The world is passing through a tumultuous period ever since the dawn of the 90s, with no signs of relenting, The emerging problems have led me to propose a strategy that I have termed as “Enlightened Moderation”.

This strategy is two-pronged. One prong is to be delivered by the Muslim world by shunning militancy, extremism and adopting the path of socio-economic uplift. The other prong, to

*President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

be delivered by the West and the US in particular, must aim at resolving all political disputes with justice and also assisting in the socio-economic uplift of the deprived Muslim world. Towards this end, we have proposed further strengthening of the OIC. The Committee of Eminent Persons being formed to recommend a restructured OIC is an important step towards this direction.

This Conference being held as an independent follow-up is very important as it would be bringing together a group of eminent scholars and professionals to analyze the challenges in detail and highlight the opportunities for specific future action.

I send my warm felicitations and good wishes to the Organizers and through them to the distinguished participants for the success of the Conference. May Allah Almighty be our guide, *Ameen!*



WELCOME ADDRESS

SADIA RASHID*

It is a great privilege and pleasure for me to welcome you all to this International Conference, on behalf of both Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and Shura Hamdard Pakistan.

I thank the Governor Sindh for being present at the Inaugural Session of this important event.

And I do not know how to express our gratitude to our Honoured Guest of today, Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad. Sir, the deep feeling, the profound understanding and the candid analysis that you have put forward with regard to the cause of the Muslim *Ummah*, have been noted all over the world, and hailed in the Islamic world in particular. We are certain that your keynoting the Conference today would go a long way in directing further efforts in promoting cohesion in the Muslim *Ummah* and in guiding it towards a better future in a more peaceful and – we hope and pray – suspicion-free world.

It is also my pleasant privilege to be welcoming Mrs. Mahathir, who is accompanying Dr. Mahathir and is gracing this

*President Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and of Shura Hamdard.

event this afternoon. There is an old saying, – and I hope, being a woman, I will not be accused of partiality if I allude to it. Who is not aware of the phenomenal success of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad? Well, I would like to remind you of what they say: 'Behind every great man is a great woman! Madam, the world owes you a debt of gratitude.

I am grateful also to the distinguished participants who, on our invitation, have joined us in this Conference, from within the country and from abroad. I am sure the thoughts that they will share with us will help in understanding better the problems of the *Ummah* in the present day world. Without knowing the problems there can be no hope of a solution, so this exercise is an important one. Only after that, can the first steps be taken which will lead the *Ummah* towards ways to develop itself in tandem with the world in an atmosphere of peace and amity.

Many of you know that the Hamdard Foundation Pakistan has been in existence for more than half a century. It had a modest beginning but has grown, by Allah's grace, into a multi-dimensional institution, devoted to the promotion of health, medicine, education, and social welfare. Since the very start, the name 'Hamdard' in Pakistan has been synonymous with the name of its founder – my father – Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said. Unfortunately and unexpectedly, an assassin's bullet cut short his life – a life every moment of which was devoted to thoughts and actions directed towards the well-being of Pakistan and the *Ummah*.

His sudden departure was a great shock to us, but we survived that shock. We survived not because we could match his devotion, vision and energy, but because he had built up the institutions under him in a manner that they could become ultimately self-sustaining.

And here there is a lesson. The lesson is that individuals matter a lot, and contribute a lot, but institutions – and, for that matter, nations – survive, basically and in the long run, not on the strength of individuals but on the strength of their inner integrity and resilience. Thus, the Muslim *Ummah* too has to pinpoint and

build up, first of all, its inner strengths and values, if it wishes to ensure sustained progress and prosperity for itself.

Everyone knows that the world is in a state of turmoil these days. Being a part of the world, the Muslim *Ummah* shares this turmoil, but has a set of additional problems as well. Even though it is asserted otherwise, the name of the *Ummah* is maligned, and its identity as a whole is associated, more often than not, with those who, for one reason or the other, are said to be responsible for disturbing the peace in various parts of the world. Paradoxically, even though its identity is a target for suspicion, the *Ummah* in practical terms does not demonstrate the integrity and cohesion that may be expected from a body of people, so singularly bound by distinct concepts, values and traditions. Moreover, despite vast material and human resources, the *Ummah* as a whole is far behind the Western world in economic, educational and technological development – the development that ultimately guarantees power in the world arena.

So, these are the basic problems to be reviewed and analysed in depth, objectively and dispassionately. In the 'global village' as the world is called today, to indicate the vastly increased interdependence and inter-linkages of its various parts, the *Ummah* evidently cannot keep itself isolated and insulated. At the same time, it cannot discard its own cherished, and in many ways uniquely ordained, set of values and characteristics. What is the way out then? The answer is simple but the task is arduous. The way out is first to look intensively, both inwards and outwards, and then to take the appropriate action that may be called for as a result.

Looking inwards would surely reveal the departures here and there from the ideals and principles, following which had, at one time, revolutionized the world. Moreover, it would doubtless show the deficiencies in various fields, particularly education and technology, again in which Muslims at one time were regarded the paragons and the leaders.

Looking outwards would reveal the misunderstandings to be

removed and the misgivings to be cleared. It would also reveal in many cases a lack of common stands, and considered and unified views on matters of interest and concern to the *Ummah*.

In short, there is a need for serious collective efforts to understand, and equally serious and integrated collective efforts for corrective action. The responsibility lies with organizations such as the OIC. It also lies with the governments of the various Muslim countries. But no less important is the contribution required from the statesmen, the educators, the intellectuals, the professionals, the technocrats – in fact the individuals and groups of individuals in every walk of life among Muslims all over the world.

At the same time, efforts cannot remain one-sided, that is to say, on the side of the Muslim world alone. The West has to play its part too. This part has to consist of an objective and dispassionate understanding, free of suspicions and of ill-informed and distorted views. It has also to consist of honest probes into the reasons of the disquiet in various quarters of the world and solutions to simmering political disputes, with visible justice and fair play.

Assemblages like this Conference can, therefore, be instrumental not only in stimulating dialogue, and in bridging the gaps in understanding, in order to bring about a more peaceful and fruitful co-existence, but also in accelerating the pace of economic and technological progress in the Muslim world. If this International Conference contributes positively even in a small measure towards this goal, we would consider our efforts in organizing it to have been worthwhile.

Thank you once again and my most earnest good wishes for the success of the forthcoming deliberations in the Inaugural Session and in the subsequent Working Sessions of the Conference. I believe in the power of prayer, and before I close, I will ask all present to join me in a few moments of silent prayer that we succeed in moving towards our goal of peace and understanding, and of rising to the challenges and grasping the opportunities to become better.



CHALLENGES FACING THE MUSLIM *UMMAH* IN THE MODERN WORLD

MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD*

The challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* at this stage of modern civilisation are too numerous to list. They will probably depress us because they are so many and so seemingly insoluble.

But they all have but one single origin. And our confusion is over the different interpretations of the one single Islamic religion that was brought by the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (ﷺ).

In the 1400 plus years of Islam many interpreters, teachers, preachers of Islam and plain charlatans have managed to break up the one simple religion that was brought by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) into a thousand religions which are sometimes so different from each other and even from Islam that it is difficult to identify them as the Islam that was brought by the Prophet (ﷺ), the Islam which changed the *Jahilliyah* Arabs into the founders of a great civilisation.

Granted that Islam permits differences in interpretation but how different can they be from the original, fundamental teachings

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of Islam, as found in al-Qur'an and the verified *Hadith*? Certainly not to the extent that Muslims begin to accuse each other of not being Muslims. If we accept as true all the accusations of those of other sects than ours, and also our own accusations against them, then none of us are Muslims – i.e., there are no Muslims in this world now.

Today we see the *Sunnis* and the *Shiahs*, both vehemently maintaining that they are Muslims, but they fight and kill each other because each accuses the other of not being Muslim. Yet the world, the non-Muslims, consider both sects as Muslims and do not differentiate between them, condemning both of being guilty of terrorism, etc.

Then we have the other sects and sub-divisions among the *Sunnis* and the *Shiahs*, and those not linked to either, yet insisting that they are the true Muslims, that all other Muslims are not true Muslims and need to be corrected, forcibly in some cases. That Islam condemns force is ignored.

The result of this fragmentation of a single, simple and forthright religion that is named after Peace is a bitter contest to prove that each is more Islam than the others. This is done more by the outward appearances of the faith than what is enjoined by Islam as found in the fundamental teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Thus when the Prophet (ﷺ) defines a Muslim as one who bears witness that "there is no Allah but Allah, and that Muhammad (ﷺ) is his Messenger" and the Prophet (ﷺ) was prepared to stop the killing of a surrendered enemy because he made this declaration of faith, most Muslims are not willing to accept this declaration as sufficient evidence of being a Muslim. We stipulate many other conditions which must be adhered to and practised or we are prepared to condemn and punish an individual, or a sect of not being Muslim, or Muslim enough. We do this not by consensus of the *Ummah* or through proper *Ijtehad* but on our own in accordance with the beliefs of our sect only.

The conflicts between the many Muslim sects on the question of Islam and its interpretations have forced us to concentrate on proving that we are Muslims to the exclusion of other things that are also enjoined by Islam.

Thus while we are often heard to say that Islam teaches us that we Muslims are all brothers, we do not show our brotherhood as evidence of our faith. We often ignore this completely. Instead, we are ready to kill each other. We do not consider Muslims killing other Muslims as evidence that they are not Muslims as much as we consider a slight deviation in dress code as evidence of our lack of faith and deserving of punishment.

We know that our religion tells us that it is a sin for a Muslim to kill another Muslim. But we justify our action by claiming that the person or people we kill are not Muslims, not true Muslims according to our own interpretations, etc. We pass judgement on their faith even though they bear witness to the Oneness of Allah, and to Muhammad (ﷺ) as His *Rasul*.

In the meantime we neglect the other injunctions of Islam. No religion has stressed the need to acquire knowledge as Islam does. The first message of Allah to Muhammad (ﷺ) was *Iqra*. We may debate endlessly as to the meaning of the word *Iqra*, but there is no doubt that we Muslims are enjoined to read, and to read means to acquire knowledge.

For a time we did. The early Muslims were learned not just about religion but about other fields of knowledge as well. They did not question where the knowledge came from, whether it was from heathens or Christian or Jewish sources. They did not question the nationality of the scholars who pioneered the studies. They learnt the languages of these scholars, acquired the knowledge, translated them into Arabic, researched and added to the body of knowledge that they had acquired.

And they became known as the pioneers of medicine, science, astronomy, navigation, mathematics, etc. Through their work and the application of their knowledge they built the great

Islamic civilisation, superior to the other civilisations, including the Europeans at that time. Muslims were respected and even regarded with awe. There was no oppression or humiliation of the Muslims nor did anyone dare to wrest Muslim land through force of arms.

The Muslims were strong in their defence capabilities. And this too is in accordance with the teachings of al-Qur'an that Muslims must be capable of defending themselves and instilling fear in the enemy. In the days of the Prophet (ﷺ), defence meant possession of war horses, swords, bows and arrows. But the Muslims of the great period of Islamic civilisation knew that the weapons of the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) were inadequate to defend themselves and to instil fear in the enemy. And so they built cannons, siege-machines, catapults, warships, along with their superior steel blades. Thus was the Muslim realm effectively defended. Such was the stature of the Islamic civilisation that even the Christian Spaniards and Jews spoke and wrote Arabic and some converted to Islam.

But later came the new interpreters of Islam who condemned learning and acquisition of knowledge other than that about the religion. They insisted that only knowledge of the religion would give merit in the afterlife and would earn places in heaven. Other knowledge was not necessary and would earn no merit for those who pursue it. Later this knowledge was described as secular and against religion. The only people who should be honoured in this life and who should lead in every Muslim society and country are those learned in Islam even if they are ignorant about administration, about development, about defence. To dispute this view is heresy.

One of the greatest differences between Islam and the two other monotheistic religions which preceded it is that there is no priesthood in Islam. Indeed it was the system of priests in Judaism and Christianity which led to the belief that the followers of these two religions had deviated from the teachings of their religions.

And so Islam does not allow for the setting up of an hierarchy of priests. There are no Popes in Islam. And there are no provisions for priests to intercede with Allah on behalf of erring Muslims. The faithful communicate directly with Allah through prayers. The learned ones in Islam are required only to explain the more esoteric teachings of Islam as contained in the verses which are allegorical in nature.

But we see some of the learned ones apparently assuming roles akin to priests. They build up followings which are based on their particular teachings to the exclusion of other interpreters. And they preside over the religious observances of the community. They even threaten not to perform the prayers for the deceased if he is not one of their followers. They demand unquestioning obedience not only in religious matters but also in social and political matters.

It is true that Islam is a way of life, and politics, social affairs and economic affairs cannot be separated from religious affairs. The separation of State from religion is not possible in Islam. The State must obey the injunctions of the religion, but not necessarily be ruled only by those well-versed in religion. Thus, while Islam enjoins that the Muslims must be capable of defending themselves, how that defence is to be carried out and how or what weapons are to be produced and used cannot be determined by those learned only in religion. Religion does not specify the weapon, the strategies or the tactics. The injunction in al-Qur'an is to have the capability to defend the *Ummah* and put fear in the hearts of the enemy. The effective word is "defence", not war horses or swords and spears or who the generals should be. But as with other teachings of Islam, we stress the form rather than the substance.

And it is the same with the governing and administration of the Muslim *Ummah* and Muslim countries. It is not the form of government that is important but rather that the Muslim government should be led by competent administrators, should be strong, should be just, should have the capability to cope with

the changing times. There is nothing to say that Muslim societies and Muslim countries should recreate the life and the environment that existed at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) before it can be considered as Islamic or before it can survive and prosper. Islam is for all times, not just for the 7th Century of the Christian Era or the 1st Century of the *Hijrah*. The attempt to recreate the environment of the 7th Century denies the relevance of Islam in terms of time and environment. It only weakens the *Ummah* and renders Islam irrelevant except for the performance of religious rituals. It limits the Muslim way of life to primitive situations only. Nor are we asked to retreat and leave this world to the infidels because the afterlife is permanent and we should only prepare ourselves for it. We are asked to seek *hassanah* in this world and *hassanah* in the next.

When Allah enjoins that Muslims must strive to look after themselves before Allah would help them, most teachings stress more appeals for help from Allah without equally stressing the injunction to help oneself first. For every misfortune long prayers are prescribed even when the misfortunes are brought about by our own carelessness or failures to do what is necessary in order to save ourselves. There is a tendency to ascribe everything as being preordained although we know that when we do what is necessary to avoid the misfortune, our success too would be regarded as being preordained. So why not do something to help ourselves even as we pray to Allah for help. We are more likely to succeed than with prayers alone!

And so because of all these deviations from the teachings of Islam, because of the differing interpretations and the confusions that they cause, the Muslims have become backward, weak and unable to deal with the multitude of challenges they now face. Muslims are being oppressed and massacred by their enemies and even more by fellow Muslims. Some of them are aware of the sad state that they are in but most are in denial, refusing to acknowledge the sufferings and the humiliations they have to endure but instead believing that without any effort on their part

they will be saved by Allah because they are Muslims and they have prayed for His help. And finally of course they will receive their rewards in the next world. So there is really no need to strive to save themselves in this world.

The challenge, the true challenge, facing the Muslim *Ummah* in the modern world is to speak the truth, to admit that they have strayed from the original and fundamental teachings of Islam. And because they have strayed, they have broken up into a thousand religions; criticising, condemning and fighting each other and weakening the *Ummah*.

We cannot determine who is right and who is wrong without involving ourselves in endless polemics. But there are verses in al-Qur'an which are clear and not subject to multiple interpretations. They are fundamental to the teachings of Islam. These are the verses which declare that all Muslims are brothers, that Muslims must not kill other Muslims, that Muslims only fight against those who fight them, that Muslims must respond to a call for peace, that Muslims must acquire knowledge, all knowledge and not just knowledge of Islam, that Muslims must have the capacity to defend themselves and instill fear and awe in the enemy because of their capacity to do so. If we focus on these and other unambiguous verses and not be distracted by the differences in our interpretations of the other verses, then we can achieve a degree of unity if not full unity. Better still, these verses can help the *Ummah* overcome the challenges facing it.

Above all, Muslims must heed those verses which repeatedly stress that when we judge we must judge with justice, that there is no duress to be applied in Islam, that Islam abhors trouble and those who create trouble, that Islam is, above all, for peace.

We must however reject those who claim that certain verses in al-Qur'an have been expunged. We must reject the justification of un-Islamic action based on the claim that the injunctions of al-Qur'an no longer apply because we no longer recognise others who claim to be Muslims as being true Muslims.

Religion is a powerful force in Islam and many want to avail themselves of this force for their own ends. But despite this we must not weaken the influence of religion in the way of life that we lead. Instead we must use this powerful force. But we must use it according to those basic teachings of Islam over which we do not differ.

We know that the earliest adherents of Islam were the ignorant Arabs, the *Jahilliyah*. They were given to feuds, to fighting each other incessantly, to the worship of stones and idols, to female infanticide, to kidnapping and enslaving women, to unlimited wives. They were not noted for their learning or knowledge, being superstitious and suspicious of everything.

Yet we know that upon embracing Islam these same ignorant Arabs were able to unite, to acquire knowledge and skills to spread the teachings of Islam and to build the greatest civilisation which endured for 1300 years.

How can it be that we who are already Muslims are seemingly incapable of building a greater Islamic civilisation than the *Jahilliyah* Arabs. How can it be that we have regressed and continue to regress, to be weak and easily oppressed by our detractors and enemies?

It cannot be that Islam is the cause of our failures and misfortunes. It must be because we have deviated from true teachings of Islam; deviated because of politics; because of the ambitions of those who yearn for earthly power and positions. For, these many have been prepared to abuse the true teachings and to spread their own interpretations so as to justify their ambitions.

Surely if we discard the earthly ambitions of our sects and our sectarian leaders and reunite as Muslims, if we go back to the fundamental teachings of Islam as preached by the Prophet (ﷺ), as found in al-Qur'an and the verified *Hadith*, and we practise these teachings; surely if we acquire all the knowledge there is in this world, whatever may be the source, if we inject our Islamic moral values in the application of this knowledge, we

hone our skills to the highest level; surely if we use this knowledge to strengthen ourselves; to build the capacity to defend the *Ummah* and our religion, we develop our countries with the wealth that Allah has showered on us; we practise charity not only towards the Muslims but also for the non-Muslims, we govern and rule ourselves and our people with justice foremost in our minds as enjoined by Islam; surely if we set aside the esoteric interpretations which divide us; then we must be able to overcome most of the challenges facing us in this modern world.

We shall all be well-equipped with the knowledge and the skills to administer and develop our countries, to strengthen them with the defence capability that we are enjoined by our religion to have, and to dedicate ourselves to the service of Islam and the *Ummah*. We should find common grounds between our different sects and disregard or tolerate the differences so that we could be united again and strong.

All these may sound very idealistic. It is easy to talk about doing what Islam enjoins upon us but it is not going to be easy considering the nature of the human race whatever may be the religion. But it must be remembered that even the Prophet (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah, did not convert three quarters of the known world of his time in one day, or even in the 23 years of his Prophethood. He suffered many failures and setbacks for years. Even when he succeeded he did not live to see the full extent of the spread of Islam. He saw only a minute fraction of the Islamic world he initiated. His successors worked for centuries to build the glorious Islamic civilisation.

If the Prophet (ﷺ) could not do it in his lifetime, can we expect to do better than him? Only the most arrogant among ourselves would dare say that they can:

We will obviously take time. It is enough if only a few countries among us try to practise and implement the fundamental teachings of Islam as have been enumerated. We will pray, we will appeal to Allah for His guidance and His help. But we must make the effort to extricate ourselves from this morass that we

are in. If we fail we must try again and again until we achieve success. That is what Allah has enjoined upon us, and Allah will surely reward us for our efforts, for obeying His injunctions.

We are as well-endowed with the brains and the brawns as everyone else. We can do what others can do. And we can do more, for in doing what we do, we are actually obeying the teachings of our faith, of Islam. This is an *ibadah*. And we will be rewarded in this world with an honourable life, a good life, free from oppression by others.

Will we be punished in the next world for bringing honour back to Islam and the Muslims, for defending them, for the performance of our obligations to Allah all at the same time?

I will not answer this. We are facing challenges which can destroy our faith. I am sure you can answer these questions by yourselves.

There is basically only one challenge facing the *Ummah*. It is the challenge of admitting the truth that we have strayed from the basic and true teachings of our religion because of earthly ambitions for ourselves, our sects and our race. It is our fault and not the fault of our religion. It is for us to correct this fault.

II

RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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MAN AND THE FUTURE OF CIVILIZATION AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

HAKIM MOHAMMED SAID*

The approaching end of the 20th century leaves in its wake an intense awareness of the problems besetting the present world. Collapse of the Western colonialism and the international Communism – both hailing from the Western civilization, secular, rational to the extent of being atheistic and economically exploitative – appear to herald the approaching end of Western hegemony.

We are aware of a new world order in the making but what shape it will assume is difficult to say at present. However, at least we may say that it cannot be mono-polar because such an arrangement revolts against the very nature of human beings. Men are different and human progress stems from this very fact. Differences in opinions, values and goals set in motion the dialectical process of human evolution in the form of action, reaction and synthesis.

*The late President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and of Shura Hamdard.

Therefore, the approaching end of this century and the beginning of the 21st require us to pause and think over our present conditions, to identify and analyse our problems and then to try to formulate policies, targets and goals, short-term as well as long-term ones.

We should be ready to face an uncertain world order for some time to come. But one finds that the end of the cold war and the Western world and the Communist world and their alliances and arrangements have ushered in a period of a reversion to a multi-polar world with accentuation of ethnic, national and religious confrontation. With the increasing pressure of population and dwindling economic resources these conflicts are bound to increase more. The Western world, habitual of relying upon the resources of the Third World, and finding it more difficult to utilise these resources, will use stiff economic measures. Rise of Far Eastern economic powers will further increase these conflicts. Aspirations of the Third World for material, scientific and economic progress will add more to it. So in the coming years we may witness intense economic imperialism and conflicts in the form of attempts by the economic giants to control global economy, regional conflicts, 'Ethnic Cleansing', a world where the weak will find it difficult to survive. This will be more true of the so called Third World, the have-nots.

In this scenario, we – the Muslim people – face greater problems than the rest of the world. We are part of the Third World but still apart from them and have a number of problems of our own. Here we may try to have a general overview of these problems facing us so that we may have well-defined targets and parameters for framing our policies and objectives.

In our age-long existence with the non-Muslim world, the present intense confrontation appears to be as intensive and acute as during the Crusades. The West has been dominating the world and influencing the local and native cultures. This impact has negative and eroding effects on these cultures. In the case

of the Muslims it has led to a strong 'Conflict of Identity' or 'Identity Crisis' (Abdullah Ahsan, 1992; Grunebaum, 1962). This conflict started when the Western colonial powers, in order to strengthen their hold over the local people, tried to destroy the local educational institutions whose alumni were mostly in the forefront of their opposition, right from North Africa to Indonesia. They also attempted to create a local class of petty officials and clerks who were English, French, Dutch or Russian in their language, manners and dress. They also destroyed and changed the local legal and economic systems.

These new local people educated in rationalistic liberal and secular education with administrative support became finally the rulers after independence and, except Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, etc., still hold sway in all the Muslim countries. This dichotomy has created a searing rift in these countries at all the three levels of a Muslim's life: individual, national and '*Ummatic*'. This is particularly true of a modern educated Muslim who finds it difficult to reconcile modern nationalism with the concept of *Ummah*. Similarly they are reluctant to accept a secular mode of life. Well aware of the advantages of a democratic form of government they yearn to reconcile it to their vision of the Golden Age of Islam, i.e., the period under the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the four Pious Caliphs. Their reaction to this conflict has varied from an out and out imitation of the West as in Kamalist Turkey and socialist controlled governments of the last two generations of the present century to a return to the Islamic Ideals, called Fundamentalism by the West.

Attracted by the glamour of scientific, technological and material progress they want to achieve it. As stated above, a number of us tried to use the socialist alternative and the others the capitalistic banking system. The first failed to deliver the goods. The second brought in its wake another source of conflict within the Muslim societies, viz., the institution of *Riba*' (interest). Obvious advantages of mobilization and use of capital through interest and banking led some of our earlier generations to find

a middle path by distinguishing between interest and usury and declared that interest and life insurance, etc., were not anti-Islamic. However, the colonial masters legalized banking and interest till the whole economy came to be based on it. The system has become so pervasive and deep-rooted that with all our good wishes we are unable to do away with it. Recent bitter facts that Western powers are not ready to accept any challenge to their banking system and use all kinds of methods to stop Muslim efforts at controlling it has raised some doubts about its international utility for us.

The third factor of this crisis is the Muslim desire to restore their former Muslim legal system and moral values. This is a new phenomenon because it came, and only in countries formerly controlled by the foreign powers, into existence only after regaining of independence. On this point, the reaction has varied from blunt refusal to restore the former system, lip-service declarations to positive efforts, like the *suo-moto* powers used by the Supreme Court and High Courts of Pakistan (Nasim Hasan Shah, *Hamdard Islamicus*, 1993).

To these problems of internal conflict in the body-politic are added the universal problems of the Third World, e.g., lack of economic resources for progress, research and development, illiteracy, problems of health and hygiene, etc.

All these factors pale into insignificance before the menace of hostility and antipathy of the West towards the Muslims and Islam.

Perhaps its roots may be traced back to the early classical period of Islamic expansion when it rapidly spread from Spain to the borders of China and South Asia. The second phase of this conflict came with the Crusades leaving behind bitter memories, and eventually came the modern European expansion and its hegemony over the rest of the world. Throughout this vast expanse of time, nearly 1500 years, a distorted image of Islam and Muslims was created and sustained, at first as a defensive response of Europe to Islam's message and during the colonial

era in the form of orientalism for weakening local resistance, spreading Christian beliefs on the erroneous imperialistic assumption that it would strengthen their empires. This image is still affecting Western attitudes and policies, rather it is again being intensified due to spreading of Islamic beliefs to these countries. In their education and propaganda media they paint Muslims and Islam in the darkest hues so as to inculcate a barrier of hatred against spread of Islamic beliefs.

In its outer manifestation, this hostility is tinged with economic considerations. It is significant that in 1980 an Islamicist scholar clearly referred to the danger of losing important Iranian oil supplies by the U.S.A. due to the revolution which destroyed monarchy. Therefore, the Western powers are doing their best to support the so-called secular-liberal groups in Muslim countries ignoring the democratic anti-monarchical and anti-feudal character of popular movements. One is amazed to see these democracies which are so vociferous in their declarations of human rights, liberty and democracy, to support ruthless military dictators and tyrants from Africa to Indonesia.

Suggestions

Steps to ameliorate the plight of the Muslims and to find out solutions to these problems may be broadly categorized as: 1) to provide security to the Muslim *Ummah*; and 2) to achieve prosperity, progress and power. The first objective can be achieved through taking steps to improve the character of the Muslims so that they may again become model human beings, the members of the *Khayr al-Ummah*. This requires ennobling of individual and collective character. This will automatically destroy the distorted image of a Muslim as a fanatic and synonym of corruption.

Together with this strengthening of moral fibre we must devote our attention to acquiring knowledge even from the remotest corners of earth. We all know that Islam emphasised learning

and started with *Iqra'* (to recite, to read) (al-Qur'an, XCVI:1) and Learning is the only means open to a common man to improve his lot and achieve respectful status, power and prestige among the nations of the world. In this respect we should utilize the international forums like UNESCO to the best of our ability. It also implies that we should devote, like Malaysia, major portions of our national budgets to education, research and development. Education, not sophisticated weapons, is the answer.

Prosperity and progress of the poor of the world is threatened by the capitalistic exploitation. Economic imperialism has replaced political imperialism. We should learn to achieve progress on the basis of our own strength and resources and not on the borrowed capital from the Western powers. Aid and loans are the modern shackles by which our governments are heavily bound.

Unfortunately, those of us who are enjoying economic prosperity through bounties and blessings of nature are also controlled by the West through their banking system. Interest and banking, foundations of modern economic progress, have become tools of exploitation for the rich nations. Islam has shown a way out of this morass by abolishing interest. Can Muslims be bold enough to reinitiate an interest-free economic system with free market economy with some arrangement for mobilization of capital? Will the powerful 'Banking Houses' of the West allow it? We have seen that they are not ready to allow the Muslims to compete with them in the banking business.

We also should have more unity and organized co-operative effort in the form of a stronger O.I.C. and its allied organizations to influence world opinion by use of moral pressure, in the world forums, by better use of the information media so that one-sided anti-Muslim versions may be checked.

The most important task before us, we believe, is the urgent need for demolishing the distorted and untrue myths based on anti-Muslim feelings existing in the Western world.

We must realize that the Western antipathy to Islam is an age-old phenomenon. Its removal or change to a positive thinking

will need a concerted long-term effort. As a prerequisite, as stated earlier, to this change we must change ourselves and present an image of noble citizens of the world.

We should not solely rely upon the policy of vehement and emotionally ridden confrontation and protests on every issue and condemning the West. The spirit of Hudaibiah should govern our efforts and lives. It was not a victory in military terms but a clear-cut opening or an outlet for peace. It showed to the non-believers that Islam was not bent upon destroying them but provided them with a better way of life. Peace not war is the way of Islam.

We should tell them that *Jihad-e-Akbar* is a struggle against one's baser self and war against injustice.

Importance of *Huquq al-'Ibad* or rights of others, concepts of equality, brotherhood, justice and *Ihsan* as the foundations of individual life, social order and international world should be presented before the world.

Mushawarat (consultation) with *Ihtisab* (accountability) in our affairs is the basis of Muslim political life which is, interestingly, the basis of democratic system also. Rise of dictators and one-party system is not an Islamic way of life but a phenomenon, common to the Third World and is even found in the West also. Islam is a democratic system which, with all the drawbacks of present societies, can still overthrow strong monarchies, superpowers and can challenge dictators.

With this we should also try to establish a 'Dialogue' with others. All efforts at ecumenical rapprochement should have a positive response from our side. This will remove misunderstandings and fears and encourage friendly relations.

An effort should also be made to make others understand that progress does not necessarily mean conformity and uniformity at every level. Nature has created men as individuals. Men develop by differences of opinions. This initiates the dialectical process, the basis of all evolution. To differ is not to be regarded as conservatism or orthodox obscurantism. If a Muslim is a

Muslim it is like other beings, a Christian, a Jew, a Confucian, a Buddhist, and the like.

We should aim to have an international system in the 21st century in which each and every society should have the freedom to develop its own version of relations with others. If this does not happen, narrow, parochial, ethnic, national and religious frictions will make the new century more horrendous and dreadful. Repetition of the tragedies like the rape of Bosnia Hercegovina, Palestine or Kashmir will be repeated every where. May Allah save us and others from these human frailties.

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REASONS FOR THE DECLINE OF MUSLIMS AND STEPS FOR RESURGENCE

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The decline of Muslims has been as intriguing as their meteoric rise. Islam shot into global ascendancy within the incredibly short period of one and a half centuries. Its phenomenal rise has been attributed to various reasons such as the following:

Reasons for Islam's Meteoric Rise

- a) The great stress it laid on equality, equity and justice and its consequent gravitational pull for the deprived and disadvantaged and unjustly treated people.
- b) The war it waged against superstition, fatalism and lethargy.
- c) It placed great emphasis on the study of natural phenomena and drawing inferences from it, thus adding immensely to the fund of human knowledge.
- d) It sounded the death knell of tribal vendetta that had plagued Arabia.
- e) It is a simple clear, straight-forward, unencumbered creed easily intelligible to the common man.

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- f) Islam gave top priority to pursuit of knowledge which pushed its followers into the vanguard of human progress. It gave tremendous fillip to science and technology.
- g) It encouraged independence and freedom of thought and speech.
- h) The basic approach of Islam is democratic and humanitarian.
- i) Islam stressed moral discipline that specially appealed to the people. Drinking, gambling, promiscuity were all prohibited and a peaceful and harmonious family life was ensured.
- j) The advent of Islam brought about the liberation of the human spirit and facilitated mankind to realize its potential.
- k) Islam brought about, among others, two revolutionary changes: (1) It bestowed dignity on women and gave them equal rights including entitlement to inheritance. (2) It prohibited any discrimination on grounds of colour, country, creed and caste.
- l) Although at the advent of Islam, Arab society was riven by tribal feuds and vendetta and was plagued by moral aberrations, it did have the quality of confidence, courage and independence. Islam harnessed and developed these qualities and its code of conduct put drastic curbs on deviant behaviour. These led to the emergence of a people full of regulated vitality and eager to prove their mettle.
- m) The Prophet (ﷺ) instilled in them a resolute and unshakeable faith in the truth of their religion and on that account in their own invincibility.
- n) Assimilation of the new faith was made easy by the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) illustrated in his person, in his word and deed, what the Qur'an enjoined. Islam's simple and pragmatic character gave it an edge over competing creeds. This proximity to the Fountainhead of Islam was not restricted to the *Sahaba* (Companions) who saw the Prophet but extended to all the succeeding generations, because whatever the Prophet said and did was preserved for all times in the shape of his Traditions.

- o) The good and just governance and the peace and prosperity that prevailed in Muslim countries, heightened the attraction of Islam.
- p) The Qur'an's repeated stress on pursuit of knowledge brought a ray of light and constituted an attraction for people groaning under the burden of superstition and prejudice.

As a result Muslims dominated the civilised world. Their conquest of the domain of knowledge coincided with their territorial exploits. Their erstwhile eminence vis-à-vis the countries of the West can be gathered from the following:

In the thirteenth century A.D., the famous geographer Masudi described the denizens of Europe as not having a touch of refinement in their temperaments. "Their manners were crude, their tongues rough and their intellects blunt". Saeed bin Ahmad Qazi, a resident of Toledo in Spain, wrote a book on racial types (1028 A.D.). He stated that "the inhabitants of Northern Europe had nothing whatever to do with any sort of knowledge. More animal than human, they lacked both physical flexibility and intellectual clarity".

Preparing quietly and diligently ever since the dawn of the second millennium, about 1500 A.D., the West shot ahead of the East. The correlation between education and development is illustrated not only by the steep decline of Muslims when they turned their back on science and research but also by the remarkable strides that Europe made in the period of reform and renaissance and the agricultural, industrial, information and service revolutions that followed in quick succession. The balance of power was made to stand on its head.

Causes of Decline

To say that the decline of Muslims commenced in the 13th Century may not be readily acceptable; for between the 14th and the 18th centuries A.D. a number of great Muslim dynasties

including the Ottomans (1300-1922), the Safavids (1502-1736) and the Mughals (1526-1857) held court in splendour. However, the sack of Baghdad in 1258 is rightly cited as the beginning of the decline of Islam. For one thing, the Mongols struck at the nerve center of Islam, the seat of the Caliphate, and eroded the impression about Muslim invincibility; for another, and more importantly, it brought to an end Islam's inherent, enlivening and vitalizing quest for knowledge which had given Muslims territorial ascendancy and academic pre-eminence. The general attitude assumed a defensive dimension. Perhaps in an exaggerated concern for preserving the pristine purity of their faith, they garrisoned themselves and prevented access to new ideas. In the process they became withdrawn and laid back.

The Muslim character as it developed during the era of decadence stands flawed because of a very wrong but long-standing interpretation of religion. Somewhere in the middle of the long journey from the advent of Islam to this day, they chose to confine devoutness to observance of religious rites. They started thinking that those persons alone are deeply religious who offer *Salaat* regularly, fast during the month of *Ramadhan* and flourish an exterior conforming to religious conventions or traditions. Righteous conduct that, *inter alia*, comprises truth, courage, charity, compassion, honesty and integrity, got gradually and imperceptibly relegated to a much lower place in their value scheme. This resulted in the moral anomaly where a person could be a liar, a backbiter, a bundle of vices and yet pass off as a pious man. This also led to widespread hypocrisy and to a morally-split personality. They became hollow men clutching all the time at false values. They are lost souls.

A society thus subverted loses its vitality. It becomes incapable of reforming and revitalizing itself. It falls an easy prey to base desires and temptations. Thus in the Muslim society as well, the value system has got completely distorted. Appearance has scored over reality, words over deeds, avowal over intention. As bad luck would have it, our religious scholars, who continue to enjoy high and broad-based popular esteem, have wittingly or

unwittingly reinforced this false value system. In their sermons they usually place emphasis on religious observances to the neglect of qualities of head and heart, of eternal values, of pure morality, of justice, courage and compassion. They have another omission to answer for. They have dethroned and downgraded reason and given the pride of place to traditions handed down from generation to generation. To denigrate reason is sheer ingratitude, for it is reason that is one of the most precious divine gifts, which enables us to see, perceive, weigh, assess and decide. It is reason that gives to men a status higher than that of animals; it is reason that has propelled men towards progress, that helps unravel the mysteries of the universe. Reason, however, is not enough, for under temptations it can occasionally mislead. On such occasions, divine guidance transcending reason becomes our polestar. Even for benefiting by divine guidance one has to depend initially on reason. By neglecting, even spurning, reason we deprived ourselves of the torch that cuts through darkness and dispels the confusion generated by senses. It coordinates and finds meaning in the messages sent by senses.

In order to release ourselves from superstition, hypocrisy and other false values, we ought to discard appearances and focus on reality guided by reason and revelation. We should adhere to eternal values of truth, honesty, justice, courage and charity. We should make a valiant effort to revamp the bases of our character inserting in it enterprise, initiative and dynamism. For this stupendous task, we would require at every stage the help of our religious scholars who continue to wield tremendous influence with the masses. They should be persuaded to put the *Friday Khutba* at the service of social reform and enduring stability. Instead of describing the horrors of hell, they should tell their audience how by upright conduct to make this world (i.e., the world of our experience and acquaintance) a real heaven. We should qualify for comfortable life in the hereafter but not at the cost of happiness and satisfaction in this world. The importance of this life needs persistent emphasis in order to secure affluence, influence and esteem.

A perceptive observer has expressed the view that during the period of their dominance, power had gone to the head of Muslims to the extent that they ignored completely the revolutionary changes that had been taking place for about five centuries in the West. Even Akbar (16th century) who had a very inquisitive mind and who had collected in his *darbar* men from different countries and scholars professing different faiths, restricted the discussion to religious issues. He failed to notice the technological changes that were destined to transfer power from the East to the West (or in current parlance, from the South to the North). He did not see either, the danger that European mastery of the seas spelt for Muslim countries. Neither the great philosopher of history Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) nor the indefatigable traveller Ibn Batuta (1304-1368) thought it fit to take notice of the momentous happenings in the Western countries. They failed to recognize the existence of the resurgent Western countries. Muslims refused to perceive or wake up to the resurgence of a technologically competent Europe. Unfortunately the bubble of arrogant ignorance was pricked with disconcerting speed. They woke up when it was too late. In point of fact they have not woken up at all and they are now reduced to abject dependence on the technologically advanced nations. The leeway has got to be made up in the interest of survival with dignity.

Other causes of the decline make a long list: disunity and discord, sectarian differences, conservatism, inflexibility, internecine warfare, decadence, literal interpretation of religion, wooden attitude of some *Ulema* who refused to take into account the never ending changes and the burgeoning developments, insularity, and withdrawal. The territorial spread of Islam brought Muslims face to face with compatriots professing other faiths. Adjustment to the changed situation presented problems apart from dilution of faith and lowering of morale. Islam's history is pock-marked with recurring internecine strife sparked sometimes

by sectarian animosities, sometimes by ethnic hostility, at other times by individual lust for conquest. The long-drawn-out war between Fatemids, the heads of the Ismaili sect of the Shia branch (909-1117), and the Abbasid Caliphate decimated both.

The Fatemid missionaries appear to have had the double task cut out for them of converting Sunnis to Ismaili faith and effect subversion in some States as part of their religious strategy. One of the numerous instances of adventurism at the cost of Islam was Timur's successful attack on the Ottomans (1402). The destructive hostility between Shias and Sunnis amounted to a suicidal conflict spanning centuries. At a time when the Ottoman empire was at war with England and Russia, local authorities created disturbances domestically. Islam thus continued to present the sad spectacle of a house divided against itself. The worst instances of total indifference to Islamic solidarity were witnessed in the twentieth century with their tragic spill over into the 21st century. The devastation caused in Iraq and Iran by the war between the two countries, the Iraqi attack on Kuwait, the destruction of Afghanistan and Iraq by a power-intoxicated super power, are too fresh in our collective lacerated memory to need reiteration.

From the fifteenth century A.D., despite the existence of great Muslim empires in Turkey, Iran and India, the pace of decline accelerated. The mastery of the seas passed into the hands of the Christian West. Muslims did not realize that as a result they had become a surrounded and besieged people. In India, mighty Mughal emperors like Akbar and Aurangzeb became dependent on the Portuguese for voyages of their subjects beyond India. They were caught napping while the European nations – Portuguese, French and British – quietly and subtly tightened their noose around their imperial necks. The European nations in their outreach to the East were primarily inspired by the opportunity of commercial exploitation and territorial expansion, but tucked away in their subconscious somewhere was the rankling memory

of the crusades. The colonization of the East became more delectable for them because lurking in it was the urge for revenge.

Curiously, whereas Muslims remain obsessed to this day with their exploits and triumphs of yore, they seem to have forgotten that apart from their self-propelling faith, their burning zeal and military acumen, their martial triumphs were also due to the advances in technology achieved by them. Turning full circle, they not only neglected technology but formed an adverse opinion about it. It is a great pity that the oral tradition in Islam looked askance at the printed word. Malise Ruthven in his book *Islam in the World* says that: "In the Islamic heartlands the conservatism of the people, epitomized by their reluctance to permit the introduction of print, helped sustain a climate hostile to technical innovation". This revealed withal a tendency on the part of Muslims to be smug, to shrink and to ignore the ever-present need of reaching out to people to communicate and to explain. Small wonder that to this day Islam continues to be the most maligned and undefended religion. There was a time when Muslims could adopt a 'couldn't care less' attitude about the opinion of the world at large. This attitude in the face of the Information Revolution and the "Clash of Civilizations" syndrome should be considered anachronistically suicidal. Isn't it strange that in the absence of any priests and clergy in Islam, their virtual substitutes, viz., *Ulema*, exercise a much greater influence on Muslims than the clergy exercise on Christians and the priests exercise on Hindus? They have arrogated to themselves the power to guide Muslims on all issues – secular and religious, major and minor. Under such a regimen independent thinking cannot survive. It has gradually been ironed out. Imitation has replaced innovation.

Nothing could be more paralysing and debilitating than the fact that till very late in the day translation of the Qur'an into the local languages was taboo. In India it was the Waliullahi Family which in India in the eighteenth century traversed this prohibited path. This brings us to one of the principal causes of the decline of Muslims: the distance that they put between

the Qur'an and themselves. Their religious scholars busied themselves with niceties of the *Shari'ah*, ignoring in the process the great spiritual and cerebral power-house of the Qur'an. This is also reflected in the syllabus of the *madrasas* which lays emphasis on the external aspects of religion and religious observances and jurisprudence but eschews the spirit of Islam as incorporated in the scripture.

Another grave omission spanning centuries relates to the *Khutba* or the Imam's address to the Friday congregation or on the occasion of *Eidain*. It should in all conscience be delivered in the language understood by the audience. By a quirk of unimaginative imitation, the Imam in countries like India delivers the *Khutba* in the Arabic language which no one understands. The self-styled clerics do not realize that by taking such a wooden and non-productive stance about *Khutbas*, they have dulled the edge of a most potent tool of regeneration, reconstruction and consolidation.

How wooden the attitude of our *Ulema* can sometimes become is illustrated by the triple *talaq* concept; there can be nothing more debasing and humiliating for women in modern times. They have taken the untenable stand that triple *talaq* in one sitting is a sin, and yet it can neither be revoked nor expiated. In flagrant violation of the Qur'anic injunction, this is illustrative of the rigid attitude of the *Ulema* on many issues. Their opposition to modernization of education is a distressing instance in point. Some of them tried their level best to scuttle Sir Syed's movement for bringing Muslims into the mainstream of education and awareness. They issued *fatwas* declaring the great reformer a *kafir*. On top of these, they secured and piled similar *fatwas* from Hejaz. To this day many of our religious scholars frown upon acquisition of English. It has been an uphill task for the present speaker to persuade the management of *madrasas* to include some essential modern subjects in the *madrasa* syllabus, to give up teaching by rote and to adopt the new techniques in pedagogy. Some of our *Ulema* provide yet

another painful proof of Iqbal's dictum.

*Aeen-e-nau sai darna, tarze kuhan pai adna
Manzil yehi kathin hai qaumon ki zindigi main*

(Fearing innovations and sticking to the old ways – this is the most difficult stage in the life of nations).

This in fact emerges as the principal cause of the fall of the followers of Islam, which being pre-eminently a dynamic creed and the last revealed religion, is expected to be equal to all the developments that take place from time to time. Civilization is moving at a staggering pace. For coping with it flexibility, innovation, movement and adjustment are required. Evidently the policy should be to be steadfast on essentials and flexible on matters that are not fundamental.

The Indian Example

I would now like to take back my audience and make them perceive the reasons of our decline through the eyes of our great men who lived a hundred years ago. My source is the Presidential Addresses delivered year after year by eminent men at the annual meetings of the All India Muslim Education Conference. These were held by rotation in major Indian cities. The following excerpts from the presidential speeches throw light on disposition and attitudes of Muslims at that time which woefully have remained unchanged till the present day. The traits of idleness, envy, disunity, selfishness, superficiality, prevarication, preference of word over deed, continue to characterize us even beyond the confines of the Sub-continent.

“For someone to object that the Conference has accomplished nothing is like saying about a legislative assembly that it failed to decide a law suit or about an architect that he did not build a house” – Sir Syed, at the Eighth Annual Session.

“Neglect has caused religious schools to fall into ruin and

religious scholars and divines are starving to death” — Nawab Mohsinul Mulk.

The following excerpt, also from Nawab Mohsinul Mulk’s Address at the annual meeting of the Conference lays bare the negative and cynical stance that has continued to colour the attitude of the majority of our people towards those who strive, against heavy odds, for the community’s uplift:

“So, my brothers, the accusations made against us and the jeers to which we are subjected stem neither from notions of piety, nor concern for religion, but are really the result of idleness and lack of awareness. In short, they will do nothing themselves nor let anyone else do anything either”.

Addressing the 9th annual meeting, Mohsinul Mulk observed: “Had we not forsaken the ways of our sagacious elders, we would not have been in the state we are in today. Regrettably, we have substituted rituals for principles, turned our backs on the spirit of inquiry and the search for truth which are the underpinnings of Islam, renounced the freedom of thought which was the first lesson Islam taught us ... Islam was revealed to eradicate prejudice; prejudice is now being ingrained in our hearts”.

“We had never even heard of the cult of untouchability; today we practise it more assiduously than do the Hindus. Did those Muslims who emerged from the deserts of Arabia to shake the courts of the Kaiser and the Chosroe, harbour prejudices like ours? Did the warriors who came down from the hills of Hejaz to conquer Andalusia and Rome consider the touch of other human beings unclean? Did those who proclaimed the message of Islam quail at the mention of knowledge and learning? Did our forefathers express their trust in God by not stirring hand or foot to help themselves and did they await the descent of *manna* and quails to feed them? Never! The truth is that we bear no similarity to them outwardly nor do we approximate them in inward character. Where is that Islamic compassion, that love of learning, that reputation for education? Colours, outward forms, and inward nature; all, all are changed. Gentlemen: we are wrong in thinking that our efforts remain unsuccessful. The truth is that we do not

make any effort at all ... Firstly, our laziness prevents us from doing anything and even if we do attempt something, we do not persevere ... the name of the disease that spreads like an epidemic among us Muslims is idleness. Together with idleness, our temperaments are so prone to avarice and inflated ideas that we do not undertake the small tasks ... we are capable of doing; instead we forever dream of great things and fix our minds on soaring examples. We aspire to reach the peak of the Himalayas but cannot find the determination to take two steps forward on the plains ... The best way is to do what we can, not sit in waiting for the great tasks. Nor, while we wait for the big tasks, should we refrain from doing the small ones ... We should do whatever we are able to do so that our enthusiasm is not wasted.

“Oh Gentlemen: what a revolution there would be in our lives if we could make a firm resolution to do what we can every day. The accumulated completion of small tasks helps to accomplish big ones. Little by little, given perseverance and discipline, we can achieve great things ...

“Along with idleness and greed, selfishness is another disease that holds us in its grip. It does not even occur to us to attempt tasks that do not bring personal benefit or from which we do not expect to derive fame and honour. Our temperament does not incline us towards others and that is why we even fail to do what can easily be done. Our lives go by and our unconcern about others and our selfishness prevent us from doing anything at all. Greater even than these afflictions is the wasting of time and the putting off until tomorrow what can be done today. There is no word uttered by the human tongue that bears greater responsibility for sin, folly, the destruction of intentions, the ruination of hopes, and the shirking of duty than this word “tomorrow”. The days pass by, life comes to an end, but our tomorrow never arrives ... The truth is not that we work and, contrary to the laws of nature, fail to succeed, but that we do not work at all, nor do we even try; yet we are greedy to enjoy the fruit of mere talking. Otherwise,

look at this great man, (Sir) Syed, who sits in front of you ... He has accomplished what no one dreamed could be done. He has sown a seed that no one expected to sprout. But sprout it did and it grew and flourished and now we see its blossoms and its fruit with our own eyes, and can hope that it will continue to grow and bear fruit all over India as long as the appellation 'Muslim' endures."

Presiding over the Thirteenth Assembly (Calcutta, 1899), Justice Syed Ameer Ali observed:

"In my opinion the basic reason for the condition of Muslims all over the world is that everywhere, greater emphasis is being given to belief as compared to practice and to outward conformity as compared to goodness and truth of thought and idea".

At the Fourteenth Assembly (1900), Imaad-ud-Daulah Imaad-ul-Mulk Maulvi Syed Hussain Bilgrami stated:

"A people who shrink from making improvements in their world and withdraw from devising solutions for economic problems will soon find their faith fractured".

Justice Borden, Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, presided over the Fifteenth Annual Assembly (1901) in Madras. His address indicates that at that time the Muslims of Madras were very backward and riven by discord.

"The kind of religious education being imparted to boys", he said, "was only a process of memorizing and therefore resulted in blunting their intelligence and wasting their time". If it were to be combined with worldly subjects, their education would be improved and much time would be saved. "In the present era", he said, "the arts and sciences are the domain of the West, just as the East had been their realm during the Muslim heyday ..."
"If the opposition of the religious scholars was based on the

fear that faith would be corrupted”, the Chief Justice said, “he could tell them that Islam was not threatened. It was too great a religion to be put at risk by a change of ideas in such matters.” He exhorted them not to waste their capital for the sake of one day’s fame and display; to retain only those customs that were essential; to save the expenses incurred on the rest so that the money could be used for their children’s education and development; and to arrange for the establishment of an educational fund to which everyone should contribute according to his capacity, however meagre that might be.

Justice Borden further remarked that he was afraid that it would be useless to appeal to the government for help until the Muslims of the South first eradicated their desire for pretentiousness, pomp and display; curtailed the expenses incurred on rituals or on themselves so that they could spend on their children’s educational requirements; and made arrangements to collect sufficient funds to control their children’s education and ensure that it was conducted in accordance with their preferences.

Having traversed part of our history let us now come back to our present gruesome plight. It is all too apparent that Muslims were never so helpless, so beleaguered, so emasculated as they are now. They have brought this calamity on themselves by shutting their eyes to the ominous clouds that had been gathering for centuries. They failed to keep pace with the times or put value on the success and prosperity in this life than which there could be no greater incentive for concerted endeavour.

The obvious answer to the question how to get out of this cauldron of agony is to reverse the process; to discard the negative attitude, false contentment, fatalism, idleness, superficiality and selfishness that have riven the *Ummah* apart. We ought to get back to the fountain-head of our faith; the Qur’an and *Sunnah*. Representatives of our different sects should meet and call a moratorium on infighting. They ought to realize that what unites them as Muslims far outweighs the superficial differences that they tend to blow up out of all proportion. They should not live

in the past, nor rake up issues that have divided and debilitated them. Learning the Qur'an by heart is good, but to understand it is better still, in fact it is essential and imperative. An effective arrangement should therefore be made to impart basic religious education (steering clear of differences) to the children at home when they are at a deeply impressionable age. Their young men should also be taught to respect other people's opinions and beliefs. They should also be persuaded to jettison the easily-provoked syndrome. Tolerance, endurance, fortitude, patience, tenacity and quest for knowledge ought to be instilled.

The correlation between education and progress is an established fact. The major reason for Muslim backwardness during recent centuries is illiteracy, lack of proper education, its poor quality and the demise of curiosity. The first prerequisite for reversing the downtrend is to assign top-priority to education, to modern education, to science and technology, for it is because of the lack of these two that Muslims have been reduced to a state of virtual incarceration. Modern education focused on science, mathematics and technology is our greatest need. While on education the schizophrenic state of the *Ummah* divided between alumni of the two schools of education – religious and secular – has got to be terminated. It would require a massive effort. A proper amalgam of comprehensive and composite education has to be evolved and adopted all over the Islamic world. Given the present circumstances, it seems to be an impossible goal. But it is worth aspiring and trying for nonetheless. It requires a collective effort and would, as a first step, demand sinking all differences. It should be realized and brought home that without getting rid of discord and lack of education Muslims cannot get out of their ubiquitous backwardness. In the interest of survival, the twin effort has got to be made almost world-wide.

Manpower fabric is built on two pillars: education and health. Physical fitness should be invoked to improve human resources. Health and fitness should be reflected in greater participation in competitive games, sports and adventures. A regulated life, nutritive

food and exercise conduce to health. Promotion of health should be made a household tradition.

Another habit that has to be jettisoned is extravagance of which we seem to be proud. For economic reconstruction, savings are unavoidable. Thrift, moreover, is enjoined by Islam.

One of our common failures is inability to manage institutions which are stepping-stones for ascension to heights. They require social consciousness and entail a little sacrifice. Also needed is teamwork, patience, objectivity, tolerance, accommodation. Management of institutions demands singleness of purpose and mutual goodwill and a firm adherence to rules.

We should get rid of a false sense of contentment, resignation and fatalism which kills initiative and favours stagnation. We should abjure living in the past, and strive to build up a bright future in this world by treading the path of righteousness and diligence, The Hereafter will take care of itself.

The *Ummah* stands in dire need of social reform. Wasteful activities relating both to time and money should be brought to a grinding halt. Among other things, the virtual incarceration of women needs to be put an end to. In this Sub-continent and in some other Muslim countries an extreme form of *pardah* is observed. It affects the health of women and reduces their role as productive citizens. What is worse, being illiterate or semi-educated, they are neither able to give good upbringing to their children, nor inspire them. As a result (in India) they remain woefully incapable of competing with children from other communities. Consequently, they start life with a handicap which persists to their detriment till the end of their career. Early in life they become back numbers and their self-confidence that should be an inalienable asset of all promising youngsters, gets eroded affecting adversely all other traits of personality. Not only women's status but also their knowledge and skills are due for a raise. *Purdah* should not be made suffocatingly tight. The *hijab* that our orthodox women are observing is a far cry from the way it was practiced in the early days of Islam.

Another religious injunction that bristles with difficulties is the prohibition on taking and giving interest. There is a view – a minority view – that what is prohibited is usury not interest as such which is supposed to be impersonal but not insensitive. The rigid interpretation of the ban on money lending within the global framework of interest-laced banking has put the economic clock back for Muslims in a number of ways. What has been dubbed as Islamic or interest-free banking often gets secretly hitched on to the interest regime. Muslim enterprise has been strait-jacketed because of the ban on interest. I would therefore suggest that as an interim arrangement for economic revival, on which hinge so many development programmes, a Council of *Ulema* should be convened to consider the issue afresh and make a more relaxed liberal and realistic interpretation of the provisions relating to interest. This arrangement could be reviewed periodically. The economic decline of Muslims and the extraordinarily difficult situation that it has created would in any case extenuate the aberration of money-lending. Opening of banks in Muslim concentration areas is a need we cannot ignore with impunity. In respect both of *pardah* and interest the position on the ground is that for economic and social considerations, the large majority of Muslims keep their savings in banks and accept the interest that accrues. Muslim girls have often to seek a job in order to support themselves or their parents or as an insurance against loss of husband, or for supplementing the husband's income in order to finance their children's education. They should be allowed to do both with a clear conscience rather than feel guilty for no fault of theirs.

The economic backwardness of Muslims has happened despite the fact that quite a few Muslim countries are endowed with rich deposits of oil. These brought prosperity to them, but it turned out to be a misfortune in disguise. Their distance from science and technology made them incapable of exploiting the liquid gold that Providence had bestowed on them and made them more dependent on foreigners than before. It made them

very vulnerable. They depended pathetically on the West and its oil technology. The deposits triggered aggressive greed in the western countries. Oil politics brought Muslim oil-rich countries into the vortex of unscrupulous Western attention.

It is not my intention to recount the story relating to exploration and exploitation of oil, nor to suggest a way out of the log-jam in which some important Muslim countries have been imprisoned. Suffice it to suggest that the domination of the lone superpower will have to be ended. Eventually the balancing may come out of the resurgence of Europe which it may well be our aim to strive to accelerate.

Muslims are being maliciously identified with terrorism to which some of their misguided groups have been drawn in despair. One should not however seek to extenuate the sin of the terrorists wherever they may be. Revenge in any case is inexcusable, it is particularly so when it kills or maims innocent people. In the end it is the terrorist who loses for terror recoils and inflicts long range damage in diverse ways on the perpetrators. The terrorists' greatest loss is that their community, for no fault of theirs, loses sympathy worldwide and their social life gets subverted.

Although people driven to despair are not likely to heed advice, I cannot but reiterate the advice given to heads of OIC countries at its last annual session by Mahathir Mohamad. He observed that a people who find themselves besieged and crushed should not think of retaliating in the form of revenge. They should refuse to be provoked. The best bet for them is to pause, ponder and plan their reconstruction and await their opportunity. The process may take centuries, perhaps millennia, as it did in case of the Jews who have bounced back with a vengeance. It follows that Muslims should organize themselves wherever they be, take all necessary steps for reconstruction, strive eventually to overtake the Western nations in science and technology and make excellence in education their highest priority. The path is striven with hurdles, but no other route is open to them.

It is common knowledge that Israel enjoys total support

of the Christendom. The queer thing is that through centuries Jews were treated most shabbily by the Christian Europe. They were ill-treated and slighted without the least compunction. To cite just one instance, Jews were subjected to all sorts of cruelty, injustice and inhuman treatment by the King of Spain. Having despaired of improvement in their lot they sent word to the Moors across the Mediterranean to come to their rescue. Responding to the cry of distress, Tariq bin Ziyad was sent to Spain. He vanquished the Christian forces that far outnumbered his. The Muslim state meted out a highly favourable treatment to the Jews, took them in confidence and put them in important offices. It is a sort of reverse recognition that frequently Jews later on turned against their benefactors. Later on during the dying years of the last century, the two communities resolved amicably their differences dating back to the advent of Christianity. It provides an object lesson for Muslims who continue to fight on peripheral issues of very recent origin. Towards the end of the paper, it provides me an occasion for reiterating that unless Muslims close their ranks they would forfeit the right to exist with dignity.

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MUSLIM *UMMAH* IN THE MODERN WORLD CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

N. ISLAM*

It is indeed a matter of pride and pleasure for me to be present in this august International Conference as an invited guest of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, the sister organization of which exists in Bangladesh as Hamdard Foundation Bangladesh of which I have the unique privilege and honour to be the Vice President.

The organization has suggested that the topic of discussion of my paper should be "Muslim *Ummah* in the Modern World – Challenges and Opportunities".

I could not resist accepting the proposal, as it sounded so vital, timely and appropriate for such a Conference.

I have, therefore, made an honest attempt to reflect on the topic which I venture to present before you today.

Let me now try to explain what is Muslim *Ummah*, its extent and activities. After this has been done I shall try to reflect on the challenges and opportunities with a few final remarks from my experiences.

*National Professor and Vice-President, Hamdard Foundation Bangladesh.

What is Muslim *Ummah*

Islam is basically a religion of tolerance, justice, fair play, and universal brotherhood. It gave the world certain eternal principles in the 7th century which are as applicable today as they were 14 centuries ago. Islam teaches its followers to show respect for other religions and the Prophets of other religions. It rejects oppression in any form, coercion, and subjugation of people irrespective of religion, colour, race, language or sex.

The Islamic principles as practised by Prophet Muhammed (ﷺ) are to establish a universal socio-economic and political order based on ethical foundations which rejects any form of discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, colour or ethnicity. Virtue is the only criterion of true human worth.

Prophet Muhammed (ﷺ) united the Muslims in various ways. The most fundamental aspect of his credo denotes that Muslims all over the world should be faithful to their message and to one religion – the religion of Islam. Muslims should imbibe the doctrine of Islam firmly in their hearts, seek knowledge, abhor injustice, and realize that their glory and supremacy are close to Allah, the Almighty and the Merciful.

Besides, Islam abhors grudges and hatred; there is no room for aggression or injustice, no scope for pride or insult, rather brotherhood, love and equality should prevail because they are from one origin, and there was no more privilege for an Arab over a non-Arab except for piousness and piety. Such a strong faith is supposed to bind all parties to the bond of solidarity and fraternity, for they would not have authority over their lands; they would only defend their sovereignty to please God. In fact, Muslims are like a solid wall of bricks supporting each other. If one brick is removed, the entire wall becomes weak and collapses in no time. But in today's world whenever one looks at the Muslim *Ummah* (Nation), he or she finds it fractured, distracted and disconnected in their aims and identity, and so he or she recalls the early age of Islam searching for real *Ummah*.

Does Muslim *Ummah* Exist?

In reality after a critical analysis, one finds that the term *Ummah* is a misnomer from the days of the four Caliphs. Apart from Hazrat Abu Bakar, two of the rest three were killed by their fellow Arab Muslims. That puts a question mark whether anything called Muslim *Ummah* ever existed. But when the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) was established in 1969, it was created under a burning hope that a real Islamic *Ummah* could be established at long last. The divergence among the members is remarkable. It is composed of a few democratic states and a motley group of countries, mostly with one party rule.

Challenges to Muslim *Ummah*

It is interesting that this meeting is taking place during the most challenging time for the OIC. Challenges facing the OIC are formidable. Many member nations have to struggle to preserve their sovereignty and integrity. Poverty, social and economic backwardness and political instability haunt many of them. The wealthy and industrialized countries having tremendous impact on the global affairs, many major decisions by the international bodies including the UN system are made on the basis of interests of the strong and powerful nations.

The OIC gave us hope about regeneration of this *Ummah*. But its failure following the massacres in Palestine by the Israelis rendered it ineffective. Sadly enough the OIC has no decision-making capacity. Its recommendations are never carried out by the member States.

In 1971 in the then Pakistan, we had the most unfortunate, devastating civil war, entailing huge loss of lives and vast resources. To my mind, the OIC should have moved in the breach and brought about a settlement satisfactory to both the parties. It was a veritable test case for OIC's genuine diplomacy.

At home, many of us are now facing challenges for preservation of sovereignty and integrity of our nation. Besides other factors like poverty, social and economic development and political stability are all problems to be solved. It must be admitted that the developing world still continues to be influenced by the wealthy and industrialized countries which have tremendous influence over global affairs. International bodies like the UN Security Council have tremendous influence over global affairs and many major decisions are not made on the basis of objective criteria but in the interests of the strong and powerful nations.

The right of Palestinian people against occupation and oppression continues and remains unsolved despite their utmost solidarity and determination against aggression. Israeli attack on Syria, a sovereign independent State and a member of OIC, must be viewed with grave concern. War in Iraq on the plea of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) continues with the whims of a merciless ruler of a big nation, killing millions, destroying wealth, and even damaging the most respected religious centre of Islam.

Recent steps taken to modernize and democratize the organization are welcome signs. In this regard the statement made by the former Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, during the 10th Summit at Putrajaya can be considered as a milestone in the history of the OIC. But the critics say that the several measures mentioned by Dr. Mahathir Mohamad are too ambitious and much ahead of time. But I do not agree with those criticisms. Prime Minister Mahathir's thoughts are invaluable and timely and we must take a fresh look at them. As a matter of fact the reaction to Mahathir's statement only underlines that the OIC is distinguished more by disunity than unity.

In this connection it should not be forgotten that Islam is a great religion. But our inability to understand the true spirit and inner meaning of Islam has rendered the *Ummah* into a state of imbecility. Centuries of failure to understand the true essence of Islam has created artificial barriers; rituals have become a vital part of Islam! People do often forget that Islam is a religion of

tolerance but today it is wrongly depicted by a group of nations as a religion that nurtures terrorism. But for this we ourselves are more responsible than others.

Opportunities

Election of Turkey as the Secretary General of the OIC also gives ample scope for a new vision. It gives an opportunity for better relations with the European countries. As Turkey straddles between Europe and Asia, she can play a vital role in improving relations with the Western world which has a negative opinion about Islam and its values. Time has now come to re-examine the role of the OIC. It is now time to find out the root-cause of frustration coupled with the perceived sense of injustice among millions of Muslims around the world specially those in the Middle East who are often blamed as terrorists by the West.

Some Personal Observations and Conclusion

Hamdard is a great uniting force between Pakistan and Bangladesh (former East Pakistan) through the firm faith of Late Hakim Mohammed Said in Islam and our brothers. I have the great privilege of being Vice President of Hamdard Foundation Bangladesh of which Late Hakim Mohammed Said was the Founder. This significant International Islamic Conference is, I believe, to plot a course for future of Islam and Muslim *Ummah*. This clearly demonstrates our faith and commitment to the OIC and Muslim *Ummah* with our determination to strengthen our role for the dignity and benefit of the *Ummah*. Above all, 1.3 billion Muslims constituting one-sixth of the world's population are placing their great hopes in us for augmenting the honour of Islam. Muslims today are facing challenges all over the world.

Early Muslims produced great scientists, scholars, mathematicians, physicians, and astronomers, etc. They excelled

in all the fields of knowledge of their times. They were able to develop and extract wealth from their lands and through their world trade. They were able to strengthen their defences and protect their people. But for the emergence of the Ottoman warriors, Muslim civilization would have disappeared with the fall of Granada in 1492. The Industrial Revolution was missed by the Muslims. The Muslim world today has the greatest oil-reserve in the world coupled with great wealth. Muslims possess fifty-seven out of one hundred and eighty countries of the world. Our collective votes can make a difference in international organizations. But we must remember that united we stand, divided we fall.

We are weak in our defences and are dependent on our enemies for our own security. We have to buy our weapons from our enemies. Muslims under suppression by the enemies have developed the feeling that they cannot do anything right. They will for ever be oppressed by the Jews and Europeans. They will for ever be poor, backward and weak. Sadly enough Muslims do not learn from the history of the Prophet (ﷺ) who on the triumphant return to Makkah did not retaliate.

It may not be possible to unite 1.3 billion Muslims. We may not get all Muslim governments to act together in concert. If we get a third of the *Ummah* of the Muslim States to act together, we are greater than our enemies and certainly we will be victorious.

Invasion on Iran and Kuwait by Iraq was investigated by the external forces, who made all efforts to disintegrate the Muslim unity and who are not against the WMD but are indeed the manufacturers of these weapons and are too eager to create markets for their sales in order to flourish this dangerous industry against human lives for their own benefits. They speak of eliminating terrorism but they are, in fact, the real terrorists in the present day world and can survive criticism ignoring human dignity and the comity of nations like the UN which is duty-bound to safeguard human lives, make the world free from war and establish peace and progress.

Some Suggestions

- i) We must strengthen the ISESCO to be a real centre of science, education, technology and culture, worthy of the centuries-old glorious heritage of the Muslim nations.
- ii) The entire Arabic-speaking region must constitute one federation on Islamic lines. The member-States too must have governments on Islamic lines.
- iii) The OIC must establish an Islamic Common Market soonest.
- iv) The OIC must sponsor an Islamic Common Defense Pact. All Islamic countries must be self-sufficient in conventional arms and weapons.
- v) Our oil-producing brethren must remember that their reserves will not last for ever. So they must make hay while the sun shines by following a prudent policy.
- vi) The OIC must forge an Islamic Security Council to address all areas of conflicts, bilateral and multilateral. Besides, the Council must assist our governments to resolve domestic problems such as the problem of Aceh before the enemies of the *Millat* take advantage of it.
- vii) The Visa system among the OIC countries must be eased.
- viii) We must be self-sufficient in agricultural and industrial outputs.
- ix) We must utilize our vast manpower. Countries with great potential for agricultural and industrial development but short of manpower must invite surplus manpower from other member-States.

Conclusion

The NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) and the OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference) must be forward-looking and action-oriented.

These two organizations must be proactive and not reactive. Equity, Justice and fair play – the principles of Islam – must

continue to be with us. Muslims must continue to stand up for these principles of Islam.

Allah, the most Benevolent and the most Merciful, has given us enough of wealth and enough of treasures. It is for us to follow the principles of equity, justice and fair play.

The hidden truth is that the developed world does not want the Muslims to work together in unison. They encourage us to much talk and little action in order to disunite and disorganize us. They expect to be able to continue to divide us and to dominate us.

Ladies and Gentlemen! I must cordially thank you all for kindly giving me a patient hearing.

Finally, with your permission, I would like to conclude my speech by quoting from the Holy Qur'an, our never-fading source of inspiration:

To be united and hold the rope of Almighty and be not divided (*Surah Al-Imran*, 103).

We must remember,

Allah does not change the fortune of a nation if the nation does not do it itself (*Surah Raad*, 11).

Following the principles of Islam we can defy the expectations of our enemies and the dominant powers. Allah, the most Powerful, is on our side.

Blessings from the Almighty and victory is near (*Surah Saff*, 13).

Let us all be united under the banner of Islam. *Insha Allah*, victory is ours.



MUSLIM UMMAH NEW DEFINITIONS NEEDED

JAVED JABBAR*

As the world goes deeper into new violence and volatility and Muslim societies struggle to find new ways out of a pervasive disempowerment, definitions of terms and interpretations of words become more than academic, semantic exercises. How are these understood and perceived directly shape attitudes, and in most cases, motivate actions?

When particular words and terms are portrayed in a specific way and when this portrayal is popularised through textbooks in schools and colleges, through the mass media, through mosques and through public discourses and discussions, even incorrect, distorted and misleading representations become accepted as the actual meanings of certain phrases.

Some words are better conveyed when seen in context. For example, with reference to "conservatism" and "moderation", it may be accurate to say: the conservatives in Islam have custody of the mosques while the moderates have custody of their own

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drawing rooms. It is only when this situation is reversed that we will move closer to the true Islam.

Definitions of terms like "fundamentalism", "terrorism" and "*Jihad*" are important. Several significant clarifications about these terms have already been made and have helped correct distortions historically perpetuated through the false "Orientalism" of the West, and more recently, post-9/11 through the mass media.

In this brief comment, it is intended to reflect on only three terms: "Muslim *Ummah*", "enlightened moderation" and "secularism".

Human beings exist on two basic planes: the spiritual and the physical. Seen as people who share the irreducible articles of faith in Islam, the term "Muslim *Ummah*" correctly describes the spiritual affinity that all Muslims feel. However, when the same term is applied to the physical dimension of visible reality, the commonality of the *Ka'bah* as well as the mosque, for all Muslims, from Mauritania to Malaysia is disrupted by the differences and the variety on the physical level.

While being Muslim, and accepting the Holy Qur'an as the word of Allah and respecting the finality of the Prophet (ﷺ), the Muslim *Ummah* is, in real terms, completely heterogeneous and divided on the basis of geography, ethnicity, cultural practices, languages, political systems, political viewpoints and economic systems.

Before the Muslim *Ummah* can project itself in credible terms externally to the non-Muslim world, the Muslim world itself needs to recognize all the implications of enormous diversity. Dr. Mahathir Mohamad has rightly referred to the fundamental cause of the present poor state of the Muslim *Ummah* as being due to divisive sectarianism.

Yet even when the more destructive differences between Muslim sects are reduced or eliminated, heterogeneity and variety will always be features of diversity in the Muslim *Ummah*.

Thus, the term: "Muslim *Ummah*" implies a comprehensive similarity and unity which, in actual fact, does not exist – and is unlikely to – in the foreseeable future.

To stress the heterogeneity of the Muslim *Ummah* is to be realistic, not to be nihilistic. We should acknowledge the diversity and use it to our advantage. We should not attempt to ignore intrinsic differences and pretend that a similarity exists where there is no similarity. Acceptance of diversity can energize the power of versatility. Denial of diversity can stultify and suppress capacity. The fraternity and unity of the Muslim *Ummah* should be seen as desirable but distant stars – even as we keep our feet firmly on the ground and reach for the skies above.

The term "enlightened moderation" is an interesting formulation. It is useful in focussing public attention on the need to resist the continued attempts by extremism to hijack Islam. However, in this context the word "moderation" is redundant. Enlightenment is the only condition for which there should be no moderation!

Moderation is also an inadequate term. As a description of the virtues of balance and reasonableness, moderation is appropriate. But it is not comprehensively descriptive of the ideal condition we should aspire to.

In many respects, moderation is a virtue. Yet in some crucial respects, moderation can be another word for weakness, for vulnerability to coercion. The partial limitations of the concept of "moderation" are best evident when we remember that resistance to extremism and violence cannot be, and must never be, "moderate". On yet another level, the limitations become obvious if we switch the sequence to read "moderate enlightenment"!

Before enlightenment, there are several stages to accomplish.

From raw data and facts, to processed information to refined knowledge to mellow wisdom. Each of these stages requires meticulous attention to details; intellectual discipline; open-mindedness

to new information and knowledge and to fresh experience; above all, the presence of a passion to pursue new learning. Ultimately, enlightenment comes from the fusion of mind and spirit to produce insight and humility.

As enlightenment without limitation is the most preferable route to ethical actions and to practising the essence of Islam, the term "immoderate enlightenment" may be a more appropriate formulation!

One of the most important definitions needs to deal with the nature of any State in which Muslims are in a majority, with the kind of political system which they should adopt. This aspect concerns the formulation that sets up an Islamic State as the antithesis of a secular State. Islam and secularism are defined in major discourse, for example in Pakistan, and specially in the Urdu Press, as being completely separate and diametrically opposite to each other. The word "secularism" is translated in Urdu media as: "atheism" or "Godlessness" which are entirely incorrect representations.

Secularism means that religion and State function separately. It does not mean a denial of the sanctity of religion as is misinterpreted in religious-political, and in Urdu media discourse. Secularism means that all religions are to be respected by the State. On 11th September 1947, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah presented his secular vision for a Pakistan in which Muslims would always be the vast majority but where non-Muslims would be equal citizens, a Pakistan that would not be a theocratic State.

A State can be secular and at the same time be guided by the principles of Islam, as well as actually practice them. Whereas a State may claim to be Islamic and yet be quite un-Islamic in principle, and in practice. Any State that prefixes its name with a reference to religion creates instant and insurmountable hurdles for itself due to differing schools of thought within a single religion, competitive clergies and futile attempts to re-create a past by applying interpretations made several hundred years ago in conditions completely different from the 21st century.

Whereas a secular State can take the most positive facets of a religion without being shackled by the chains of dogma, of ritualistic thinking, and ritualistic practices.

No State, secular or theocratic, Western or Eastern, is perfect. Evolution and change are perpetual.

The *Misaaq-e-Madinah* or the "Constitution of Madinah" in the era of the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ) can be seen as a definition of how a Muslim-dominated State could also be a secular State. In references to the rights of the Jews of Yathrib/Madinah, authoritative interpretations point out that this Charter placed a minority like Jews as being part of the *Ummah*.

Allama Mohammad Iqbal in his lectures, titled "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam", said: "All that is secular is deeply sacred at the roots of its being".

The Holy Qur'an defines the inclusive, secular character of Islam by which the beliefs, actions and practical deeds of all believers are given an equal and equitable status.

Verse 62 of *Surah II – Al-Baqarah* states:

"Those who believe (in the Qur'an), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians, – any who believe in God and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord; on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve".

(from the translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

The antithetical formulation of an Islamic State and a secular State is conceptually flawed. It distorts the direction of the debate which shapes the political development of Muslim nations.

There are presently at least seven different kinds of States in the Muslim *Ummah*:

- a) Hereditary monarchies without elections (Saudi Arabia).
- b) One-party dominated democracies (Egypt).
- c) Multi-party democracies with military domination (Pakistan).

- d) Authoritarian systems or partial/democracies (Central Asian Republics).
- e) Multi-party democracies with civilian supremacy (Malaysia, Bangladesh, Indonesia).
- f) Multi-party democracies with religious councils wielding veto powers (Iran).
- g) Secular democracies (Turkey and – others?).

Such a wide diversity of political systems wholly or partially explains the inability of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to go beyond lip service to act purposefully in applying collective force for the resolution of the crises facing the *Ummah*.

Before attempting to restructure the OIC, the Muslim States should initiate internal restructuring to make their political systems more participative, to bring their governance closer to the original democratic core of Islam.

Turkey is possibly the only dominantly Muslim country that has categorically adopted secularism as its basic political system. Yet in some respects, Turkey has gone to excessive and unreasonable lengths in the name of secularism such as by its ban on *hijab*. Even now, the military retains an ultimate veto power that is not in keeping with pure secularism.

There are some African countries and some North African/Arab countries (Algeria) that may also come close to some aspects of Turkey.

Of all the 50 plus members of the *Ummah*, only two or three States show the capacity to combine their pre-dominantly Muslim identity with truly Islamic values such as democracy, pluralism, respect for minorities, regularity of elections, peaceful transfer of power on a non-hereditary basis. Two of these States are Turkey and Malaysia, with some reservations, e.g., the suppression of Muslim Kurds in Turkey, the use of a draconian Internal Security Act in Malaysia. Both countries are either overtly secular, or quasi-secular. Is their relatively fast development and their progressive modernity due to their being secular or

quasi-secular, or, because both are more truly Islamic in practice than "religious" or theocratic States?

To answer that question, there is a need for *Ijtehaad* on this subject, through candid, tolerant debate in the Muslim *Ummah*. To reflect upon the synergy between Islam and secularism. To galvanize a new level of participation and dynamism in the effort to shape a new kind of State and political system for the Muslim *Ummah*.



CHALLENGING THE CHALLENGES

IFTIKHAR A. SIROHEY*

O my Lord!
Expand me my breast

Ease my task for me

And remove the impediment
From my speech

So they may understand
What I say (XX:25-28)

I would like to commend Shura Hamdard Pakistan and its President for this International Conference. I feel honoured and privileged to speak at this forum.

We are deeply distressed and concerned about the plight of the *Ummah* and the challenges it is facing.

*A former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and a former Chief of the Naval Staff of Pakistan. Presently, the Speaker of the Islamabad/Rawalpindi Chapter of Shura Hamdard and a member of the Islamic Ideology Council, Pakistan.

The challenge to Islam started on the day the final Messenger of Allah, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (ﷺ) convened the assembly of the Quresh around *Safa* to invite them to the 'Truth'. They vowed to nip it there. That challenge has been continuing and shall undoubtedly continue. I shall not go into details of the hardship the Prophet (ﷺ) and his limited but steadfast followers endured before he emigrated from Makkah to Madinah, where he found the spatial freedom to spread Allah's message of enlightenment, liberty and wisdom.

The welcome and affection he received from the *Ansaar* in Madinah threatened the importance of those aspiring for higher status, hence they pretended to convert to Islam for their well being. These hypocrites caused greater anxiety and more damage to Islam in its infancy than the non-believers. There were thus challenges both from within its new abode and externally. He created peace within through *Misaaq-e-Madinah*, a document of pride and prudence for the Muslims. They achieved ascendancy over the Makkan Quresh on the battlefield of Badr. He himself led 19 *Gazwat* and returned victorious. We may pause to imagine the times when these battles were fought. The Muslims were lesser in number and inferior in every kind of material. The victories were due to their complete faith in the cause, steadfastness, unity and total obedience to the commandments of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Hence they enjoyed Allah's mercy.

He set examples as a military commander and a peace maker par excellence. He structured the administration in Madinah that ensured service, justice and equality to all. He returned as a Military Commander leading a large force to Makkah, the city where he had endured so much hardship and had to emigrate from it. When Makkah capitulated, he entered it not as a conqueror but as an epitome of mercy and forgiveness. He forgave all those who caused him extreme anguish during the thirteen years of his early ministry. He had the *Ka'bah* cleaned of statues and entrusted its keys to the same person who at one time had refused to give

it to him; such magnanimity was unknown till then. Almost every one in Makkah accepted Islam. Entry of non-Muslims was forbidden to *Baitullah* soon after. Capitulation of Makkah facilitated the conversion of the whole of Arabia to Islam. Thus within ten years the Arabian Peninsula became the citadel of Islam and the last Messenger of Allah became its Ruler. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) performed the only *Hajj* and delivered his sermon from Mount Arafat that is simple but an all-inclusive guidance for humanity. There shall not be a better Human Rights Charter, because every word he uttered was God-inspired. No human can formulate unblemished law for its fellow being. There shall always be some weakness.

All inhabitants of Madinah were given equal rights and justice, whereas *Munafiqeen* never missed a chance when they could harm Islam and its followers. They practically displayed their inner feelings at Uhad and during *Ghazwa-e-Khandaq*. At a number of occasions they tried to kill the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) knowing it all, forbore their intrigues till he was commanded by Allah to end their machination by expelling them from Madinah.

Because Muhammad (ﷺ) was the last Prophet (ﷺ), he was for all humanity. He was therefore required to propagate the everlasting attribute of Allah. He sent invitations to the Rulers of the Roman and Iranian empires to enter into the fold of Islam. On their rejection of his invitation to accept Islam and the alternatives he offered, he prepared plans to dispatch expeditions against both powers. Before he could execute his plan, he was recalled by the Creator. Immediately a number of liars declared themselves prophets. A few tribes reneged on payment of *Zakat*. Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.), the first *Khalifah* of the *Ummah*, sent expeditions, despite the advice against his intent, to exterminate the false prophets and for the recovery of *Zakat*. He also executed the plan of the Prophet (ﷺ) to send expeditions against the Romans and the Persians.

The plan was pursued with vigour by Hazrat Umar (R.A.), the second Caliph. At his martyrdom, he was the head of an Islamic Empire of about 2 million square miles. Subsequently, the

Islamic forces reached the Danube. The empire would have extended to the whole of Europe from Andalusia but for internal differences.

The differences, though forbidden by Allah Almighty, are inevitable as the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) had beseeched Allah for not destroying his *Ummah* en-masse like those destroyed earlier and for sparing it from internal divisions. The first prayer was granted, the second was not. Therefore, no power on earth can exterminate the Islamic *Ummah*. The difference is the part of the extent of freedom granted to man by the Creator. Like it is in the other two religions of Moses and Jesus, there shall be differences and divisions within Islam as well. There are two main sects in the *Ummah*; however, within these sects there are also factions. For creating these differences they have been punished and will continue to be punished. Allah commands:

Be not like those
Who are divided
Amongst themselves
And fall into disputation
After receiving
Clear Signs:
For them
Is a Dreadful Penalty [III:105]

Despite early differences, an Islamic Empire was established from the west coast of Africa to the Pacific Ocean, encompassing countries approximately 40 degrees either side the equator. The central purpose of this expansion was spreading the message revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ).

At the advent of Islam, there was no Jewish State. The Jews were scattered all over the globe for reasons well known. They mostly remained so, except for the relief provided to them by the Muslims. The Persian Empire after many ferociously fought battles submitted to Islam. The other power that feared the expansion of Islam as a challenge, was the Christendom of Rome

and many other countries of Europe and Western Asia that constituted the Empire. That was also overpowered and exterminated from Asia westward.

From the 7th to the 15th century, known as the Dark Ages of Europe, was the period of the Islamic Empire. It was the shining era of the Muslims, hence that of Islam. The Muslims replaced darkness with the light of truth. They inculcated culture of research in every field of knowledge. Islam created new knowledge and refined that already existed. Their enquiry encompassed from Astronomy to Zoology and every subject of every letter in the alphabet in between. The libraries of Baghdad, Cordova, Granada, Kiev, Tashkent, Samarqand, Bukhara and other cities were overflowing with books of new knowledge. That was the result of their research. They taught every discipline of science and philosophy to any nation or people, set standard of honest trade, created wealth and maintained value of money. Though Baghdad was burnt by Halako and Changez Khan, after their followers conversion to Islam the research was pursued with greater verve and vigour. The knowledge was spread throughout Europe from Andalusia and in other parts from the centres of excellence in the Central Asia and the Middle East. Knowledge was free to all. There were no sanctions, no limit due to colour or creed. The women excelled in various branches of learning. The Christian Kingdoms and Priestdoms did not accept Islam as it was cutting at the roots of the power of the Church and the priesthood. The clerics of Christendom spread and continued to spread venom against Islam and the Prophet (ﷺ).

From the Papacy, a clarion call was made to the Christian world to unite and exterminate Islam and its followers. The Crusades against the Muslim Empire were started. The Muslims taught the Crusaders in particular and others in general the ethics of war and the conduct in peace. *Jus ad bellum* and *jus in bellum* were practically demonstrated to the world that then existed. The Muslim commanders were given in writing what not

to do in war. This subject has since been discussed *ad nauseum* without result. The commencement of war was the prerogative of the *Khalifa* after due consultation with the *Shura*. The non-Muslims saw the chivalry and compassion of Islamic armies during wars and battles. They displayed magnanimity in victory. It is the greatest legacy of the Muslims, not only for the believers but also for the humanity at large. Many of the adversaries entered the fold of Islam after being convinced and impressed by the examples the Muslims set.

The ethics of war has been the subject matter of early Roman attention. It has been discussed in Geneva, The Hague and the United Nations. The outcome of all these efforts is what we have seen at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, suffocation in containers of captured prisoners, burying the prisoners alive, carpet bombing the innocents in Afghanistan and Iraq. The atrocities committed cannot be described in words. Muslims neither used force to convert the existing population of the conquered territories, dispossessed them from their possessions, nor exterminated or exterminated them as it was done by subsequent colonisers of the world. The Muslim rulers encouraged the existing industry and craft and guided them for improvement unlike the later invaders who exterminated or deprived them of the limbs, to protect their own industry and economy.

The jealousies and intrigues within the *Ummah* and the continued warfare, first for its establishment and expansion and then in its defense, weakened their resolve. The leaders of the Islamic world, having built the empire reached their zenith and having remained there for almost a 1000 years were, in my opinion, exhausted and rested on their oars. The leaders, commanders and officials were allowed to live in the conquered cities where they got accustomed to life of luxury. The fall of the empire was therefore inevitable. The rollback started from Spain in 1492 and culminated in 1921 when *Khilafat* was abolished and the Ottoman Empire was reduced to the Republic of Turkey.

From the time immemorial, the Europeans fought amongst themselves for power and supremacy. They fought for parceling the globe amongst themselves. Eventually they settled on its division by drawing straight lines on the map with total disregard to tribes or ethnicity. In the process, they wrought untold miseries on the local population. The inquisition in Spain expelled, exterminated or converted the Muslims, till then their rulers, to Christianity. No Muslim was left in the realm which Muslims had ruled for 800 years. When the British overthrew the Mughal Kingdom in India, gallows were erected on the streets of the capital to hang the Muslims for being Muslims. Atrocities were committed everywhere. They avenged their defeat during the Crusades.

Since the advent of Islam till 1990, 142 million Muslims had been killed during major genocides, excluding those martyred during battles. After the demise of the Ottoman Empire, there was not a single Islamic State that could be called independent.

The Muslims after 1492 became introvert; they could no longer bear the burden of being the men of 'thought and action'. Having taught the world, they slid into the blissful state of ignorance and have been residing there since. The adversaries took over the mantle of leadership and became men of thought and action. The Muslims were marginalized, oppressed, dispossessed, denigrated and despised.

After the second World War, the rollback of the colonial era started with the creation of Pakistan. All Muslim countries gave great sacrifices to gain independence that turned out to be a nominal political freedom.

The departing colonial powers left by design inter-country or intra-country problems in these nominally free countries. By the creation of Israel in Palestine, the Islamic world was explicitly told of its insignificance. Over a period of time, the Muslims became oblivious of the universality of the Prophet's teachings to the whole humanity.

In the Christendom, cannons could be invented, new theories started, traditions discovered and glosses placed upon Prophet Jesus (ﷺ) literally at variance with their spirit. The Hebrews deposed their Pentateuch in favour of Talmud. The Muslim likewise relegated the Qur'an in favour of traditions and decisions of the so called 'learned'. However, if inquired from any Muslim, or for that matter from all groups of Muslims, what was the text of their religion, they would answer nothing but the 'Qur'an'. The majority is anyway ignorant of its contents though would give their lives to defend it. It is the strength of this faith. It does not need our defence as Allah himself is its defender.

Illiteracy has made the Muslim dogmatic. He believes in what the preacher from the pulpit tells him. The preacher tells him what he has been taught in a particular school of thought in utter defiance of Allah's command.

When we do not know what the Qur'an says or what the Prophet (ﷺ) preached, we cannot be expected to obey the commandments. How can we grasp contents of verses like these:

Behold! In the creation
Of the heavens and the earth,
And the alternation
Of Night and Day,
There are indeed Signs
For men of understanding
Men who celebrate
The praises of Allah,
Standing, sitting,
And lying down on their sides,
And contemplate
The (wonders of) creation
In the heavens and the earth,
(With the thought):

“Our Lord! Not for naught
 Hast Thou created (all) this!
 Glory to Thee! Give us
 Salvation from the Penalty
 Of the Fire [III:190-191]

The *Ummah* must exit from darkness to light and cease letting the world pass by. To do so, *Ilm* is required. For that the *Ummah* as a whole be urged, persuaded, driven, coerced, or enticed for acquiring *Ilm* in the widest sense. The present day system of education is for the self. We should acquire it for the betterment of humanity to usher equality and brotherhood of mankind as it was done in the past. It has to be a relentless and selfless pursuit by Muslim nations and individuals. The revelation of the Qur'an began with *Iqra* (read). The Prophet urged the Muslims to acquire knowledge from wherever available. Hazrat Ali (R.A.) lectured on many branches of learning. According to him, eminence in science is the highest honour and the greatest ornament of man is erudition. We must banish ignorance and walk the path towards erudition.

The event of September Eleven 2001 has changed the world. Even before this condemnable event, since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, many Western leaders of significance or insignificance, choreographed Islam as the enemy of the civilised world. They promoted the idea of a clash of civilisation that is now a reality. It has been started as planned. Happenings in Chechenya, the Balkans, Abkhazia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Kashmir and many other Islamic territories are the manifestation of this weird idea. The Muslim minorities, almost everywhere, are being oppressed without fear of retaliation. Regrettably, Muslim countries contributed in the creation of this inequilibrium by supporting the disintegration of USSR. The attack on Afghanistan was much before the 9/11 tragedy. The attack on Iraq was also decided in a similar manner. The justifications were after-thoughts. A most dangerous doctrine of pre-emption and bringing

about changes of governments has been adopted. The Islamic world must undo the harm that has been caused to humanity by their misplaced trust in those who have been the ardent enemies of Islam.

Doing Tora Bora of Afghanistan, destruction of Iraq, attacking Sudan in 1998 and threatening to do it again, ethnic cleansing in erstwhile Yugoslavia, have all been endured by the Islamic countries as observers hoping that such things will not happen to them elsewhere. The plan to obviate the use of oil as a political weapon in future, was prepared after 1973 Arab-Israeli war. The West believes it has acquired control of the energy resources of the Islamic countries. It has not and shall not sustain.

The West has decided to attack the Islamic religious values. They have allocated \$30 bn to achieving their short-term objective. The long-term plan is more audacious and expansive. In this they have the support of the so-called liberal Muslims. In this effort they have been unsuccessful for fourteen and a quarter centuries and they shall not succeed till the end of this world.

We should be proud of being Muslim and praise Allah for it; for being the custodians of the Qur'an, 'The TRUTH'; and for being the inheritors of the finest heritage and legacy left by the Islamic leadership over 1000 years. This pride should be spread throughout the Islamic World. The Holy Qur'an provided inspiration to men of understanding to think, deliberate on the creation of the universe and on the self. They acquired knowledge and taught the world. They set high standards of civilised conduct in every sphere of human affairs. We are being told to amend our school syllabi, being told what not to wear. They have the audacity to direct us what to be taught from the Qur'an. Such direction is to be rejected with contempt. Anyone agreeing or implementing such direction will be condemned on the Day of Judgment. The Qur'an gives the humanity a complete code of life. A Muslim must enter Islam completely. Some display their ignorance that Islam inhibits enquiry and therefore hampers

progress. It contains about 730 *Ayaat* concerning science, urging *Taffakkur* and *Tadabbur*. Obeying these the early Muslims excelled in every branch of science. The Qur'an contains scientific knowledge which has been gradually understood. I present a few examples of the subjects in the Qur'an on which the Nobel Prize has been awarded:

Big Bang Theory	21:03
Expanding Universe	51:47
The Sun proceeding towards a determined destination	36:38
Barrier between waters	25:53
	27:61
	55:19

Therefore, the Qur'an is and will remain current till eternity. The Almighty grants the knowledge to mankind as He pleases. The clergy and other ignorant leaders have declared their civilisation better than ours.

Since 9/11, Islamic leadership has been under a struggle for survival. There is not a single country that could be identified as Islamic. Quite a few are governed by a dynastic system. Those claiming to be democratic are following Senhendrin philosophy of constitutional democracy, and that too in name only. In this system only numbers matter; the gap between the rulers and the ruled and the rich and the poor widens. This system creates the ruler and the ruled syndrome. There is a lot of talk of good governance. It is an antithesis of the Islamic system of Shura where service not governance is the creed. In Islamic ethos, equality, justice and competence are fundamentals for electing people for administering the affairs of the State.

A Muslim must not seek power or position. He is to be urged by people to assume a responsibility, that he is bound to accept and discharge to the best of his ability and take care of

all matters big and small. It entails that as a member of the society he shall not only live correctly but also well for all.

Disunity, ignorance, technical incompetence, fear of the powerful un-Islamic system of government, inequilibrium in global power distribution, non-responsive international organisation and sustained animosity against Islam right from its advent are the factors identified for our present state. The challenges were successfully challenged and an Islamic Empire was established and sustained for a thousand years. Since the beginning of its downslide at the end of the 15th century, it has reached the present abyss. It can either rise or will perish. It will not perish, hence the ascent must start. It has the potential in human and material resources to challenge the challenges of all times.

To that end, here are a few thoughts:

- The Islamic world must chart its course with deliberation with fear of Allah only and none else.
- Irrespective of the tradition and the *Tariqat*, the most cherished to all the Muslims is the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.
Therefore,

And hold fast,

All together, by the Rope

Which Allah (Stretches out

For you), and be not divided

Among yourselves: [III:103]

- To understand Allah's Book, banish illiteracy from the *Ummah*.
- Restart thinking, deliberating and we can retake the lead. Conquer the Space, Star, Sea and Sand. We can reach beyond Moon, Mars and Venus. We should be participating in the search of the sub-atomic fragment that may explain the creation of the entire universe.
- 'OIC' conveys nothing. It should be renamed 'The *Ummah*'.

- Its Charter be modified to reflect its political power. That means joint foreign policy of 'The *Ummah*'.
- The *Ummah*'s main function must be the security in its totality. Therefore, a policy of collective security be formalised. Attack on any Muslim country is to be considered attack on 'the *Ummah*'. All measures be taken to acquire the required capability. It entails development of sciences and technologies with urgency.
 - The *Ummah* should exit from any restriction that inhibits the achievement of this objective.
 - It should evolve effective mechanism for the resolution of disputes within the *Ummah*.
 - Ensure undisputed control on its wealth and its resources.
 - Establish its own financial institutions, banking system and currency.
 - Islamic Court of Justice be made effective to deal with inter-country and intra-country matters concerning the *Ummah*. The legal framework be fortified to sue organisations and nations for damages to lives and property of the *Ummah* in unjust wars.
 - The UN has not resolved any political issue pertaining to the Muslim countries due to the veto exercising countries in the UNSC. It is unlikely to do justice in the future either. Therefore, the *Ummah* should acquire a veto in the UNSC, or all others should abandon the right to it. Till then, the *Ummah* should dissociate from the UNSC proceedings. At least for the time being, insist on a determined number of votes to adopt any UNSC resolution.
 - The *Ummah* should pursue the creation of a multipolar world and be itself its one pole.

What I have proposed is doable. It needs political will, courage, consistency in the pursuit of the objective. The most important is adopting *Din* in all affairs of the *Ummah*, State and individuals.

The *Ummah* has the potential and Allah has so ordained in the Holy Qur'an:

You are the best community that has been raised up for the (guidance of) humanity: you (are therefore supposed to) enjoin the good, forbid the evil, and keep your own faith firm in God [III:110]

Let therefore the keel of the ship to revive Islamic values of nobility, humility, altruism and compassion be laid. Rev up the engine for search for knowledge.

Glory to thy Lord,
The Lord of Honour
And Power! (He is free)
From what they ascribe
(To Him)!

And Peace on the apostles!

And Praise to Allah,
The Lord and Cherisher
Of the Worlds (XXXVII:180-182).



**POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL LINKAGES IN THE
ISLAMIC WORLD AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
FURTHER COHESION**

HAZIQUL KHAIRI*

It is my proud privilege to address this august gathering in the presence of eminent scholars who have read out their papers and spoken to you on matters of utmost importance for the Islamic world. The learned speakers have very candidly and ably presented their points of view and provided food for thought for a better future for Islam and the world at large.

I welcome the learned speakers at this forum of Hamdard Shura, particularly our foreign guest speakers, such as Dr. Dietrich Reciz, who have spared time to come down to Pakistan, honoured us by their presence and enlightened us by their learned discourses. Our Pakistani participants namely Senator S.M. Zafar, Justice (Retd.) Javed Iqbal, Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Admiral (Retd.) Iftikhar

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Ahmed Sirohey, Mr. Mahdi Masud and Mr. Burhanuddin Hasan are highly respected intellectuals of the country and their presence in the Conference has demonstrated their keen interest in a matter which concerns all of us.

I will pause here to state that the learned speakers have touched upon almost all aspects of the subject under discussion leaving virtually nothing for me to dilate upon, but even so, I would avail myself of this opportunity to say a few words.

At the outset I would say that the political environment for national and international cohesion in Islam calls for peace and freedom within Muslim States. The political culture for attainment of this goal is wanting in almost all the Muslim States. To provide a framework for Muslim countries as a unifying force which has diverse, social, cultural, racial, sectarian as well as historical background, is not an easy task and any effort to bind them together into a community of interest requires extraordinary efforts and unfettered and concerted determination. A device conducive to political stability is the starting point to be followed by re-examination of Muslim thought and values in this fast changing world.

The concept of *Ummah* degraded soon after the first four Caliphs whose election or selection was made differently each time and with them the institution of mosque headed by the Caliph where all religious, political, social, educational and economic issues were discussed and all administrative and judicial functions were carried out, lost its central place. Whether they were the Umayyads, the Abbasids, the Fatimids or the Ottomans, the Caliphs established their own dynasties and assumed arbitrary powers over the governed, in spite of the fact that it was Islam which had given to the world the first Charter of Human Rights. However, the left-over agenda now is to ensure a democratic exercise of political power reflecting the will of the *Ummah* and it should not be left to the posterity.

Presently there are 57 Muslim States and about 1.4 billion

Muslims the world over, constituting 1/6th of world's population. Neither, the Muslim States nor the Muslim *Ummah* can isolate itself from the rest of the world and they have to exist and live with them. It would be appropriate to refer here to what Dr. Mahathir Mohamad had said in his speech at the 10th session of the Islamic Summit in October 2003:

“But, not only are our governments divided, the Muslim *Ummah* is also divided, and divided again and again. Over the last 1,400 years the interpreters of Islam, the learned ones, the *Ulama*, have interpreted and reinterpreted the single Islamic religion brought by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), so differently that we have a thousand religions which are often so much at odds with one another that we often fight and kill each other.”

It is unfortunate that a number of religious schools in the Muslim world teach only Islamic theology and some of them preach even terrorism as a so-called vehicle of *Jihad*. Allah has ordained that to kill a human being without cause is like killing all the mankind and to save the life of a human being is like saving all the mankind. Those who had demolished the statue of Buddha in Afghanistan or killed 12 Nepalese in Iraq have not served the cause of Islam or of the Muslims, but have spread contempt and hatred against the Muslim *Ummah*. Instances are not wanting when, due to the dastardly acts of such misguided zealots, the Qur'an and the mosques have been desecrated, antagonizing even those people who were friendly to the Muslims and the Muslim world. We must realize that this is high time that our intellectuals and scholars, writers and journalists, lawyers, jurists and *Ulama* should make concerted efforts to eliminate terrorism by words spoken and written, apart from other steps which Muslim States and their political leaders may take in this direction. The Prophet (ﷺ) had said that “the ink from the pen of a scholar is holier than the blood of a martyr”. What follows

further is the supreme importance attached to acquisition of knowledge by Muslims, which is only possible through education.

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) can be a living and effective organ voicing the aspirations of the *Ummah* and a vehicle for unity and cohesion between Muslim States. At the same time because of its position as the prime representative of the Muslim States, it can create friendly relations and better understanding among them and with the rest of the world. But the rest of the world should also realize that State terrorism is the worst of all forms of terrorism, and only justice and fair play in international field can bring peace, tranquillity and brotherhood in the world.



SUGGESTED RESPONSES TO CHALLENGES BEING FACED BY THE ISLAMIC WORLD

MAHDI MASUD*

Although the present widespread ferment derives from an amalgam of political, economic and cultural factors, the seeds of political turmoil were laid in the arena of political disputation. Nearly all long-running political disputes involve Muslim peoples. Nearly all peoples and States under foreign occupation happen to be Muslims including Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Iraq. The strong feelings against foreign domination, pre-existing the attacks on the twin towers, have been reinforced by the way the West has capitalized on the horrendous attacks of 9/11 to implement its neo-imperialist agenda.

Never in recent history has an act, attributed to a Muslim militant group, led to such disastrous consequences for the Islamic world as 9/11 did. But for this attack, the US Administration could never have rallied the American nation to a pre-emptive, unilateral attack on Iraq and to its horrendous consequences. The

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September eleven attack provided the perfect opportunity for the implementation of the US neo-con policies in a unipolar world.

In spite of adverse circumstances arising in the aftermath of 9/11, the Islamic world with 57 independent States, strategic importance and economic resources, continues to have its own leverage. Leading Islamic States such as Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, the GCC States, Indonesia and others are in a position to exercise diplomatic or economic leverage as the case may be in important regions, where vital Western interests are involved, including the Middle East, the Gulf, Central Asia, South Asia and East Asia.

In spite of the above, the OIC has rightly been seen as merely a talking shop in the world at large and has not been taken seriously. The perceived divergence of interests between the regimes (not the States) in the Islamic world has accentuated their dependence on the West. Irrespective of their own perception of the presence or absence of a commonality of vital interests, the Islamic world today has little choice in the matter in view of the wide-running fear distrust and antipathy *vis-à-vis* Islamic State and non-State actors and Islamic communities, animating much of the non-Islamic world. Whether they accept it or not, the Islamic *Ummah* today, perforce, shares a commonality of security and political interests.

At this juncture, when Islamic States are being targeted one after another, it is only by bringing into play the combined diplomatic, economic and political leverage of the Islamic world that further aggression can be discouraged.

The OIC should consider adopting a credible policy decision pledging the members to oppose by diplomatic, economic and political means any pre-emptive, unprovoked threat or attack against an OIC member and to pledge mutual political and economic help to enable the OIC to maintain this unified opposition. The OIC must establish a standing mechanism at the Summit/ Foreign Ministers level to deal with crisis situations affecting the security of the OIC States.

The declarations adopted by the OIC in the past are mostly expressions of consensus of the *Ummah* on issues of interest. If however the OIC has to exercise a concrete leverage on developments of concern, Islamic States would have to acknowledge the identity of security interests which the OIC States share in the current threatening situation. They should also work at creating greater complementarity of economic interests, an essential building block for meaningful co-operation in the modern world. This is indispensable for creating political will at the highest level for achievement of effective solidarity.

More important than formulating new resolutions is the need for implementation of past decisions, which mostly remain a dead letter. A high-powered OIC monitoring mechanism should be set up to follow up for implementation of numerous decisions, which have remained on paper .

A collective mechanism and close coordination should be devised amongst Islamic States in media-related matters to counteract the worldwide disinformation portraying freedom movements of Muslim peoples (such as the Palestinian and Kashmiri struggles) as terrorist outfits and Islam as a force for hatred and violence.

Persuasion should also be applied on the leading world powers through collective, coordinated approaches urging the relevance (for peace and development), of a more forthcoming Western role in the solution of long running disputes, affecting Islamic peoples and States such as Palestine and Kashmir.

The restructuring of the OIC must be taken in hand. Even the Eminent Persons Group mooted at the last Islamic Summit for making recommendations towards this end, has not got going. Numerous other proposals for restructuring have to be examined and integrated into a viable whole. President Musharraf recommended some time back that the OIC secretariat must have professionally staffed departments dealing with

modern intellectual challenges, economic, scientific and technological cooperation, higher education, social reforms and other issues.

With a reduction in the strategic importance of Third World States generally, following the end of the cold war, the significance of these States for the developed North is now linked more to their economic standing and to their role on global issues such as terrorism, nuclear and arms control, population, drugs, environment and the refugee problem. In order to assess the prospects and opportunities in the changed world scenario, the OIC States should make a reappraisal of the convergence or divergence of their interests with the developed world in the above mentioned fields of key importance to the West.

Islamic States should recognize their underlying identity of interests as developing States economically, vulnerable States militarily and mistrusted peoples politically and ideologically. It is time therefore that the Islamic States in general and the affluent Islamic States in particular, shed their reservations towards greater financial contribution in strengthening the OIC institutions.

Except for the Islamic Development Bank, there is no other instance of successful institutional economic cooperation in the OIC framework. The intra-OIC trade is a fraction of the total trade of Islamic States. Plans for joint defence production between selected OIC member States have not got off the ground, with the OIC member States preferring to maintain their dependence on the Western military hardware rather than investing in regional defence industries. For lack, mainly of financial resources, the OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, headed by Pakistan, has so far not achieved the desired goals and targets.

Linked with the requirement of justice and human welfare, peace occupies a central position in the Islamic creed which postulates a principle-based order. In the Western approach, however, peace is considered separately from justice and is equated with absence of war and with stability and order guaranteed on occasions by hegemonic influence. In the spirit

of true moderation, the Holy Qur'an warns against the committing of excesses even in the pursuit of rights or in combating injustice.

To meet the current political and social challenges facing the Islamic world, it is necessary to revive the practice of *Ijtehad*. The established principles of *Ijtehad*, applied in the light of contemporary interpretation, should be brought to bear on the burning questions facing the Islamic world.

If the serious turmoil, unrest and confrontations affecting the world community are to be overcome in the interests of peace, development and conflict resolution, the major States would have to reconcile their present policies of national expediency and real-politik with elements of principled diplomacy including the purposes of the UN Charter and the sanctity of international agreements, as well as age-old canons of ethics, morality and religion.



STRAIGHTENING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE WEST AND THE MUSLIM *UMMAH*

ABDUL MATIN*

The Muslim *Ummah* today is subject to grave dangers of systemically engineered Globalization, Westernization and Adventurism. Intense psychological dissonances, anomies in values and sociological stresses and strains are experienced. The menace is creating distances, eroding trust, and spoiling international relations. Running parallel to the external neo-imperial forces shaping the world landscape, is the monumental internal phenomenon of the revival of Islam and rejuvenation of the Muslims. This is underpinning the strong pushes and pulls for reform and reconstruction of the *Ummah* encompassing the polity, society and economy.

The opportunities for and the will to get mobilized and organized to cope with the forebodings and to address the grand mission of reconstruction are being visualized. The reforming leaderships steering varied movements are abreast of the requirements. The prospects of and the potential for the win-win

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game are foreseen on all fronts. However, the actual realization of the dividends is a matter of sagacious management of the process within and farsighted interaction with the outside world.

The way to symbiotic relations was originally illuminated by the Bandung Conference in 1955. The subsequent resolutions approved by NAM, the OIC and the UN spell out realistic, moral and rational canons for enriching international interactions. They call for proportional mutual benefits, moderate inward looking unilateral designs as well as universal rights and responsibilities of States. The roadmap demanded for agreed settlements of disputes, grant of concessions, reconciliation gestures and narrowing of the ridges through dialogue is invariably superior to the path suggested by subjectivism, absolutism and outdated real-politik. Deceptions, duplicities and manipulations are in any case short lived. It is the process of articulation of interests, discussion of views and ultimate deals or compromises that engender durable relations.

Open and candid dialogue is always illuminating for all sides. False assumptions are detected. Faulty facts are discerned. Distorted interpretations of events come to limelight. Information is shared and proper explanations are tabled. Illogical inferences from what is said or done are checked. Ideas put forth are evaluated. Critical questions are answered. Issues get elaborated. Tasks are addressed. Realistic options are floated and weighed. Evaluation of alternative courses of action is closely inspected. Appropriate assessment of choices is volunteered. Pressure of the vocal, the powerful and the coercive is countervailed. Friendly postures relieve misgivings. Accommodating offers are greeted. Inspiring motions receive positive responses.

Initiation of dialogue tends to help in getting the parties back on the right tract of peaceful resolution of contentious matters. Rays of hopes glimmer after the disruptions, disappointments and hatred caused by the cycle of violence. The positive process of diagnosis, prognosis and search for efficacious coping mechanisms appears on the scene. Knowledge, wisdom and virtues are pooled to impact on each other. The dissonances,

anomalies, dilemmas and West-phobia experienced on the part of the *Ummah* is addressed with understanding and proper consideration. A fruitful outlet to the Islamic world by the West is facilitated without being suspected of predatory design, civilization enslavement and hedonistic perversions.

Notwithstanding the reservations of the West, the beacon light of the Islamic revival engenders articulation of objectives and awakens the need for availing prospects for establishing what is right, good and beneficial. Glimpses and glimmerings of the Kingdom of Allah and the unfolding of the inner potentials in a knowledgeable, determined and systematic manner galvanize revitalization. The lofty task of effecting ideal self-concept and of building productive and innovative capacities is stimulating. The awakening taps the emotions and multiplies sentiments of attachment to the cause. It provides courage to take up the call. Grievances are asserted. Feelings of weakness, fear and helplessness are controlled. Trial and tribulation is seen as part of a meaningful life, responding to oppression, dilution and exploitation. A self-conscious, purposive and widespread resurgence nurtures itself. It never gets weary, fades or perishes with prolonged endeavors, occasional set-backs and under pressure of the hostile forces. A continuous process of becoming is engaged in.

The internal revival is rooted in growing awareness of and sensitivities to the identity of civilization and culture and the expression of the felt-need to get activated for the grand cause of self-preservation. The collective ideals, the memory of historical contributions and the prospects of synergy come into play to offer hope, ensure dignity, and provide opportunities for a positive change. Speedy modernization, true perspectives, Globalization and equitable sharing of the socio-economic benefits emanating from growing West-*Ummah* transactions are seen as the outcomes of self-assertion and solidarity. The necessity of cooperation and partnership in trade, flow of money and investment and assimilation of technology dawns inevitably. The mainstreaming of universally

acceptable Islamisation is facilitated through collaborative projection, pooling of wisdom and orchestration of *Shari'ah* by the *Ummah*.

It is increasingly recognized that psychic and cultural affiliation, bonding and connections are expressed, expanded and diversified via exploration of ever-new avenues of socio-economic cooperation. The mis-directed resources, futile outburst of resentments and deep troubles and arid turbulences can be suitably rectified and properly channelized. An essential requirement to cope with weaknesses, failings and victimization is to jointly plan for 'being', 'becoming' and fraternal unification.

Despite the Occidental publicity to the contrary, at the core of Globalisation is a pattern of relationship that entails the intensification of the West's exploitative transactions and the Orient's economic disparities. The continuation and further deepening of the concentration of wealth, income and decision-making is built into the process. The assumption, consolidation and enhancement in the controlling power of G-8 countries is the vision, design and *modus vivendi* of the phenomenon. Conceptually it works for the creation, enactment and execution of a socio-economic order that ensures further ascendancy of advanced economies, disproportionate accrual of benefits to the affluent and retarding sustained development of lagging countries.

The resources of the *Ummah* as well as of other underdeveloped economies are accessed for the West's centric gains. The lagging countries are taken as appendages left to the trickle-down-effect on the edges. The symbolism of poverty alleviation and token programming for health, literacy and public utility services with nominal resources of less than 1% of GDP is brought into the scene in an attempt to whitewash somewhat the exploitation-nurtured process. In essence, the interests, purposes, values and voices of the backward countries are largely excluded from the substance of Globalization. The root causes of poverty, under-development and deprivation remain outside the purview of the agents of restructuring of the world order.

This generates anger, disappointment and alienation among the masses.

The euphemism of a free world market is mostly self-serving. The mechanism of and arrangements for free trade, travel and investment are put in place to structure a dependent, dispossessed, unfair and subsidiary centre-periphery relationship. The direction of world economy is set by the supreme mission, shared motivation and convergent interests of the affluent nations. Navigation is done by the US and the EU. The international organizations such as the IMF, the WB and the WTO, etc., execute the salient items of the agenda at the sectoral level. The MNCs and the NGOs are at work on the micro plane.

The rulers of the lagging countries beholden to, supported by and remaining in power through the courtesy of the West, oblige the masters. They are lured by occasional help, transitory adjustment assistance, and conditionality-tied restructuring aid. The idea of institutionally in-built proportionality, equity and sharing of gains has not as yet captured the imagination and resolve of the authorities on either side of the fence. At the moment, they are satisfied with auxiliary and ancillary benefits, voluntary contributions and symbolic gestures.

Choices Open to the Role Players

The forces operating on both the internal and external fronts are born out of respective interests, values and ideologies that have divergent, convergent and overlapping elements. Reflection, logic and dialectics are at work in addressing the challenges and responding to the threats. All sorts of questions are raised. Deep concerns and practical problems are surfacing. Assorted pressures and subjective considerations are getting into play in mooting what direction to take. Choices at cross-roads are weighed. Frenzied, random, pointless and trivial activities are strayed into occasionally. Issues of standing up against alien thoughts and life-style originate from different mind-sets, calculations and hostile

actions. The perception of the adverse consequences of passivity, and conformity, and of submission to repugnant beliefs, preferences and modes of behaviour warns against inaction. The drift towards erosion in self-esteem and loss of what is worthy lead to activism and backlash.

Ultimately, acceptance, accommodation and assimilation or otherwise of foreign ideas, ideals and courses of action depend on congruence or dissonance as recognized. The attraction, taste and satisfaction from foreign artifacts and ways of living influence formation of positive attitudes. Dissonance sets forth opposite forces of rejection and fight-back. Psychological unacceptance and inconsistencies are disturbing. The desire for elimination of contradictions is normal. The assertion of the core interest, the projection of the faith and the struggle for fulfilling the cherished ideology are natural.

The obstacles, setbacks and sacrifices encountered in the self-fuelled journey toward what is perceived right, good and great are faced without reservation. The safeguarding of truth, purity and perfection is motivating for the persons touched by the perception of the bad and the ugly. The will to bear the cost involved is aroused. The fight against falsehood, evil and watering down and contamination of the preferred way of life is deemed an obligation. The price for performance of duties is voluntarily paid. In the process, misperceptions, misunderstandings, illusions and delusions are taken as usual experiences. The bumping up or downgrading are parts of the reality in doing the right things and resisting the wrong-doings. What comes into play is the condition of the common men as well as of the privileged groups to be on or off the mark in judgment, virtue and wisdom. Getting into the whirlpool and cross currents or sailing out successfully out of the threats of arid challenges are uncertain outcomes. The responsibility of the powerful, knowledgeable and well-meaning persons is to illuminate sound choices and engage the stakeholders on both sides in dialogue and a civilized conflict resolution. The prospects of adopting gain-maximizing and cost-minimizing

direction is conditional to researching, reinterpreting and reprojecting the denotations and connotations of the parallel forces impacting the *Ummah*-West relations.

Significance of Revival

The revival mirrors and connects the *Ummah* with its heritage, glorious history and revealed guidance for inner shaping and outer relationship. It turns on and charges the faithful for positive action. Revivalist thoughts, values and movements are in search of justice, good-will and security of identity. Activation is a historical watershed. It marks the break with being resigned to domination. Although the form, direction and priorities of the leadership vary, the responsibility to order lives in line with what is ordained is at the centre-stage everywhere. The protection, defence and extension of the cherished way of life is wanted. Nowhere a subversion of and an onslaught on Islamisation is tolerated. The sacrosanct nature of *Deen* and the affirmation of Islam as a basis of governance are considered paramount.

The urgency to adopt the system, structure and model of Madinah for the formation of an Islamic Welfare State and consequent socio-economic development underpins the resurgence. The phenomenon is pure in spirit, perfect in mould and realistic in orientation, objectives and attitudes. Personal piety, collective virtues and normative interaction are aimed at. The vision of equality, fraternity, self-actualization and salvation is the goal. The necessity of seizing opportunities for the restoration of freedom, securing civil rights and coping with neo-imperialism is recognized. Only the question of how to go about it is being crystalised.

There is no ill-will, animosity or hatred towards any party, organization or entity. The rallies and the protestations are designed to draw attention to the atrocities and the resulting sufferings and agonies. The silent and the invisible share the annoyance of the vocal and the torch-bearers in the forefront. The apparent

distasteful and violent activities are incidental reactions. As such no terrorization or evil-doing is intended.

The revival can find an outlet for inner reconstruction and an outer bridge-building with the West. The orderly resurgence is contingent on democratic assertion, operating via political parties, representative governments and reform movements. A peaceful process ensures when the aggrieved, the victimized and the deprived are allowed freely to air apprehensions, complaints and dissents. Wrong-doings are criticized. The excluded, and the marginal ones see opportunities of presenting their interests, claims and rights. The normal fury, drums and spinning during the course of the stirrings go on. Protest and processions are resorted to by the disenfranchised. Formal and informal avenues for rectifying the structural deficiencies and improving the processes, behavioural practices and interactive relations are explored. Entertainment is welcome of irrefutable, forceful and sound suggestions to help in relieving, treating and healing the pain and the suffering. The marginalized and the humiliated are touched, if counted.

Hubris, pride and self-righteousness seldom contain, control and prevent uprisings or prove helpful in placing them on a civilized path. Brinksmanship triggers recall of crusades, colonization, and secular rigidities. Arrogance serves as a reminder of past injuries, debasement and damage. The overarching, overbearing and visibly bullying or callous indifference arouses intense reactions. It is the gestures of reconciliation, moderation and recognition of the vital interests of the alienated that rekindle a sense of peace, sanity and sobriety. Humanity and rational behaviour turn things around. A new ball game deserves consideration by the power-wielders as well as the resurgents.

The blockage, deflection and undermining of spirited calls for the restoration of identity lead to unintended outlets. Radical approaches, violence and militancy are the consequence. Those affected tend to engage in agitation, show of street power and veiled or overt confrontation as and when unduly barricaded. They break out into open resistance, and defiance and in situations

of oppression. Seeds of rebellions and revolutions are sown by myopic handling of discontent. Scenes of turmoil, gloom and chaos are associated with demonisation. The orchestration of intra-Islam divisions and manipulation of differences between the liberal, and the conservatives flare up sectarian troubles but in no way reduce the longing for desired overall transformation. The pump-priming of ethnic fervour is ineffective in diminishing the basic identity. The malicious interventions to sidetrack mass movements, malign leadership and buy off the mavericks fail in dampening down the zealous.

The significance of the needed revival is derived from the search and recapitulation of the identity. It symbolizes and raises a sense of future, that is, a place in the world with sovereignty, security, proper rights and a role to play. The realization of an inalienable bond with mankind pervades the awakening. It directs thinking, influences sensitivities and sharpens focus on a needed response to Occidental designs. The anguish of being powerless, under-developed and polarized and the resentment against dictation, invasion and humiliation are heart-rending visions of the inability to cope effectively with all these menaces; to have appropriate leadership at all organizational levels is the answer.

In the process of revival, the Islamic glory, heritage and duties are recalled. References are made to the basic causes of falling by the wayside during the past six centuries. Wake-up calls are issued. Soul-searching is done. The impulse for catching up in modernization is reignited. The desire to match the race for economic development surfaces. Competition in personal moral development, collective character upsurge and reformative leadership are talked about. Replacement of myopic, lustful and egoistic rulers by farsighted and public-spirited figures is deemed imperative to be equal to the task ahead. The nature of gap-bridging to be done, the initiatives to be taken and the appropriate responses are examined by the thoughtful elements of the society. The possibilities of meeting people's needs, aspirations and

preferences are explored by the intellectuals. The deep will and conscience of the masses are given due regard. Rays of hope emerge from the darkness. The courage to get engaged in doing what is just, right and good is picked up. The imperative of avoiding bad and struggling against the evil is realized. The idea of what needs to be done is researched. In a word the right choices before the Muslims are illuminated.

The authoritarian, coercion-addicted rulers, having succumbed to faulty Globalization, brutal Adventurism and flashy alien culture, are getting frightened of both the mass revivalism as well as of the neo-imperialism. They are aware that Islam is the prime source of the Muslims' identity. It is the mainspring of their morality, law and cultural make-up. Individual self-actualization, success and salvation are linked with adherence to the mandated way of living. State and societal glory is tied with restoration of the Qur'anic rule and establishment of commanded socio-economic relations. Nothing can be done that is inconsistent with the guiding principles of *Shari'ah* and Islamic ethical code. The Islamic teaching is that deviatory acts, whether intended or committed by the rulers or by the ruled, are warned against, punished, deterred and prevented. It is obligatory for all to comply with, and endeavour to go by, the script. These concepts, as against the paralysis caused by the fear of the mighty West, engender practical dilemmas for those at the helm of affairs, but these dilemmas have to be faced and resolved under the guidance of the spirit and dictates of Islam.

Propulsion for Reincarnation

The all-pervasive needs for a rejuvenation of the *Ummah* generate a milieu of dialectics, within as well as without, for recovery and reconstruction on the one hand and the manner and extent of coping with the neo-imperialism on the other. Internally, three-dimensional, interlocking process of Islamisation is called for. Conceptual clarification of the script, contextual

interpretation of the revealed message and appropriate application of the principles, norms and standards are the essential requirements. The scholars and intellectuals have to come forward for the purpose. Rethinking of the institutional, organizational and constitutional/legal ordering is necessary. The Islamic ideology council, parliament and *Shari'ah* Court have to take up the chore. Review of the conditional, motivational and behavioural conduct on the part of persons, role-players and position-holders is called for to initiate action for 'being' and 'becoming'. The family, the mosque, the educational institutions and the mass media need equally to be alerted to the tasks.

Those segments of the civil society, the community-based associations and the various schools of thought and movements which have hindsight, insight and foresight, are marshalling the will, injecting inputs and pursuing the mission of reconstruction in their domains. Content is being concretized, energy is being channelized and promising consequences are being identified. Knowledge, wisdom and virtue are brought to bear on incongruence where recognized. Anomies are replaced by value orientation. Morbidity is displaced through spiritual exaltation. Amoralism is questioned. Ignorance is blighted. The change from denizenship to citizenship of the world is projected. Fear of the crisis of identity on account of the onslaught on the civilization is substituted by a sense of opportunity for defining it. Everyone is reminded that history is of our own making. The past, the present and the future make-up of the world mirrors the self-conception, self-confidence, and self-esteem, and the attendant courage, balance and disarming interactions. Thoughts, choices and deeds of the people make or unmake existential conditions.

The urge and the constant struggle for the restoration, reconstruction and creative cultivation of Islamic polity, society and economy are taking hold. There are intrinsic and extrinsic attractions, benefits and inspirations contained in the struggle for the establishment, consolidation and build-up of the Islamic identity. The eradication of the inferiority complex, the stagnation syndrome

and the defenselessness against external dangers call for the true self as portrayed by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. The Muslims are charged with the spirit of modernization and self-positioning for contributions to development and human well-being. The path to the *Ummah*-West relations is perceived in imaginative, adaptive and innovative self resurrection.

The repair, renovation, cementing and maintenance of the foundation of Islam, its way of life and the civilization is a momentous venture. Five pillars need to be strengthened to ensure the core process, the basic structural shape and the positive engagement with the rest of the world.

These five pillars are:

1. Observance of and expanded institutional arrangements for the fulfilment of the five elements of the faith. At home, in school and at the community level, the discharge of these duties strengthens self-concept. A sense of self-preservation, self-enhancement and self-satisfaction is felt in complying with the mandatory actions. Acts of omission or lapses evoke feelings of sin. Happiness is experienced in inviting others to follow the laid-down course.

2. Introduction of *Shari'ah* and the application as well as extension of the control, command and steering system of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. This is carried forward by incorporating the reinterpretations by consensus and updated elaborations of the law, jurisprudence and normative guidelines. *Ijtehad* is encouraged in this field. All the irrationalities manifested in diverse forms are diagnosed, treated and prevented or deterred through law, learning and role-modeling. Considerable scope is there for informed flow of ideas and exchange of views in the fields that are open-ended. Questions relating to the place and role of women and permissibility of family planning are to be readdressed in earnest. The fundamentalist and the traditionalists, and the moderate and the liberal, are free to debate the issues relevant to female life and find rational solutions within the framework of the revealed wisdom. No school of thought can

foreclose exploration, investigation and prudent resolution of issues of interpretation.

In the resulting scenario of the introduction of *Shari'ah*, punishment is accorded as prescribed to perpetrators of sex-related crimes such as adultery, rape and homosexuality. Prostitution, child abuse and sexed-up entertainment are debarred. Nudity and vulgarity are banned. Greed-driven misdeeds are penalized. Persons involved in corruption, malpractices and underpayments are indicted and convicted as required. Interest-bearing financing is replaced by profit-sharing. Stock exchange is subjected to dictates of rules and regulations enforced by responsible and accountable position-holders. Gambling, speculation and profiteering are prohibited. Producers, wholesale dealers and peddlers of momentary pleasure-yielding and tranquilizing intoxicants such as liquor, heroin, etc., are chastised. Stealing, illegitimate money-making and illicit accumulation of wealth are deemed grave offenses.

Materialistic ambitions are allowed through the rise and modernization of production, investment and expansion of trade. The increase in productivity, improvement in quality and generation of novelty in output is supported. The comforts and luxuries of life are not objected to, provided extravagance, vaunting exhibition of luxurious life styles and wastefulness are not resorted to. Power-rooted trespasses are subjected to punitive action. Stooges are discounted. Puppets playing to the tune of outside masters stand strictured. Traps laid down by the enemies of Islam are exposed, condemned and removed from the stage. Requisite checks on authority and a system of accountability are proclaimed, commenced and enforced.

Systemically, the positioning of fittest persons for governance is brought up front. Charismatic leaders are hailed as long as performance is public-spirited, effective and in accord with the situation as well as reflective of the deep will of the Muslims. The quality and the impact of policy pronouncements, strategic thrusts and decision-making are watched and evaluated. Betrayal

of the State, the society and the organizations is retributed. Laws of the creator are made binding on the rulers and the ruled alike. The prescribed code of conduct is to prevail in all walks of life; no meddling by mortals of finite vision is allowed.

3. Teaching, preaching and adhering to the enjoined moral creed and learning the preferred ethical initiatives, responses and interactions. This serves as a foundation of conscience. It is through the social behaviour build-up that one tends to avow obligations and cardinal values, and nurture the principles, norms and rules. The respect for human rights and the regard for humanism is cultivated. A sense of guilt, remorse and regret is felt as and when deviations from the learnt moral standards take place. Regular engagement at the scholarly level in inductive reasoning and mass propositions and assessments help in rectifying mistaken opinions. Coherence, consistency and evidence are brought to bear on faulty thought. Partial views are replaced by holistic perspectives. Both dissent and consensus are informed and reasoned. An atmosphere of freedom is evolved. Pertinent questions are raised. Reflective thinking is fostered. Self-righteous intentions are coupled with consequences of what is being opted for and acted upon. Inner unfolding and outer scaffolding lead to steady ethical development. Intelligence is prevented from being used for circumventing the imperatives. Talent is utilized to steer out of irrationalities, evils and egoistic temptations.

4. Formation and exercise of will to negate wrong and vicious behaviour within and without. The source of the evil is identified and pursued, however powerful the perpetrator may be and irrespective of the mundane temptations and financial rewards offered. Deconsecration of the holy, undermining of the heroes and dethroning of the time-honoured icons are resisted. Actualization of the fundamentals of Islam, build-up of the desirable structure for justice, good governance and welfare of people and personal piety are focused on.

Curbing of the reprehensible and promotion of the

commendable is called *Jihad* which is commanded in various forms, from struggle for self-purification and control to fight against invaders, offenders and hurters. Exchange of blows is resorted to only under conditions of intimidation, siege and occupation or bruising. Adventurism is countered with equal force. Coercions of, and crackdown on, the freedom-fighters is battled. Preservation of territorial integrity, maintaining ownership and control of natural resources and safeguarding cultural artifacts are upheld tenaciously. Tyranny and despotism are defied verbally and resisted in actions. The resolve to give tit for tat and oppose oppressors is expressed appropriately. Rights are defended and secured. This is better done without creating Muslim-phobia and in a manner to win minds and hearts. Attention is focused upon the enslavement, exploitation and victimization causing violent responses. The will to relate to universal morality, international law and peaceful resolution of conflict is manifested on all occasions.

5. **The *Ummah* as an integrated community.** The *Ummah* is the fraternity of the believers obligated to follow the Divine Message and the *Sunnah*. The Muslims irrespective of colour, ethnicity, race and language are brought together into a cohesive whole. They are subjected to the tenets of *Deen*, individually as well as collectively. The *Ummah* built up an exemplary makeup of society, polity and welfare economy during the periods of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and of 'the rightly guided' *Khalifas*. The philosophy, ideals and practices as well as the direction and scale of the tasks ahead of the *Ummah* were set up. Ideas regarding the solidarity of Muslims were firmed up. The operative material, moral and spiritual norms were specified. The parameters for practical care, help, cooperation and conflict resolution were prescribed. In principle, the framework to go about the conduct of intra-*Ummah* relations was laid down.

The quality of life that is witnessed as a result of going by the enlightened arrangements is adored to this day. It is the most peaceful, the most harmonious and the most satisfying quality.

The Muslims are inspired by the model and cherish the memories of the success story and the binding force of the heritage. The landmark events in security, commerce and human resource development are recorded in golden words and cited with pride. The milestones reached in coping with external threats and in spreading the rays of culture and civilization are admired. Engagement in devoted learning, rightful earning and generous sharing of valued goods and services with the underprivileged fellow beings is taken as a model of affirmation of the true self. Ever since the splendid times, gradual incapacitation of the Muslim rulers, the moral slide down of the elite in coming to grip with ethical dilemmas and the weakening of the society's outrage against wrong-doings have been rife. The *Ummah* as such is mostly non-functional in substance. It is subject to social evils, inner frictions and grave rifts in its holistic personality. In its symbolic existence, the entity is, however, very much operative.

Islamic spirit, deep will and vision of better future impel exploration, understanding and forging of intra-*Ummah* binding variables. A concerted approach towards the West-*Ummah* relationships in vital fields is desirable. It is in this context that everywhere in the Muslim world the grand narratives of Islam, good governance and welfare of the people which impart sense, purpose and direction to life are presented with hope. Inspiring ideals, eternal truths and universal reasons that withstood analytical scrutiny in all ages and locations are placed before the public. The foundations of identity, State, society and economy are in discourse and researched. The fundamentals of self-formation, and appropriate linkages to Allah and to the existential micro, macro and global realities are examined. The contemporary themes of freedom, democracy, human rights and crises of interactions of civilizations are seen from varied perspectives.

The determination to follow the tested roadmap toward the destination is on the horizon. The notion of being the captain of independent choices among alternatives and maintaining dignity in transactions is emerging. The will power to manage rationally

and openly resolve disagreements arising from the diverse interpretation of scripts is gaining momentum. The need for suitable structural arrangements for cooperation and orderly operation of functional entities is felt. The importance of firm resolutions of conflict, in bedrock matters and issues and the establishment of sound processes of interactions is rightly perceived as indispensable.

Stakes Involved

The external forces of neo-imperialism and the internal dynamics of resurgence focused on modernization, safeguarding of the overriding identity and expression of the deep will for securing the rightful place in world affairs underly the situation at the micro as well as the macro level in the *Ummah*. The States, societies, the economies, the common persons and the elite are experiencing various conflicts in choices and actions. The display of power, greed, hedonism and hegemony on the part of the West and the opposite awakening to ordained selfhood, consciousness of inner socio-economic interests and commitment to the faith are at odds with one another.

The parallel operation of the highly complex, intricate and potentially explosive forces on both sides are inducing processes towards equilibrium in reflection, reciprocal understanding and decisions-making, aided by prudence and realism with some inbuilt morality. The frontage of the Western ambition towards subjugation, exploitation and spread of flashy ways of life concealed in the ideology of liberalism, aggressively pursued and sugar-coated, is evoking a response that is a mixture of violence, resistance and acquiescence. The superpower interaction with the target States, strata of people and socio-economic as well as political movements trigger varying kinds of reactions with different degrees of intensity and frequency. Depending upon the set of objective functions, existential constraints and feasible options in combination with historical background, traditions of courage and organized devotion to faith, the range of responses to events is

wide apart. Evidence of passivity, criticism, rejection, strong opposition, and outright confrontation is visible. Whatever the nature, form and content of the counterpoise, the cost-benefit calculations and risk-success probabilities are assessed by the affectees. Whether they are informed or are ignorant, right or wrong, justified or off-the-point in the objective analysis, subjective predilections and actual judgments get the upper hand.

The important thing is that almost every segment of the population is touched and stirred by what is being witnessed. They care about the consequences of what is being done to them or by them. Neither side is unmindful of changed outcome of alternative courses of action open to them. The significance of dialogue, understanding and flexibility is grasped. The preference for an orderly, fair and efficacious approach is felt deep down. The importance of self-correction through negotiations and consensus is evident. But the idea of compliance with, conformity to, and accommodation of, the Western super-imposing designs, universalisation of capitalistic system and Occidental cultural ascendancy run contrary to the concept of the supreme self-hood. Submission to the new scheme of things endangers the preservation of national security, political sovereignty, cultural integrity and prospects of sustained development. It demolishes the framework of freedom, mutually beneficial management of global interdependence and blossoming up of pluralism.

The acceptance of, and yielding to, the pre-emptive strike doctrine signals the loss of human will and spirit. Surrender to the threat of coercion, feeling of fear and emotions of shock and awe are demeaning. Once reinforced by the weak and the vulnerable, the dictates, willful demands and bullying are likely to become a never-ending process. Except for its proponents and the like-minded, the return to gunboat diplomacy is dismissed all around. Antagonism is worsened on account of the misguided dogma of smashing disliked regimes. The turnover to the imposition of preferred socio-economic systems, installation of selected rulers and brutalisation of the dissidents is vehemently reacted to by the

people. The unrepresentative rulers are haunted by the reaction. The frightened men at the helm of affairs refrain even from recognition of the basic rights. Public references to the double-speak, the multiple standards and the glaring wrong-doings of the West are avoided to remain in office. But the affected section of the populace is unyielding. A guerrilla war is waged against the invaders, occupiers and uprooters of cultural values and institutional structures.

At stake for the *Ummah* is the seizing of opportunities for steady movement towards the restoration of its glory. The phased modernization, outsourcing of the high technology industrialisation and the widening scope of remunerative migration are involved in installing proper scheme of things. The prospects of relief from the dirty work of policing and hunting the militants are marked out for the ingratiating Muslim rulers. On the line for the West are prospects of access to the precious natural resources of the planet and elimination of threats posed to life, property and business of transnational corporations as well as the functioning of the NGOs. In sight for the hubris-ridden authority-wielders of the unipolar world is deliverance from the pains and sufferings of being haunted by the cries of innocent men, women and children that are killed and incapacitated during unjustified invasion, occupation and military operation. The interest of mankind in peace, security and orderly international relation is on the bet.

Problems of Dissonance and Leadership Crisis

The internal cross-currents of external forces drive deep rethinking, fresh policy choices and strategic decisions followed by results-oriented actions. The opportunities offered by the Islamic revival span the entire Muslim world. The preservation of, and adherence to, the principles of *Deen* are reflections of what is valued and is required to be done. The struggle and the sacrifices involved make the faithful feel good and worthy. Obstruction of the awakening and dampening of the renewal

from any quarter arouse anger, outrage and antagonism. The use of force to curb Islamic movements of any kind generates violence. Attempts to dent the fabric of the cultural setting produce chain effects and multiplier impacts. The forceful responses are legitimized in situations of misunderstanding and mishandlings.

Any dilution, pollution or distortion of the civilization is opposed with intensity. Western aid, pushing and tutoring that run contrary to the psychic make-up become suspect. Compliance with alien world views that are incompatible with treasured norms is repugnant to the common man and public-spirited leaders, whether in power or out of office. The ones who submit to foreign dictates, and temptations are held in contempt. Denial, defensiveness and outmaneuvering attempts by the subservient authorities serve no purpose. The people cannot bear the anomies brought about by outside forces, deflecting the inner convictions and commitments to the survival of heritage.

The discrepancies and dilemmas resulting from arguments for, and pressures to, cede space to unacceptable beliefs and predilections motivate countervailing critical thoughts, assertion of time-tested preferences, and of fight-back impulses. The rulers and amoral liberal secularist groups who gloss over the people's concerns are brushed aside. The opportunists who tend to oblige the foreign zealots, greedy penetrators and mighty incursionists out of fear or under lures of existing or prospective positions lose trust and aggravate widespread wrath and hatred. A crisis of leadership emerges.

The authorities fail to notice signs of estrangement and to read writings on the wall. Distinction between the administration of relevant and irrelevant corrective stimuli is blurred. Situations are destabilized because of shortsightedness. Wishful connections are seen between the policies announced and effects perceived. Frictions and polarizations are intensified. Bitterness is injected into politics as well as governance. The organizational functioning is impaired. Anxiety, depression and cynicism take over. States of nothingness, anarchy and wickedness surface. Practical

dilemmas of what to do, how to unify and recharge the masses without getting isolated from or dissociated with the major powers of the world assume complex proportions. Selective pacifications, appeasements and ameliorations of material conditions on the fringes by the rulers does little to satisfy the populace. The resigned postures on the part of the insightful is of no help in coping with the intricate issues and entrapments.

The denial, suppression and gloss-over of some elements of the incongruent forces by the rulers is of no avail. It cannot redress the adverse reality experienced by the people of all the 57 OIC countries. The ascendancy of the powerful at the cost of cutting the bedrock of Islamic way of life and the blockage of the resurrection of *Ummah* are considered a source of guilt and shame. Bruising the theologians and ignoring the orthodoxy is spurned. By doing the bidding of neo-imperialists and keeping silent on adventurism and demonisation of States following unpalatable policies, the good will of the masses is eroded. The trust of the people in the integrity and credibility of the top decision-makers is lost. Whatever publicity is done by the officially controlled media, vices cannot be turned into virtues regardless of the compulsions of circumstances. The history of the Muslims is replete with heroes and role-models who boldly faced the demi-gods of their times. Dodging of reality and flight from harsh dangers to save face or win favour of the wrong-doers is not in the ethos of the faithful. Engagement in realistic dialectics is demanded from the contemporary leaders. Monologues need replacement by dialogues. Conceptions, perceptions and choices on both sides call for subjective reviews and objective analyses.

The public opinion and inner unease among Muslims cannot be changed by the propaganda machine using circular reasoning and excuses to confuse the issues. Men and women all over know that the cycle of violence is caused by the neo-imperialism. The subjugation of the weak is resisted. The rhetorics of the actions being for the sake of freedom, democracy and human rights are considered insulting. Tyrants, dictators and

oligarchs are accepted and supported by the West as long as they are useful to the West. It is the devastating hatred of the West that is felt by the Muslim militants and witnessed by the masses.

The sound and mutually reinforcing paths to the restoration of a balance and ultimate salvation from the situation deserve exploration. The following propositions are afloat at the moment:

Provide open channels to the reconstruction of the *Ummah* that is its natural and inalienable right as a supranation representing a distinct civilization. Ensure legal, political and social outlets for Islamic movements, programmes and activities. Watch, prevent and treat aggressive tendencies and violence. Refrain from closure of peaceful, constitutional and lawful struggles on flimsy assumptions, misperceptions and prejudiced suspicions. Renounce the types of regulations that smell of being foreign-dictated and thereby enlarge the circle of disaffection.

Defy and deflate the sham liberalism and pseudo progressivism that are ahistoric and against the *Ummah's* sacrosanct norms. Elaborate the injustices inherent in unilateral greed-driven Globalization arresting sustained socio-economic development of the Third World. Publicise the impurities entailed by Westernization. Reveal the hidden agenda of the distortion of values, interests and attitudes. Invite attention to the brutalisation underlying the adventurism and the consequential cycle of violence. Highlight the slants, double-speak and partial reporting of the Occident-controlled media. Put up resistance, to counter and deter wrong-doings in all forms and manifestations. Battle evil with courage and perseverance. Show patience and persistence in situations of transitory setbacks. Subject the timid, wavering and egoistic rulers to counter pressures, enlightening communication and exit outlets.

Prepare the roadmap and follow the track as illuminated

by the Islamic legacy and as exemplified by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Go along with plans and support leaders that establish, strengthen and consolidate the bond between the existing deficient self and the ideal self. Let the intellectuals, information houses and media investigate and report what values and interests are supreme and need to be served by the authorities.

Update public opinion regarding the evils, irrationalities and wrongs that merit censoring and necessitate efforts for eradication. Make calls for the repentance of the adventurers over what has been and is being done. Be mindful of the cosmic order in which the nobility of intention, realism in strategic coping and truthfulness in projection of what is done or omitted are the key to an eventual breakthrough. Beware that it is the unfolding of the positive aspects of the mindset indicated by the 'ought', 'should', 'must' and 'can' that leads to ultimate balance and success. Keep historical perspectives in the forefront for understanding reality and organizing current experiences as well as research findings for adaptive and beneficial courses of action.

Core Issues

Both sides are cognizant of the problem of dissonance, the cost of the clash and consequences of a rigidity in stances. The West fully understands that assertive response of the *Ummah* to the threats of Globalization, Westernization and Adventurism, is occasioned by the necessity for survival and the strong desire for equitable sharing of gains and mainstreaming of the Third World in sustained economic development. Confrontation is an expensive, risky and lose-lose game. Neither side can endure the cycle of aggression indefinitely. The Muslims perceive that submission to imperial forces is incongruent with their own system and beliefs. They want peace, security and partnership. This is enjoined by

Islam. Forging of orderly and fair relations is also a necessity for the effective pursuit of the objectives of revitalization. Their thinking is agitated by the question of how to achieve peace, co-existence and pluralism without getting submerged, subjugated and deprived of fair distribution of international economic benefits. The concern is to secure the kind and the degree of space that is essential for the desired Islamic reconstruction.

The question is whether the West is willing to accede to the required space and grant the right to all civilizations 'to be' and 'to become' in a free and cordial milieu. Will the West refrain from making demands that are inconsistent with the teachings of Islam? Can the imperialists be persuaded to cease interfering in institutional, societal and cultural matters? Being pushed to the wall, cornered and sieged after the 9/11 tragedy, makes even the most moderate feel humiliated. The simple and straight mortals brace for a fight-back when trampled. Banners of *khudi* are raised. Notwithstanding the horrors of what is done to the *Ummah*, hopes of peace are kept alive. Appearance of sagacious leadership is prayed for within the *Ummah*, the West as well as the UN to address the thorny issues. Improvements in the ratings of rulers, handlers of international affairs and democratic representatives is wished and worked for.

Desired Approaches

The requirements of designing symbiotic relationships with the advanced countries are to initiate and patronize the search for truth, justice and fair play at the institutional level all over the globe and conduct discourse among the stakeholders. List the negatives of Globalization, Westernization and Adventurism from the perspectives, values and interests of the *Ummah* as well as the Third World countries. Bring out the viewpoints and intended positives of the phenomena engineered by the West. Define the yardsticks of judgment of wrong and right, just and inequitable in transactions, communications, motivations, and forces

underway. Collect, collate and order all facts of the matter on which arguments are based, claims presented and deeds justified. Organize discussions and conferences to understand the ideas and illuminate new choices, actions and relationships open to both sides. It is possible to:

Analyse the problems and issues and search the conscience in reordering of relations, and spell out what is being done to one another. Examine how far the Western intrusions are steered really by the moral compass, the balancing of interests and the charter of the UN. Assess and project whether the gamut of actions and responses foreshadow hope or gloom. Ascertain whether the engagement is in the direction of deleting the systemic gaps and dysfunctional elements or otherwise. Scrutinize whether the targeted interventions are repairing the worn-out, damaged and outdated elements of capitalism or adding to the deformation, debasement and depravity brought about by it. Reflect whether humanity is divided, dejected and repelled by the history-makers or unified, inspired and cheered up by the power-wielders.

Prepare for sincere, meaningful and issue-specific negotiations at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels preceded by dialogue with leaders, spearheading assorted movements, mirroring disagreements and master-minding, agitations, insurgencies, rebellions and ideological agendas. Consult wise, virtuous and credible intellectuals from all schools of thought to enlighten the myopic, partial and tunnel-viewers. Heed eternal values, perennial principles and universal norms in offering proposals for mending relations. Consider incorporation of mutual interests, common values and proportionality in cost/benefit distribution. Respect inputs offered by trouble-shooters, bridge-builders and moderators. Build up consensus before bringing changes. Avoid being entrapped by coercive, extremist and strait-jacket elements

suffering from the illusion of having unassailable power, monopoly of knowledge and transcendence of character. Balance absolute morality with natural psychology. Square imperatives with possible options. Equilibrate courage with responsibility to fellow-beings and the cosmos. In a weaponised world, let not passions rule on either side to give cause for a crusade or *Jihad* as a last resort.

Fortunately a lot of preliminary work has been done by the Third World nations with regard to the roadmap for establishing good international relations. Starting from the Bandung Conference resolution in 1955, the periodic declarations from the platforms of the NAM, the OIC and the UN have laid down just and reasonable bases for North-South and inter-civilization negotiations. Visions have been presented. Objectives have been set. Problems have been defined. Issues have been clarified. Causes of conflicts have been highlighted. Complaints and grievances have been voiced. Systemic injustices, failings of the capitalistic order have been viewed critically. Misunderstandings, misperceptions and illusions have been brought into the open. Positional stands on divisive themes have been stated. Appeals have been documented for peaceful pursuit of common interests, shared values and universal principles.

A great deal of sound inputs, thoughtful diplomacy and cosmopolitan broad-minded ideas have gone into the series of resolutions adopted at the regional and multilateral podiums. In searching for truth and arriving at mutually acceptable negotiated solutions, the statesmen of the world and rulers having goodwill can benefit from the deliberations and grounds already covered. Dialogues on the approach towards correction of the flawed Globalization, shelving of barbarian invasions and containment of the one-sided Westernisation can be conducted. The emasculated UN can be empowered to perform more earnestly the chartered functions and roles.

It is feasible to allay the fears of the hard-hitting, violent

and emotionally charged so-called Islamist militants. Being God-fearing responsible persons, they are amenable to measured resolution of conflicts. No sane believer would like to get locked in unwarranted, unnecessary and meaningless clashes. The unrest, hostility and animosity would give way as soon as willingness to do justice is discerned and offensive actions are stopped. It is the wrong-labeling, mis-projection and intimidation that escalate immoderation. The muted, wavering and confused segments of the Muslim world would hail any settlement made with the active resisters. It is advisable to proceed in all prospective negotiations from the five principles of the first Bandung Conference namely: respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence of States with different political, economic and social systems.

Presently the neo-imperialists are obsessed with the notion of reigning the under-developed, poor and technologically backward non-white nations. They feed the electorate on the regal grandeur, the supremacy, the might and the capability of the White House, for instance, to prevail in all encounters. This is at odds with the magnificent principles, values and ideals, on which America is founded. It polarizes the people of the United States. About half of the American citizens realize that the obsession to wear the crown is limiting the influence, exaltation and bloom of the nation. Those who themselves depart from the grand values in international relations, talk of extending freedom, democracy and human rights. A balanced, imaginative and positive consideration of the calls made on different international forums from time to time with regard to the multifarious issues befit the best interests of the superpower. Civilized standards if set by the US would help extinguish the fire of discontent everywhere in the world.

The *Ummah* in turn is better counseled to take charge of the affairs relating to the image, behaviour and destiny of the Muslims. While safeguarding the cultural heritage, reconstructing

the majestic way of life and interacting with the West, things are to be designed in an acceptable, appealing and attractive manner. No useful purpose is to be served by random decrying, discrediting and provoking of the West. Annoyance can be conveyed in non-offensive manners whenever harmed, hurt or damaged without cause. Animosity, hostility and hatred because of impulsive and transitory quarrels initiated by either side are not warranted. To forgive and forget occasional aberrations by extremists on both sides is a perfect antidote. Among hints from the biography of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), ideas from the graphic narrations of the Islamic historians and thoughts of saints, scholars and sages, most reliable recipes could be explored for the normalization of relations.

The *Ummah* knows that the West is not out to launch the crusade as such again. It is primarily driven by socio-economic interests and geopolitics, and a rise through these to power, prestige and glory. The aversion is to undue interferences in and uncalled for regulation of the market mechanism. On the part of the Muslims, the central concerns are proper understanding and reciprocal accommodation. The willingness to work out mutually beneficial partnership arrangements in the form of joint ventures, co-production, outsourcing of business and selective fixed foreign investment is evident. The formation, retention and stabilization of coalition and alliances for shared purposes in specific fields is readily appreciated. Basically, if the West likes to see democracy, freedom and human rights upheld everywhere, the people of the Muslim countries want this also.

Accepting the agenda for clear democracy would upgrade Muslim rulers in the eyes of America as well as of the faithful themselves. Engagement in gender equality, women empowerment and safeguards of minority rights would be welcome positive actions. Environment-friendly approach in the economic development programmes would be a win-win game. Discounting the questionable acquisition, possession, exercise and retention of power is a worthwhile activity for both sides. Since time

immemorial, mankind has lived and enjoyed the rewards of pluralistic society. The protection and equal treatment of minorities is a laudable undertaking; their harassment and discrimination against them are by all means retrogressive. The preaching of hatred and spread of violence are invariably to be deplored. Concentration on eradication of evil in all shapes and manifestations always receives the blessing of Allah and the gratitude of humanity.

The task ahead of intellectuals, leaders and rulers as well opposition parties is constructive dialectical engagement. An informed triad of dialectics focused on truthful image-formation, insightful problem-solving and judicious interfaces is needed. Presently the perceptions, feelings and ideas on both sides are wanting in many respects. The build-up of the *Ummah's* perceptions is derived from the history of colonization, the bitter memories of subjugation and the anticipation of neo-imperialistic designs. The coercive postures of the West, subjective interpretations of statements, deeds and doctrines and media's slanted reporting of events strengthen these perceptions. Insensitivities breed adverse emotions and anger. Goodwill is deficient. Mistrust and credibility gaps can be very well seen. The general and the abstract both are better examined from the viewpoints of truth and an honest appreciation of respective interests. Partial conceptions and mistaken perceptions act the negative forces in reasoning and distort understanding.

Problem-solving is frustrated in situations where the parties are oblivious of stakes and unmindful of issues and where partial perspectives are pushed through. Things retrogress when cost/benefit calculations are overshadowed by phobias, alarm bells and callous disregard of the pains, sufferings and inhumanities perpetrated on the ground. Break-throughs are made through the application of knowledge, firming up of resolve and exhibition of empathy. The de-escalation of the cycle of violence, invasion and brutalisation is possible if matters are seen in historical perspectives, contemporary dynamics and creative adaptations to emerging realities. Tensions are defused by consulting and heeding the

judgment of the wise and the virtuous. A balancing of moral absolutism with the mindset of each other provides the way out of the impasse. Leaving strategic decisions to the whims of power-wielders, showing bravado and trampling the values and interests of the weak leads to a complication of problems and perplexities of the people, deepening the angsts of the leaders and worsening the agonies of mankind. Restraint on the part of the mighty rulers, and inclusion of those deprived, squeezed and discriminated against in the mainstream of development can make a real difference in countering the setbacks to civilization on both sides.

The signals from the superpowers indicate receptivity to fresh propositions emanating from diverse bilateral, regional and multilateral forces. Willingness to consider the viewpoints and the concerns of the opponents catches attention of the alienated. The path for meaningful discourse, result-oriented negotiations and realistic bargaining is opened up. Mutual criticism begins to lead towards soul-searching and productive reflection. Flawed conceptions and prejudiced perceptions are reviewed. The struggle for rights and fair deals assumes a prudent shape. As against aggressiveness, peaceful features are added to interactions. Anger, hatred and disposition to inflict pain on the adversary begin to subside. A mood of reconciliation surfaces. Subjectivity is itself subjected to objective reality based on a detached analysis.

Mankind is bonded in reason, morality and spirituality. Rationality, justice and submission to the cosmic order give meaning, worth and dignity to civilizations, States and societies as well as individual persons. The grant of rights guided by compassion unifies people across space, time and circumstances. The latent capabilities blossom up in a secure atmosphere. Pluralism, inclusiveness and respect for universal principles come into play. Monolithicism, exclusion, and discrimination cause divisions, frictions and animosities all over. Success and happiness can be attained through the straightening of relations at every level. It is advisable to find, know and reclaim our true self.

Liberation from raw desires, and enslaving, momentary and hollow motivations is called for by the vision, the voice and the conscience of the humanity which are ingrained essentially in both the West and the *Ummah*. Let the UN in its forthcoming session to be attended by Heads of States and Governments from all over the globe table the major resolutions passed by the NAM, the OIC and the Bandung I and II as agenda items, and launch the dialectical process of addressing perceptions, conceptions, problems-solving and strengthening of international relations from thereon.

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EXTREMISM AND THE USE OF RELIGION IN POWER POLITICS

MYTH AND REALITY

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Extremism is the raging topic of our age. Unfortunately, in the post-9/11 era, this syndrome of extremism – coupled with fundamentalism of a religious kind and blended with terrorism as an expression of political sentiment – has been entirely and, perhaps, purposely attributed to Muslims and the Islamic *Ummah*.

When I talk about 9/11, let me remind you that up until the tragedy of the Twin Towers of New York's World Trade Centre struck us, global history used to be measured and referred to in terms of 'before-Christ' and 'after-Christ'. However, such has been the impact of this epic occurrence that history, in the wake of 9/11, is now most likely to be recorded in terms of 'pre-9/11' and 'post-9/11'. That, in a sense, underlines the seismic importance of the event that has, no doubt, jolted our contemporary world and unleashed a dynamic, neither seen nor perceived before.

As all of you know so well, the power-that-be lost not a moment to lay responsibility for this cataclysmic event squarely

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and arbitrarily at the door of the Muslims and the Islamic *Ummah*, collectively denoting the world's 1.2 billion Muslims in all six Continents. There has been no let up in an incessant thrust – a deluge of policy statements and well-oiled propaganda – provoked by the tragedy of 9/11 to hold world Muslims collectively 'guilty' of the 'crime'. Thus, necessarily, the burden of proving the allegation wrong – wrong in its fundamental premise, and wrong in its relentless tirade – has fallen on the Muslims of the world. We have been found culpable by association and it is now our call to prove our innocence to those pointing the finger at us with impunity, if not with vicarious pleasure and sadism.

Why is it, you might ask the question, that Muslims have, *en masse*, been condemned and put in the dock? The answer, in this case, is that the aggrieved party, ostensibly hurt and bruised, has chosen to be the prosecutor, the judge, the jury and the hangman, all rolled into one, and has condemned the Islamic *Ummah* of extremism and, of its twin sibling, terrorism. So when one hears of extremism and terrorism, one should be absolutely clear in one's mind that what the interlocutor is referring to is extremism and terrorism going hand in hand together.

Extremism has a context like any other problem or question. It also has a history. Therefore, what I intend to do in my discourse is to bring up both the pristine context of the problem, in its clearest perspective, and its historical ramifications so that you may be able to appreciate what the problem really is. This should also help you to understand why the prosecutor of the Muslim *Ummah* is so keen that it accept its indictment without demur or critique of any kind and concur in the punishment being meted out for its perceived 'crime'.

Extremism, as social scientists would tell you, is a product of inequality, of injustice and of a variety of discriminations. When all these things get together they create frustration. They create an unconventional mode of thinking. They perpetrate an extraordinary mindset, different from the usual and conventional.

The United Nations, or rather its founding fathers who

conceived it at the end of World War, realized that frustration was at the core of the global nightmare that had just visited the world in the form of untold barbarity, murder and mayhem that characterized the six years of World War II. Therefore, the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations states, cogently, clearly and categorically, that since wars take place in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be erected.

That was the road map originally charted for the UN. That was the road map chalked out, by the wise men who drafted the UN Charter, for humanity and the global community they found bleeding and lying prostrate in their experience of a global holocaust. Their pious hope, in mapping out a bold new initiative in collective security for mankind and ineluctable responsibility of the world to shun the demons of war forever, was that this road map, if followed judiciously and effectively, would help alleviate the suffering of mankind because of strife and war. Indeed most problems unleashed in the world since the founding of the UN would have been settled peacefully and amicably had the intent of its founding fathers been honoured and implemented according to its spirit. But that did not happen, largely because those, who were supposed to be in charge and responsible for ensuring that the expectations engraved in the Charter were fulfilled, did not deliver on those expectations. They failed to do their duty. They could not prove to be up to the task. They betrayed the trust and confidence reposed in their ability to enforce peace by the international community.

I started by saying that extremism is an expression and embodiment of frustration. When frustration comes to an extreme juncture – in other words, reaches its critical mass – then it manifests itself with devastating effect and explodes in the form of terrorism. In both expressions, it is a raw emotion of mankind that asserts itself violently. And since it is ingrained in human psychology, it cannot be dissociated from the rationale of 'cause and effect'. As such, for extremism to culture and mutate into

terrorism, there has to be a context and a perspective. It does not breed in isolation or thrive in a vacuum.

One hears this argument regularly voiced these days from political scientists and theoreticians that terrorists are, invariably, out to make a political statement. Politicians and leaders responsible for guiding their countries according to policies formulated by them have been putting it differently since 9/11. They claim that fundamentalists and extremists – although it is patently unjustified to bracket fundamentalism with extremism as the two have different meanings and connotations – are not only making political statements but have hijacked religion for political ends. They fear, not without justification, that the exploitation of religious sentiment for political brinkmanship is a lethal weapon in the hands of those determined to make a political statement by violent expression.

It is not my intent to deny that extremists in the Muslim world have hijacked Islam – their religion – for political purposes, or are seeking religious justification for their violent deeds. But what I would like to draw your attention to is that history tells us that the use of religion for political ends, and as a means to justify violence and war, is not a Muslim property or invention. This ‘necessity’ was invented, a thousand years ago, by the Church of Rome in its capacity as the cradle of Christian interests.

Those with a sense of history, recorded in its full dimensions for us to read, ponder, and comprehend, would know how and in what circumstances the Christian church first hijacked religion to make a violent and bloody political expression, as early as the 11th century.

It started with the rout of the Byzantium imperial power, ensconced in Constantinople – the then most formidable fortress of Christendom – at the Battle of Manzikert, in Anatolia, at the hands of the *Seljuk* Turks in 1075. By the time the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus ascended the throne in 1081 the empire of Constantine, the founder of Byzantium Empire, had largely shrunk to the areas immediately adjacent to Constantinople.

The hardy Turks, who had risen from the inhospitable steppes of Central Asia, were literally knocking at the gates of Constantinople. He raised the alarm of the citadel of Christianity being in grave peril under a determined Turkish onslaught.

Alexius found a willing cohort and crusader in Pope Urban II who had been elected pope in 1088. A native of France and the son of a noble family of Chatillon-sur-Marne, in the Champagne region of France, Urban carried in his genes a passion for extreme religious purity and piety. He was also an ambitious man who saw in the alarm of Alexius an opportunity to rally those distancing from the Church under the banner of Vatican. Urban not only responded to Alexius' cry for support with fervour, he also added his own propaganda twist, not too different from the media spin and doctoring we are witnessing in the slick PR machinations of the West in our times.

I must, here, quote from the sermon Urban delivered to a select gathering of Christian clergy and nobility at Clermont, in his native France, in November of 1095. I want you to carefully note Urban's provocative words, for they have had a nauseating echo in our own times in both the Western and Islamic worlds.

In order to rouse the passion of his audience, Urban said the land of the birth of Christ had fallen in the hands of 'savages' and 'barbarians'. He spoke as if Muslims had only recently conquered the Holy Land, thus conveniently glossing over more than four centuries of Muslim rule over Jerusalem and Palestine during which Christians of all denominations had enjoyed complete peace and protection of the ruling Muslim dynasties and practised their faith without let or hindrance. In fact, they enjoyed such favours from the ruling Muslim houses of Jerusalem that were unthinkable for religious minorities in Christian lands. The harassment of Jews in Europe, for instance, stood out in sharp contrast to the benevolence of Muslim rulers of the Holy Land.

But Urban had to conjure up the spectre of an uncivilized

horde having desecrated the holy precincts of Jerusalem. He said, and you should take note of his words, "A race absolutely alien to God has invaded the land of the Christians, has reduced the people with sword, rapine and flame. These men have destroyed the altars polluted by their foul practices."

Let me now fast forward you to the last decade of the 20th century, exactly 900 years since the day Urban described the Muslims of Palestine, who had been there for nearly 5 centuries as a people 'alien to God'. Do you remember what Osama bin Laden had demanded of the Americans sitting pretty on the sacred land of Saudi Arabia with thousands of their soldiers, following the Gulf War of 1990-91? He did not – contrary to what George W. Bush provocatively and falsely claimed to sell his open-ended global war on terrorism to his people, hate the American liberties or the American way of life of high consumption and hedonism. He simply wanted them to get out of the land he thought they had no right to set their feet on.

But echoing the sentiment of Urban II, Osama too demanded that the American forces, ostensibly in Saudi Arabia at the 'invitation' of its rulers, pull out of the Holy Land because Allah had consecrated that land for Muslims only and non-Muslims had no mandate to be there. Do you not see a clear parallel in the demands of Pope Urban and Osama bin Laden, both claiming a justification, in the name of God, to throw out a people, not to their liking, from a land they thought had been consecrated for them by God?

The terminology of 'Holy War' or 'Crusade' was an invention of Pope Urban, and not of the Muslims who became unwitting victims of his 'holy war' imposed on them on the flimsiest and most spurious of grounds. There is no concept of a holy war in Islam. The Qur'an does not sanction or consecrate a war as being 'holy'. The only war the Qur'an enjoins upon its followers (the Qur'anic terminology used for this purpose is *Qital*, as distinct from *Jihad*) is in self-defence in response to an aggression against the lives and property, including land, of the

Muslims. A 'holy war' is, in reality, a contradiction in terms. War, invariably, is ugly and laced with gore and blood. It cannot be holy because God never sent down to this world any commandment, under any religion, through any messenger of His, consecrating the spilling of blood only to satisfy one's fancy.

But Urban sanctified the shedding of Muslim blood when he proclaimed, before his spell-bound audience, that those battling as 'soldiers of Christ' would be purified by the fire of battle and would go to paradise for their act of 'service' to God.

Osama bin Laden and his frenzied followers also mistakenly believe that those responding to his call for *Jihad* and getting killed in its cause automatically earn a passport to paradise.

George W. Bush also believes that God has commanded him to chase the terrorists to the farthest end of the world. His gut reaction, in the flash of 9/11, was to pronounce his open-ended and global war on terrorism as 'a crusade'. Though later, on the advice of his neo-conservative ideologues and advisers he retracted the reference to 'crusade' but the world, by then, had come to read his mind with perfect clarity. Like Pope Urban II, and not much differently from Osama, Bush too thinks he is on a divine mission in taking his battle, with impunity, to wherever his mind and advisers tell him to. No wonder he has consistently shown so much disdain and such scant regard for the UN and the collective will of the world epitomized by it. Because of his untrammelled religious zeal, Bush has flouted international law and conventions with contempt and invaded and occupied Afghanistan – for which he managed to get a mandate of sorts from the UN – and Iraq – for which he failed to browbeat the UN into submission to his *diktat* and decided, therefore, to go solo.

The use of religion for political ends and for invasion and occupation of lands abroad did not end with the Crusades. It became an accepted religious norm with European Christianity. The cross went, in lock-step, with the sword wherever lust for land and greed for wealth goaded the European adventurers and

fortune seekers to go. An arch imperialist like Rudyard Kipling glorified it as 'the white man's burden'. He lent a cloak of religious sanction to bounty hunters and privateers to go and enslave the 'heathens' and the 'infidels' in order to bring them the 'enlightenment' he thought only the Christian West possessed under the will of God.

South and Central America was denuded of its ruling Indian dynasties by the blood thirsty *Conquistadors* because they had the cross planted firmly by their side in what was, in modern jargon, genocide in the strict sense of the term. But the cross blessed and consecrated their wanton blood letting with great abandon. The Church itself amassed a lot of gold and wealth in the process.

The so-called *Pilgrims*, the early European settlers, to North America did not behave differently, *vis-à-vis* the Red Indians. Although they were said to be refugees fleeing Europe to escape religious persecution and oppression, the Pilgrims put millions of the Indians to the sword because the Church sanctioned the spilling of their blood. The sermon from the pulpit to the settlers of North America was that it was God's commandment that the 'heathens' be cleansed from the land in order to open it up for the followers of Christ. Could it be described any differently from ethnic cleansing?

And what is the story in Israel, the State gifted to the Jews of Europe in order to compensate them for the atrocities committed against them over the centuries in Europe?

The Jews had been victimized and treated as pariahs by the Christian Church and State for centuries, and most recently by the Nazis in Germany. The bloody phase of Inquisitions is a dark spot on European and Western history when, after the extinction of the last Muslim dynasty from Andalusia, in Spain, Muslims and Jews were burned at the stake with great religious festivity.

But after World War II, a State was carved out for the Jews of Europe, persecuted and tortured by Hitler, in the heart

of the Arab world, in Palestine, to salve and accommodate the persecuted. It was history's most unusual act of charity where an aggrieved party was compensated by taking away a land from those who have had no role at all in its persecution. Every known law of justice and fair play was flouted with relish by the 'generous' West to drive the Palestinians from the lands they had lived on for millennia to make room for the new 'pilgrims'.

Apart from the obvious travesty of history and known canons of justice in this greatest bungling of the 20th century, the question is how has Israel been behaving as a sovereign State? The so-called victims of the Holocaust have made life hell for the natives of the land of Palestine and have oppressed and terrorized them with impunity because their Western patrons have given them a blank cheque for this purpose. The Palestinians are being treated with contempt, just as the Indians in South America and the Red Indians in North America were in the earlier centuries.

The unremitting use of force and raw military power for political ends is a legacy of the Crusades and a bequest of the European colonialism that wreaked so much havoc and suffering on those caught at the receiving end of aggrandizement and expansionism for land, resources and markets. That this legacy survives in modern times – not only in neo-imperialism but also in global corporate adventurism and exploitation – is the cause of so much frustration, restiveness and despondency in the countries not blessed with military muscles. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the Muslim world, though counting 57 sovereign States in its ranks, happens to be in a phase of history where it is without the kind of military muscle that would make it a match to the sophisticated armies of the Christian West.

So the use of force, or the threat to use of force, continues to hold sway in our age. State terrorism, implicit in the threat or actual use of force, has been a potent weapon in the hands of the powerful to dictate their policies and have their way with the weak.

In our living memory, the only time Muslims used their political muscle to make a bold political statement, with a hint of dictation, was in 1973 when the OPEC imposed its oil embargo – the very first in the history of oil exporting States – against Europe and the U.S.

Even that was more of a reaction to the openly partisan policy of Washington in favour of Israel, and in hostility to the Arabs, during the Arab-Israeli war. The Nixon administration left nobody in the world in any doubt about its pro-Israeli stance, when it established an 'air bridge' to lift thousands of tons of military hardware to Israel to beef its military muscle against the Arabs that finally tipped the scales in favour of Israel. King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, incensed at that brazen Western hostility to the Arab and Islamic interests, spearheaded the oil embargo. Henry Kissinger, that arch exponent of power diplomacy and a high priest of use of force by the powerful to impose its will on the weak, was then Secretary of State and went on record to openly advocate the use of force if the embargo – a blackmail in his terminology – was not lifted. He espoused the physical occupation of the oil fields of Arabia if, what he described, as the jugular of Western economies, was threatened by the prolongation of the oil embargo.

Many, by now, may have forgotten the blow to the Western ego that, prior to the embargo, had come to believe, smugly, that cheap oil from the Arab world and the ME would always be guaranteed to them in order to sustain their life style of high consumption. Many may also not remember Kissinger's threat to unleash the U.S. military might to end the embargo. However, classified documents of that period, recently made public, vouch to it that the U.S. and Britain – the upcoming imperial power and the past imperial power, respectively – had, actually, drawn up the blueprints of a joint military expedition to land their forces in Saudi Arabia and occupy its oil fields.

The then threatened, but orchestrated, physical occupation of Saudi Arabia became a virtual reality after the Gulf War that,

in turn, led to the rise of Osama bin Laden's brand of militancy and extremism in the Arab and Muslim camp. What followed that cataclysmic development is history so well known to all of us as to need no further elaboration or comment.

My intent in dwelling over all this historical perspective was merely to argue that the use of religion, or military power, or the threat or actual use of force is neither an invention of Islam or the Muslims nor do Muslims of the *Ummah* have patented a right over these tools of State terrorism and imperialist expansionism. In historical fact, Muslims, more than any other religious community in history, have been subjected to ruthless terror and made to suffer at the hands of those hostile to their interests, *ad nauseam*.

In modern times, the news media, has donned the mantle that belonged in the bygone age to the Church. It is now assisting the State apparatus with utmost devotion to lend moral justification to unbridled use of force to ram down an imperialist agenda down the throats of the targeted peoples and countries. The role being played by the U.S. news media since 9/11 is a case in point. The American media wizards and spin doctors are, in the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, four squares behind the establishment and abetting its charge with a fervour reminiscent of the role of the Church in the heyday of Western colonialism. But the Church too is still robustly behind the State power, at least in the U.S. in the guise of Christian evangelism that boasts tens of millions of followers in that land. Which other country in the world proudly boasts of its 'Bible Belt'?

Most appalling victims of spin jointly crafted by the neo-conservatives, evangelical priests and opinionated media *gurus* in the U.S. and a Europe of American liking (not "old Europe") are freedom movements of the oppressed in places like Kashmir, Chechnya, Iraq and, most tellingly, in the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza. It has become a tool of convenience in the hands of the neo-cons and their cohorts and acolytes in the West and, of course, Israel to tar all freedom struggles of an oppressed people hankering for emancipation with the blighting epithet of

'terrorism'. So the Kashmiris have become terrorists, as much as the Palestinians and the Chechens, *et al.*

One can well understand and appreciate the plight of the freedom seekers in a world where the purveyors of vested interest are ganging up against them and closing all avenues for legitimate expression and redress of their grievances, ambitions and demands. What alternatives do they have in a world closing in on them from all sides and where the rich and powerful are erecting all sorts of barriers and walls, in real and physical terms, to keep them out in the wilderness of frustration?

I am not advocating anybody's right to take recourse to violence. Violence is not a viable or legitimate option, certainly not for the Muslims whose religion and Holy Book categorically shun violence in any form. But the question confronting the collective conscience of mankind, in a highly polarized world where the fundamental rights and freedoms of the oppressed are being violently denied in the name of security for the rich and the powerful, is how to square this circle? What tools are available to the disenfranchised to wrest their God-given freedoms and rights?

So I want to sow this seed in your minds to ponder and cogitate, and try to come up with an answer: yes or no.

I say that war is terrorism by powerful States backed up by huge resources of weapons, wealth and dreams of global domination. And terrorism, in its modern sense and connotation, is war by the weak, the oppressed and the poor.

If the powerful, with a global reach in economic and military terms, deem it legitimate to force their will on the weak by declaring and enforcing war on them, then why should the weak be prevented from making their own political statement by whatever means they can lay their hands on?

And what about the terrorism of the seculars – those who may have, theoretically, discarded or sidelined religion but have adopted secularism as their creed, dogma and faith? Has not secularism become as sacrosanct for them as religion?

Just think of what is happening in France in the name of safeguarding its secularism. The French government, ever so jealous of its secular and liberal roots, has issued an edict by which Muslim girls will be forbidden, by force of law, to wear *Hijab* in school. The point to ponder is why is it that the French secularism is so weak and vulnerable as to feel threatened by a meter long *Hijab*, or scarf, on the head of a Muslim school-girl?

Or is it that the scarf is being used as a cover of convenience to target the growing legions of Muslims in France? Some – intellectuals and men of letters, among them – in France have long been raising the alarm that French secularism is coming under threat by the rising tide of Muslim immigrants. They have long been sniping at Muslims and keeping them in their cross-hairs. But then, does it not point to the supposedly rock solid foundations of French pride, of *egalite*, being in fact shaky and uncertain of itself?

But all this historical and current perspective to the debate on fundamentalism and terrorism should not be geared to justifying the use of force as a legitimate tool of making our point. Terrorism is un-Islamic and cannot be justified, even if the other party confronting the Muslim *Ummah* subscribes to the use of force as a legitimate weapon. A partisan of Islam cannot be a terrorist, and a terrorist is not a partisan of Muslims.

The likes of Osama bin Laden cannot be our role models. The role models for us are the likes of Ghazali, Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Khaldoon, Jinnah and Iqbal. We have to clean our act and get our priorities right. Fundamentalist of a closed mind has never been our identity through ages; terrorism is not, never has been, the face of Islam.

It also goes without saying that in the face of the harsh reality, where anti-Muslim forces are marshalling all their resources to deal us a mortal blow, we have a huge challenge on our hands. But the intrinsic strength of pristine Islam is such that, if judiciously deployed, it can still provide us with all the answers we need to stand up to this massive challenge.

In order to get on top of an undoubtedly bad situation getting progressively worse, we will have to do a lot of soul searching and take a real hard look at where we stand at this most sensitive stage in the life of the *Ummah* since the Crusades were imposed on us, nine centuries ago.

Our task should start with a massive house cleaning. In the centuries of our precipitous fall and decline as an *Ummah*, we have collected a lot of baggage of ignorance and prejudice about our religion that we must discard, with alacrity, in order to wipe the slate clean. A process of unlearning should precede fresh learning. It may be like washing the Augean Stables but washed they must be. Mahathir Mohamad's stirring messages to the *Ummah* should show us the way out of the dark cave we presently find ourselves in. As he has said, and his words of wisdom still echo in this hall, there is light at the end of the tunnel if only we seek it with determination and devotion.

Let us admit that we have done a grave injustice to ourselves and to our religion over the past so many centuries of our free fall. A religion that came to honour and dignify the fundamental freedoms of mankind has been held hostage to our greed for the glory and self-aggrandizement of kings and monarchs. Islam is the most democratic of all religions that accords centrality to the dignity of man and, on this fundamental premise, defines the perimeters of social and economic interaction between man and society.

I pose this question to you: how many Muslim States, out of a total of 57 or 58, can honestly be upheld as models of democracy, human rights and dignity of mankind? Hardly any.

Another question: how many Muslim States can be credited with safeguarding the fundamental freedoms and liberties of their people? The number could easily be counted on the digits of your fingers.

The most glaring omission in most Muslim societies is the absence of fundamental human rights and of democracy and civil liberties. This will have to be changed. Our societies will have to open up. They must dignify the spirit of human pride that

God has so repeatedly exhorted in His Book of Guidance – the Qur'an. Education is the only panacea to cure our ills and empower our men, women and children. Empowerment of the individual is the corner stone of a free and dignified society. It is also the bedrock for the evolution of a just and democratic polity.

The freedom of speech and expression is a *sine qua non* for a progressive and open society. You measure your *Ummah*, collectively, by this yardstick and you quickly learn the dismal state of affairs on this score in practically all the sovereign Muslim States. Implicit in the freedom of speech is a people's right to question their rulers and leaders, and hold them accountable for their deeds. Only a society that knows how to hold its rulers accountable can survive the test of history.

Adversity on so many fronts and open hostility from the other camp, all primed to jump on us and snuff us out as a people, has, unwittingly, brought us at a crossroads where we can still chart a clear map for our emancipation and salvation. We must not squander this God-given chance. We can still make the best of a bad situation. That is our biggest challenge – and our biggest opportunity.



TERRORISM AND THE MUSLIM *UMMAH*

AFZAAL MAHMOOD*

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. From ancient times, terror has been used for political, territorial and economic ends. For instance, in the first century A.D. a Jewish sect, known as Zealots Sicarii, started an assassination campaign against the Roman forces that occupied the land that is present-day Israel.

The word "terrorism" was first used during the French Revolution, but the term was popularized by Edmund Burke, who used it in his famous work "Reflections on the Revolution in France." The term has come to mean use of force or threat to demoralize, intimidate, and subjugate, especially such use as a political weapon or policy.

Even in the last century, many liberation movements resorted to terrorist tactics to achieve their objectives. A number of modern States, particularly many post-colonial States, owe their independence to terrorist tactics. Many national heroes had been proclaimed terrorists when they were struggling to achieve their objectives, Ireland's De Valera, Israel's Begin, Palestinian Yasser Arafat and South Africa's Nelson Mandela, to name a few

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amongst them. It bears recalling that there was a time when even Osama bin Laden was a welcome guest in Washington.

There has, however, been one disturbing development in recent times. Formerly, terrorists targeted mainly government and military personnel, and civilian deaths were generally accidental. But the terrorist of today, particularly the suicide bomber, makes no distinction between civilian and non-civilian targets.

Two historic events of 1979 are regarded as precursors to the wave of terrorism that later on swept through some parts of the Islamic world. I am referring to the Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The overthrow of the Shah of Iran, the most trusted ally of America in the region, and the defeat of the Soviets in Afghanistan, followed by the disintegration of the Soviet empire, showed to the Islamists that the two super-powers were not after all invincible and could be defied. In Iran, they held American hostages for 444 days and in Afghanistan, Islamic *Mujahideen* defeated the world's largest army.

When we talk of the causes of terrorism in the Muslim *Ummah*, the problem is usually explained in terms of extraneous and overt causes like poverty, illiteracy, deprivation, social injustices, foreign occupation and so forth. These are no doubt important factors. But it is an over-simplification to argue that these factors alone contribute to the growth of extremism, fanaticism and terrorism. Nor do they fully explain the rage and resentment that drive suicide bombers to blow themselves up in order to wreak vengeance on their perceived or real enemies.

None of the September 11 hijackers lived in poverty or suffered from illiteracy or deprivation. None of them was a Palestinian victim of Israeli repression. Sixteen of the 19 hijackers were, in fact, the nationals of the richest Islamic country in terms of revenues and income. It is obvious that extraneous factors alone do not explain the causes of their rage and resentment against the United States.

However, extraneous factors cannot be ignored as they do play an important role in nourishing extremism and terrorism. With the advance in technology the world has become a global village which the electronic media have woven into a single unit. Pictures of the disproportionate affluence of the West, led by the United States, are beamed into the villages and urban slums in every part of the world 24 hours a day. Mr. Osama bin Laden may have been wealthy himself but the resentment and rage on which *al-Qaeda* feeds do often spring from the miserable conditions of the dispossessed.

No one can deny that many parts of the Islamic world have lost their way. In most Islamic countries, a deep divide has developed between those who govern and those who are being governed. The political and economic systems are dominated by selfish and corrupt elites who are exploiting these systems to enrich themselves while driving the common people towards poverty and deprivation.

But this state of affairs cannot continue for long. Television and satellite, fax and internet are bringing about a new openness that is beginning to undermine the closed society and closed minds that have sustained autocracy and social and economic injustices. The teeming millions are now beginning to get impatient. They are grappling every hour with the consequences of political corruption, incompetent governance, overpopulation, gross distortion in the distribution of wealth and resources, and they hardly share any of the material benefits of modernization. It is, therefore, not surprising if the terrorist camp is overflowing with recruits. As French President Chirac has aptly put it: "Terrorism is a feverish expression of suffering, frustration and injustice."

We have so far discussed the extraneous causes of terrorism. But it is obvious that these causes alone do not explain the growth of extremism and terrorism in the Muslim *Ummah*. We shall now discuss intrinsic factors which are as important as the extraneous ones and which are generally overlooked in any discussion of terrorism.

For almost a thousand years, from the first Moorish landing in Spain in 710 A.D. to the second Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, Islamic supremacy and domination extended across Asia, Africa and Europe. But with the fall of Grenada, the last outpost of Muslim power in the Iberian Peninsula began, in 1492, the great European counter-offensive against Muslim domination. Incidentally, 1492 was also the year when Columbus discovered America. By 1920 the triumph of Europe over the Islamic world was complete and final as vast Muslim territories and countless millions of Muslim peoples were brought under the control of the Western empires.

The chief cause of Muslim decline was that the *Ummah* turned away from the path of reform and regeneration and began to resist change and stifle intellectual inquisitiveness and creativity. Just one instance will bring home the point I am trying to make. In 1492, after the fall of Grenada, the Spanish Jews, because of Christian persecution, migrated to Islamic Turkey with their printing presses. They were granted permission by the Sultan to print books in the capital and other cities on one condition: they would not print any books in the script used by the Turks or their Muslim subjects, because the Islamic clerics were afraid of the dissemination of new ideas. Consequently, until the 18th century books were printed in the Ottoman lands in Hebrew and many other languages of the world except the ones used by Muslims. Thus for over 200 years the *Ummah* remained out of touch with what was happening in the scientific, technological and intellectual world.

The thinking of the Islamic extremist is that the West and the Jews, led by the Americans, are mainly responsible for the problems and miseries of the Islamic world – the degradation, the poverty, the injustices are the result of exploitation of the *Ummah* by the West under the leadership of the United States. The World Trade Centre was targeted because it was the symbol of the strength and triumph of the American Way.

Two important factors have played a crucial role in distorting Muslim consciousness and its world view in modern times. No

doubt it is hurtful for Muslims to feel weak and poor after centuries of being rich and strong and to lose global leadership and be reduced to the status of the camp followers of the West. But instead of removing the causes that have led to our decline, we have developed a culture of victimhood. Instead of inquiring "Where did we go wrong?" we have been asking the wrong question: "Who did this to us?" First we blamed the crusades, then the Mongol invasion, then the Western imperialism of the last two centuries, and now we are blaming the Americans for keeping us down. We have got to realize that the success of our adversaries has not been the cause but the effect of our decline and decadence. It is not the outsiders but we ourselves who are responsible for what we are today.

It bodes ill for our future that this blame game continues and shows little sign of abating. The reason is that this game serves a useful and indeed essential purpose for the oppressive, corrupt and ineffectual governments that rule much of the Islamic world. It serves to explain the poverty that the rulers have failed to alleviate and to justify the tyranny that they have inflicted on their people. The rulers are quite happy if the mounting anger of their unhappy subjects is deflected to external targets.

There is yet another important factor that explains the current turmoil in the Islamic world. The larger crisis of Muslim *Ummah* is neither political nor economic. Rather, it is the crisis of a civilization that has become aware of its inadequacies but is too confused or fearful to walk the path of reason and initiate reforms and changes that are imperative to moving forward. This factor largely explains the social, political, economic, cultural and institutional stagnation and crisis that we encounter today throughout the Islamic world. As Dr. Mahathir said, Islam is not an obstacle to freedom, to science, to economic development. When Europe was living in dark ages, the Islamic world was a global leader in science, technology, statecraft, culture and the arts. It was in the Islamic world that the old sciences were recovered and developed and new sciences created, it was

there that new industries were born and manufactures and commerce expanded to a level unknown before. Also, it was in the Islamic world that governments and societies achieved a degree of freedom of thought and expression that led persecuted Jews and even dissident Christians to flee for refuge from Christendom to Islam. And where do we find ourselves today? Instead of asking the question "Who has done this to us?" we should ask the question: "What have we done to Islam?"

To sum up, it is a combination of extraneous factors like poverty, illiteracy, deprivation, *et cetera*, and intrinsic factors like the culture of victimhood, civilizational crisis and distorted world view that have made a dangerous mix for the growth of extremism, militancy and terrorism in the Muslim *Ummah*. The outside world can help eradicate extraneous causes by generous economic assistance and technology transfer. But the intrinsic factors can only be dealt with by the *Ummah* itself.

The need of the hour is that religious scholars, intellectuals, and thinking people in the Islamic world get together to dispassionately examine the factors responsible for the *Ummah's* decline and suggest measures to rid Muslims of the culture of victimhood and civilizational crisis engulfing them.

I shall conclude my presentation by two short quotations from Iqbal's "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam". He says: "During the last five hundred years, religious thought in Islam has been practically stationary ... The task before the modern Muslim is, therefore, immense. He has to re-think the whole system of Islam without completely breaking with the past." Referring to the current state of affairs, he says: "It is one of the most essential teachings of the Qur'an that nations are collectively judged, and suffer for their misdeeds here and now."



IS DEMOCRACY NECESSARY FOR MUSLIM POLITY?

S.M. ZAFAR*

Islam is both a religion and a political ideology – that is how, we have named our country an Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Similarly, there are about 57 Muslim States in a world of 192 nation States, which have sovereignty over vast territories extending from Morocco to Indonesia, and which are rich in national resources and whose peoples have great potential for innovation and development. The total number of Muslims in the world is exceeding 1.5 billion. Muslims are inhabiting all the five continents and are to be found in almost all the countries of the world. Islam today is the fastest growing religion braving a materialistic world.

But what is its political power? In the contemporary world, we measure the political strength by indicators such as: is any one of the Muslim States a permanent member of the Security Council, or can all the Muslims States combined together or through the OIC acquire, even by rotation, the representation

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of a Muslim State in the future possible extension of the Security Council; or is there any Muslim State which has indigenous defence industry where weapons are or can be manufactured and sophisticated technology invented to provide adequate protection against hostile intervention. How many Muslim States are nuclear-capable? How does the GDP of individual or total Muslim countries compare to the other developed States?

What share do we have in the outer space where traffic of satellites of different countries is proliferating. Can the Muslim community draw the attention of the world to their legitimate grievances in the same manner and with the same speed as was compassionately considered and decided in the case of East Timor? Can those thousands of Iraqis who lost their families, properties and even honour claim any compensation as was given to the heirs of the victim of Lockerbie for the wrong done to their dear ones by Libya. The answers to all these questions and to similar questions are in the negative.

Does it mean that the political power of Islam has failed? Many westerners and orientalisks do want us to believe that Islam has no political potential and can only exist as a religion of beliefs and rituals. This situation calls for a dispassionate analysis and a reconstruction of our priorities. My thesis is that the Muslims, over a long period and in the rush of history, while consolidating the growth of their civilization and acquisitions of territories, ignored and thereby committed the 'political sin' of not complying with the Qur'anic mandate requiring the Muslims to decide their affairs by mutual consultation. If we had followed this political prescription in its letter and spirit the Muslim civilization would have evolved into a full-blown and vibrant democracy.

Democracy as we all know is related to the affairs of the governance. It is simply but aptly defined as a government of the people, by the people and for the people, i.e., *shura ama'r bynahum*. Even democracy has its history of long evolution starting from city-States of Greece to the republic of Italy, to parliamentary

supremacy of the U.K. to equality of the French Revolution and to the constitutional supremacy of the United States of America. Evolution is unabated and new rules for effective public participation are being tried. Today we have 171 countries where democracy is the sole surviving source of the legitimacy of the government. Thus, in about 72% of the countries of the world, democracy in one form or the other is being practised. The common ingredients of democracy found in these democratic or quasi-democratic countries are:

- i) that political sovereignty belongs to the people;
- ii) that political sovereignty is to be expressed by the people through its chosen representatives;
- iii) that the representatives are to be selected through a process of independent and transparent election; and
- iv) that those who are chosen to run the government are accountable to the people, and are replaceable by periodic elections.

Muslims started their political journey on 1st of Hijri by establishing a Muslim State in Madinah which was based on a social contract (*Misaaq-e-Madinah*). This was the first step towards a republican democracy.

Then came the time for the selection of the first Caliph when the roadmap for a democratic system was laid out. I shall take some time to describe what happened on the date of the 'election' of Hazrat Abu Bakr as the first Caliph of the Muslim State. In describing the event, I am going to take the liberty to employ, wherever possible, concepts and idioms of the contemporary political language.

The demise of the Prophet (ﷺ) was received with a shock, so much so that Hazrat Umar refused to accept the news, till Hazrat Abu Bakr corrected his thoughts by pointing out that Muhammad (ﷺ) being a mortal could not be spared death but, Islam being eternal, the mission (the State) had to continue.

In the meantime, a group of *Ansaar* collected in the hall (*Saqifa*) of *Bani Saa'da* where the notables of Madinah used to gather. On this day, the pressing affairs of the State of Madinah were under discussion. The basic issue was: who should succeed the Prophet (ﷺ), i.e., who should be the Chief Executive of the State.

Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar learnt of the ongoing meeting and decided to join the Round Table Conference. *Ansaar* welcomed the leading representative of the *Muhajireen*. There was no boycott.

Ansaar argued that they were entitled to name the *Amir* (the Chief Executive) as they were in majority (compared to *Muhajireen*).

Hazrat Abu Bakr not only accepted the validity of the argument but eulogized the *Ansaar* for their hospitality and sacrifices. He however pointed out that the State of Madinah was expanded to include Makkah and the new *Amir* must be selected keeping in mind the preference of the *Quresh* (i.e., the majority).

Ansaar pleaded for two *Amirs* one from the *Ansaar* and one from the *Muhajireen*. Hazrat Umar answered that in running the affairs of the State the responsibility must rest with one head only as two swords cannot be accommodated in one scabbard.

After some further debate, Hazrat Abu Bakr suggested the name of Hazrat Umar as the *Amir*. This is equivalent to nominating a candidate as is the practice in modern democracies. Hazrat Umar declined the offer and stated that Hazrat Abu Bakr was a better qualified candidate. The right of Hazrat Umar to decline to accept his nomination is now a part of the rules of the conduct of the election of any modern democracy which invariably provides that after a candidate for election is proposed by any elector, he has to indicate his acceptance.

Later, Hazrat Umar proposed the name of Hazrat Abu Bakr and taking his hand in his gave his *Bai'at* (vote) to him.

Soon others followed, and Hazrat Abu Bakr was thus ascertained as the future Chief Executive. He called himself *Khalifa-e-Rasul Allah*. After the ascertainment, Hazrat Abu Bakr took the vote of confidence from the general masses through *Bai'at-e-Aa'm*. I have used the words ascertainment and vote of confidence in place of *Bai'at-e-Khaas* and *Bai'at-e-Aa'm*. Under our constitution, the Prime Minister has to undergo the two processes of ascertainment and obtaining the vote of confidence.

If the leaders and the *Ummah* had followed the roadmap delineated on that day, it would have led to a democratic arrangement, but for the two tragic event of far-reaching consequences. Firstly, Hazrat Usman when confronted with a protest and general dissatisfaction, declined to relinquish his office as the procedure for replacement had not been evolved. If Hazrat Usman had accepted the advice of Hazrat Ali and some other associates and decided differently the *fitna* (anarchy) which ensued after his assassination could have been avoided. Hazrat Ali tried to correct the damage by resorting to direct vote, i.e., *Bai'at-e-Aa'm* at the time of his election as the fourth Caliph.

The second unfortunate event was the martyrdom of Imam Hussain, who laid his life along with many of his followers to uphold the sanctity of vote when he refused to surrender to the rule that "might is right". The tragedy of Karbala interrupted our march towards democracy.

The Muslim community has been mourning over the tragic events of Karbala for centuries. It is only now in the Iranian revolution that the spirit of Karbala was asserted to restore the right of the people to participate in the affairs of the government.

The concept of consultation enunciated in *Ayat 38, Surah Shura* "who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation" was wrongly interpreted as the right of the ruler to ask advice from any one and whenever he deemed it necessary. He was not

obligated to accept the advice, nor was he accountable for any harm done to the realm by his acting contrary to or ignoring the same. I am in agreement with a number of illustrious Muslim thinkers who believe that the consultation in the affairs of the community embraces the involvement of the people at various stages of the government, and that the consultation must be purposive, meaningful and result-oriented.

Having lost the right at Karbala to participate in the affairs of the government, the Muslim masses awaited for a long time for the appearance of a *Messiah*. Again we had forgotten the Qur'anic admonition that God does not help those who do not help themselves, which enjoins upon the community, as a whole, to participate and remain proactive in their affairs. No *Messiah* appears nor will one appear unless the people are willing and ready to support him.

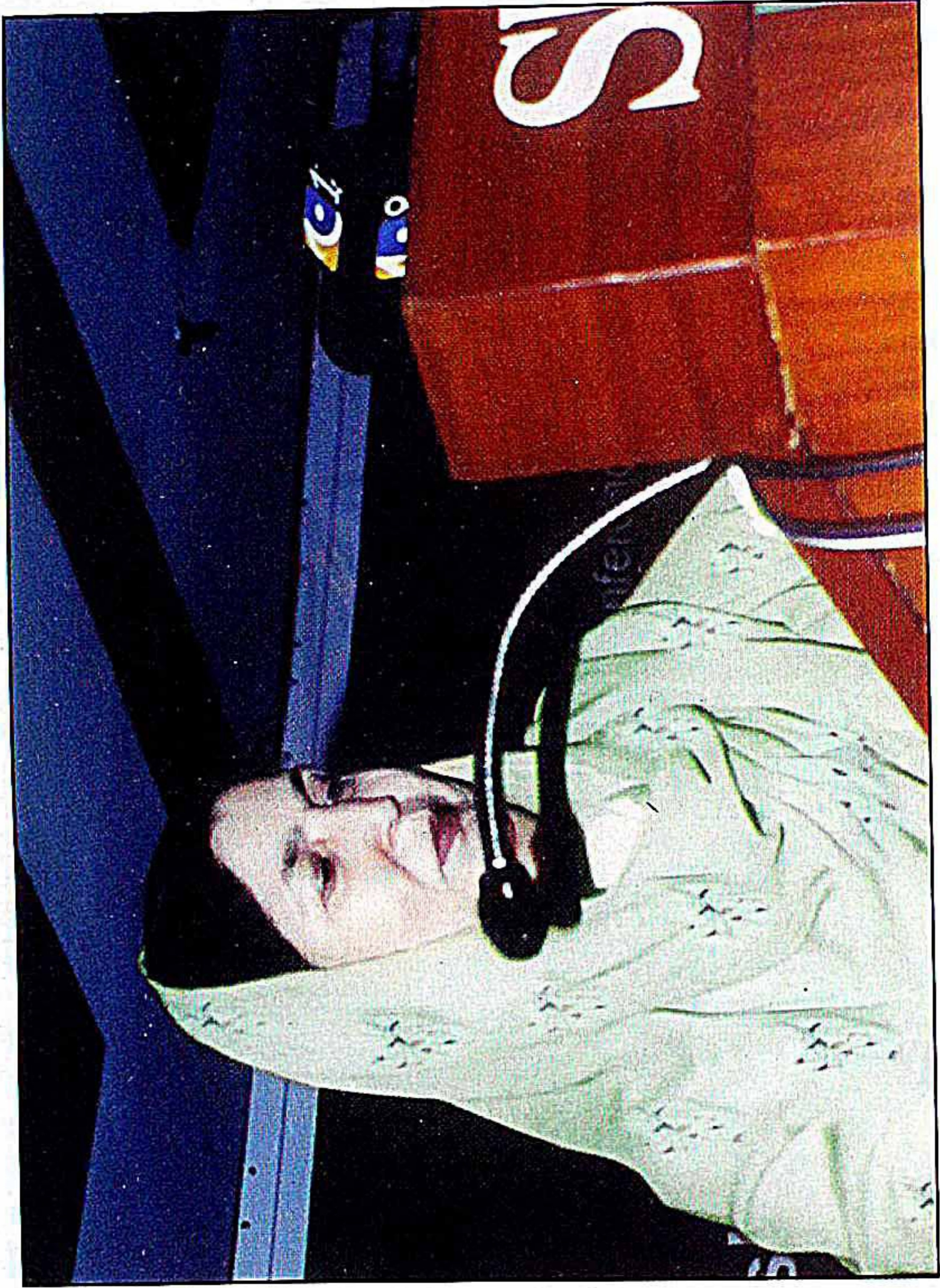
The result has been that the impact of the Muslims and their political weight in the world affairs is insignificant. Besides poverty and ignorance, corruption is on the rise. The Muslim masses are disturbed. There is a public discontentment. Public demonstrations are more common in the Muslim countries than elsewhere and are likely to be more frequent and violent. The panacea to solve the innumerable problems and challenges faced by Muslims is not to long for a *Messiah* but to resurrect the mood and spirit of *Saqif Bani Sa'da* and take quantum jump towards mutual consultation at every stage of the governance.

Political Islam which may appear to have failed amongst and due to the elite is now asserting at the grassroots and revivalism is taking place across the length and breadth of the entire Muslim population. We have to pay heed to this new awakening. Now is the time to assert that a Muslim State can be best run with the participation of their people in the affairs of the country and by giving the people access in the decision-making at different levels.

I may end my paper by referring to a wonderful and unique

achievement of the Muslim masses under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The country where this Conference is being held today came on the map of the world as a result of the participation of the people who voted to create a new country.

Let us therefore in Pakistan and in other Muslim countries return to the rule of *shura ama'r bynahum* in letter and spirit. Democracy is both natural and necessary for the development of the Muslim *Ummah*.



Mrs. Sadia Rashid, President, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, welcoming the guests.

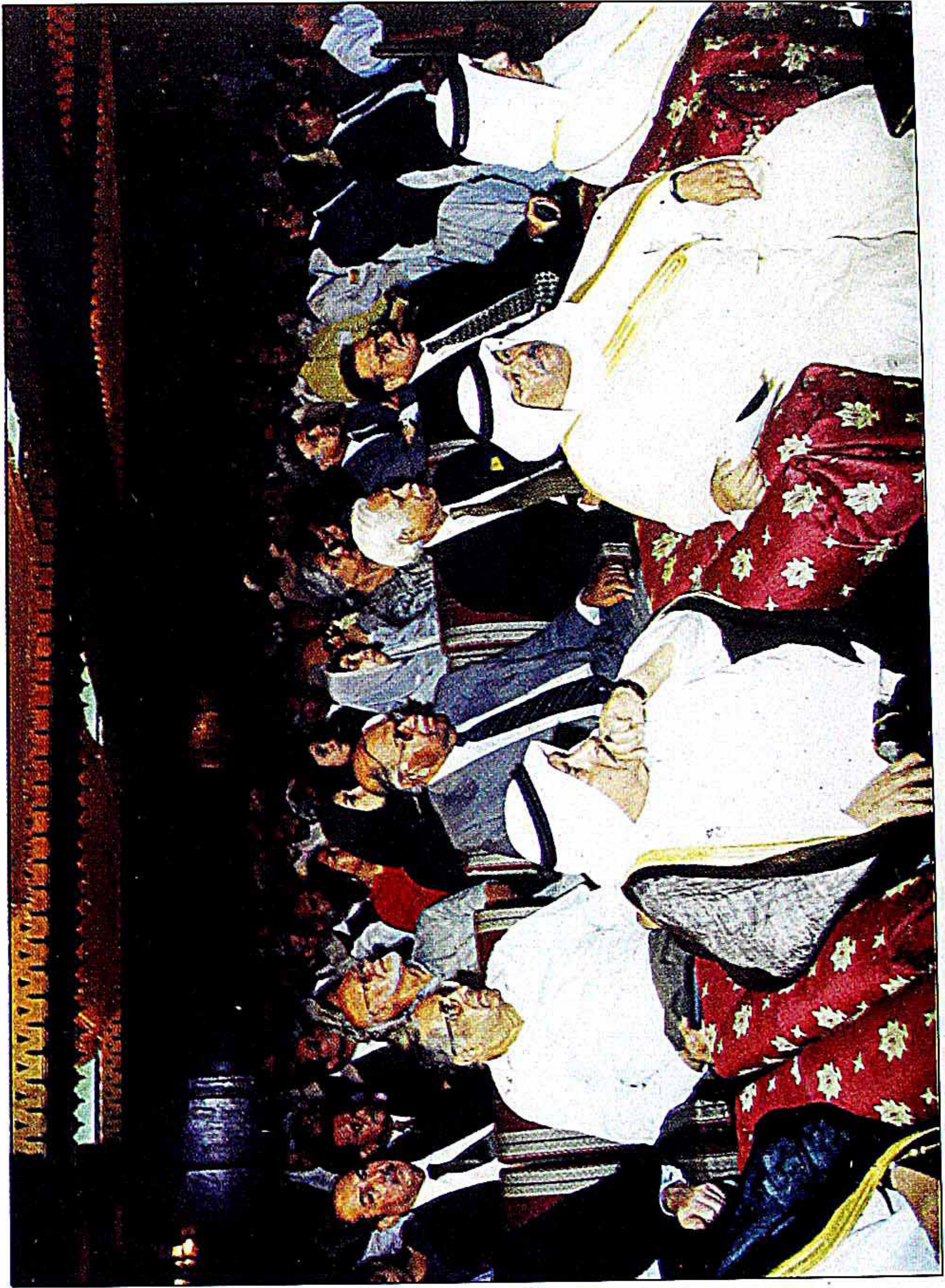


Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad delivering the Keynote Address.

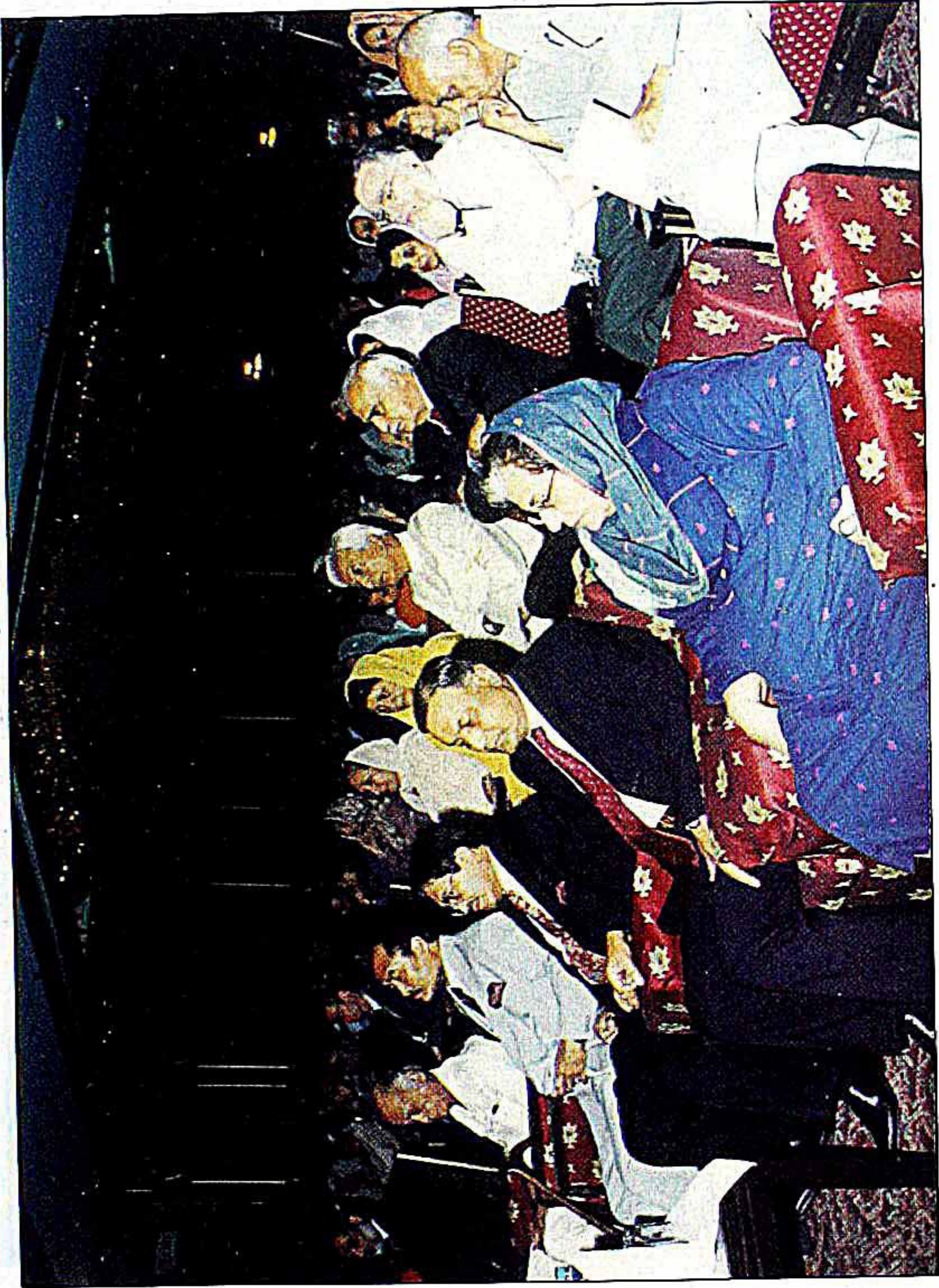


At the dais, Mrs. Sadia Rashid with three Speakers of the Hamdard Shura Chapters

(L. to R.) Admiral (R) Iftikhar A. Sirohey, Islamabad/Rawalpindi;
Justice (R) Haziqul Khairi, Karachi; and Dr. Abdul Matin, Peshawar.



A section of the distinguished audience.



Another section of the distinguished audience.



Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad after having laid a wreath at the Mausoleum of the Founder of Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah.



At the dais, Mrs. Sadia Rashid with Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, Dr. Ishrat ul Ebad Khan, Governor of the Province of Sindh and Mr. S.M. Zafar.



**CONVENTIONAL ISLAMIC RULES OF
GOVERNANCE AND
ALLAMA MUHAMMAD IQBAL'S CONCEPTS OF
NATIONALITY AND STATE IN ISLAM**

JAVID IQBAL*

There have been many Muslim scholars in South-Asia like Shah Waliullah, Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Shibli and Syed Jamal uddin Afghani who have gained eminence in attempting to interpret Islam to suit the modern requirements. But on the subjects of the principles of governance of a modern Islamic State and the necessity of commencing the process of اجتهاد in an elected Muslim Assembly in order to modernize the *Shar'iah* laws, the contribution of Allama Muhammad Iqbal is outstanding.

About the nature of the Sovereignty of Allah and the basis of Muslim nationhood, the views of Iqbal are founded on the

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teachings of the Holy Prophet of Islam (ﷺ) to the effect that the overall Sovereignty of Allah does not interfere with the sovereignty of the State as the application of any Qur'anic rule of law can be held in abeyance, restricted or expanded by those who command authority in the State if the conditions so demand; and that the Muslims constitute a nation on the basis of a common spiritual aspiration and not on the grounds of common language, race and territory.

As for the methodology of governance, Iqbal thinks that a modern Islamic State can be established through the implementation of a democratic/republican political order. He therefore selects "election" as the only appropriate method out of the five conventional modes approved by *Shari'ah* for constituting a government, i.e., election, nomination, selection through an electoral college, referendum and usurpation. Although there are many deficiencies in the working of modern democracy, Iqbal still recommends that the system be adopted, as its alternative is arbitrary rule of a dictator or a king which should be rejected as it is against the spirit of the Qur'an.

It is interesting to note that while interpreting *اولى الامر منكم* (*Surah al-Nisa*, verse 57) he advances the argument that *اولى الامر* in the verse clearly signifies that *اولى الامر* must be person/persons who is/are status-wise *منكم* (from amongst you), i.e., from amongst the "people" and not those belonging to the royalty, nobility or elitist class. Such *اولى الامر* can emerge only through an electoral method in a strictly democratic dispensation.

The traditional method of appointing an *امام* or Head of the State was that a limited number of eminent members of the community through mutual consultation selected a person for this office and then the rest of the community in the city of Madinah acknowledged him as such through the process of *بيعت*. In the ritual of *بيعت* women and non-Muslims did not participate. Furthermore, although there was no prohibition on more than one candidate contesting for the office, such a situation did not arise during the Republican era of Muslim history. But Iqbal accepts the

present method of constituting assemblies through general elections in which men and women as well as non-Muslim minorities together cast votes and elect representatives. Iqbal does not consider this method as "repugnant" to the injunctions of Islam.

Under the traditional Islamic system of governance, the شورى was merely an "advisory" body, presided over by the امام and the امام could overrule the advice of the شورى possibly under the Qur'anic command contained in *Surah al-Imran*, verse 159, and following the practice of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). But at this juncture, Iqbal parts company with the holders of the traditional view. It is evident that according to the above-mentioned verse, only the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was not bound by the advice of the شورى and was given the authority to overrule it; for the rest of the Heads of State, the rule laid down in *Surah Shura*, verse 38, is to be followed where under شورى through "mutual consultation" is authorized to resolve the matters of the community and therefore as a "consultative" body, شورى is supreme and sovereign. Iqbal argues that at the end of the Republican era, when خلافت was transformed into ملک the succeeding sovereigns completely reduced the importance of this vital organ of governance lest it should impose checks and restrictions on their arbitrary rule. Iqbal supports the viewpoint that after the abolition of the Caliphate in Turkey in 1924, all the powers of governance entrusted to the Caliph stood transferred to the شورى, which according to him, meant the elected Muslim Assembly or Parliament. He further holds the view that شورى is not only a consultative body for resolving the day to day problems of the community, but he also grants it the status of a "legislative assembly" by naming it اجماع and empowering it to reinterpret the *Shari'ah* laws through the process of اجتهاد, so as to make them conform to the modern needs and requirements of the community.

Iqbal was aware of the problem that the elected members of a modern Muslim Parliament, despite being educated may not be fully conversant with the intricacies of Islamic jurisprudence (فقه). On the other hand, he was also conscious of the fact that

owing to unprecedented advancement and expansion of human knowledge, the religious scholars (علماء) may not be in a position to provide solutions arising out of the changed conditions of modern life and to think in terms of alternatives in case the traditional interpretations failed to provide proper guidance. In this background, it was necessary to include غیر علماء experts in the process of اجتهاد. Iqbal also did not want to ignore the worldly-wise representatives who had a natural ability of keeping an eye on the changing conditions and finding solutions of problems on the basis of expediency. However, he concludes by suggesting that the syllabus of modern institutions of legal instruction, law schools as well as universities in the Muslim countries, be reformed so as to include the study of Arabic language and to add a course on comparative study of Islamic jurisprudence (فقہ) with modern jurisprudence. The lawyers who qualified in this course of study could be permitted to contest elections as technocrats on the tickets of different political parties with other غیر علماء experts and sit in Parliament of the future to participate in the process of اجتهاد for modernizing Islamic laws wherever required.

Iqbal has not specifically pointed out in which fields of Islamic Law re-interpretation is required through اجتهاد. But his writings indicate that he was in favour of legislation on family planning and prohibition of polygamy. In his opinion, such legislation is lawful as Head of an Islamic State can hold in abeyance, curtail or expand the application of a Qur'anic rule of law if the conditions so demanded.

However, in this connection there still remain some ambiguities which have not been attended to by Iqbal. For instance, if non-Muslims get elected as members of Parliament through joint electorates and have the right to cast votes in accordance with the mandate of their political parties, can they participate in the process of اجتهاد along with their Muslim colleagues in matters pertaining to Islamic legislation? According to some Hanafi jurists they may participate as members of اجماع but they cannot act

individually as *مجتهد*, *مفتی* or *قاضی*. However, in the course of development of Muslim Personal Law in British India some principles of modern jurisprudence were incorporated in Islamic jurisprudence under the Doctrine of "Justice, Equity and Good Conscience" and as a consequence, Muslim Personal Law (Civil) has become "objective" like other non-religious, secular or man-made laws. Therefore, now it is not necessary that only a Muslim judge should adjudicate on matters pertaining to Muslim Personal Law. Even a non-Muslim judge can decide cases involving the interpretation of an Islamic law and this jurisdiction is still being exercised by non-Muslim judges in the courts of India and Pakistan.

The second problem involves the question of *ناسخ و منسوخ*. Can a legislative Assembly of a modern Islamic State, in its capacity as *اجماع*, declare a Qur'anic rule of law as "abrogated" if the conditions under which the original law was revealed, have undergone a radical change or have ceased to exist?

The third problem is that if a legislative assembly of a modern Muslim State, while exercising the power of *اجتهاد* in the process of re-interpretation, adopts a new code of Islamic Civil and Criminal law, enforceable only within the territories of that particular Muslim nation State, would it not lead to the formation of a new national and territorial school of law, that supersedes the traditionally established schools?

In the conventional Islamic state only those laws could be enforced which were derived exclusively from the Qur'an and *Sunnah* and no other source. Ibn Khaldun considered such laws as *سیاستہ دینیہ* as distinguished from man-made or secular laws which he categorized as *سیاستہ عقلیہ*. The argument advanced was based on the principle of governance that if a Muslim majority State enforced man-made laws along with *Shari'ah* laws then it would be called *ملک* but not an Islamic State. However, in a modern Islamic State, as conceived by Iqbal, man-made laws, which are not repugnant to the injunctions of Islam, can be enforced side by side with the *Shari'ah* laws.

The main sources of revenue of the conventional Islamic state approved by the *Shari'ah* were: عشر، زکوٰۃ، خراج، جزیہ and غنیمہ. But it is doubtful if these ancient taxes can be levied by the government in any Muslim nation-State today except perhaps زکوٰۃ which can be given voluntarily or privately. As for Pakistan, the minorities are not considered as ذمی, nor are there any *Kharaji* lands. However, زکوٰۃ is collected through the governmental machinery from the Muslims and عشر is imposed as tax on the agricultural produce of Muslim landholders. But these Islamic taxes are not sufficient for the economic growth and development of the country. Therefore, Iqbal recommends the imposition of additional taxes derived from the teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

The taking of interest on money loaned (ربوئی) was forbidden in the conventional Islamic State. But in order to encourage the development of "free market economy" Iqbal is of the view that bank interest does not fall in the category of ربوئی. On this point he appears to follow the opinion of Maulana Shibli.

The ancient Islamic State was based on the principle of a two-fold idea of happiness for its citizens: i.e., to provide them the basic necessities of life for their material happiness in this world and to prepare them for the realization of spiritual happiness in the next world (hereafter). The latter objective was achieved through the department of حبه (Religious Censor) which enforced the observation of عبادات (religious obligations) on the Muslims. In other words, the State not only guaranteed حقوق العباد (Human Rights) but was also expected to make provisions that the citizens observed حقوق الله (Rights of God). However, the modern Islamic State as conceived by Iqbal, is founded on the supremacy of Parliament of elected representatives of the people which guarantees Human Rights (حقوق العباد) and upholds the rule of law. As for the Rights of God (حقوق الله), these must not be enforced by the State through adopting coercive methods but should be the responsibility of the educational institutions of the State. In other words, the educational policy of the State must include bringing up

Muslim children as good Muslims by making them observe **حقوق الله** (Rights of God).

The conventional Islamic State strictly enforced Islamic Criminal Law **حدود**, but Iqbal agreeing with Maulana Shibli, is of the opinion that since the **حدود** penalties were revealed keeping in view the habits and customs of the people who were before the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and that the object of these penalties was not simply to punish but to eradicate crime in accordance with the customs of the community, these penalties need not be strictly enforced on the future generations of Muslims. It seems that Iqbal lays more stress on legislation for the eradication of poverty and ignorance among the Muslims than on the imposition of **حدود** punishments because in his view the economic backwardness of the Muslims is the real cause of the spread of numerous crimes in the Muslim society.

In the conventional Islamic State, the non-Muslims were free to lead their lives in accordance with their own laws and generally speaking Islamic laws were not applicable to them. In the "conquered territories", they were expected to pay **جزية** and **خراج** taxes for their exemption from military service. In the case of violation of any provision of Islamic criminal law, they were awarded, as far as possible, half the penalty as compared to a Muslim offender. However, the distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims was strictly maintained. But in Iqbal's modern Islamic State, Muslims and non-Muslims are to be considered as equal citizens of the State and there is no political distinction between them. Iqbal does not object to the system of mixed electorates in a Muslim majority State. He believes that **توحيد** stands for human solidarity, equality and freedom and that Islam aspires for the creation of a pluralistic society based on these principles. Iqbal was the first Muslim in South-Asia to declare that the real object of Islam is to establish a "Spiritual Democracy" On this point his vision is founded on **ميثاق المدينة**.

In the conventional Islamic State, the mosque-*Imams* were

appointed by the Caliph but the religious schools *مدارس* were free from the governmental control. However, during the Ottoman Caliphate, the office of *Sheikh-al-Islam* was created and the mosques as well as religious schools came under his management. In this manner in order to avoid conflict of opinions, only that interpretation of Islam was advanced which was approved by the State. Thereafter, during the times of Ata-Turk, when the Ministry of Religious Affairs was created to bring the mosques and religious schools under the governmental control, a law was passed to the effect that only those mosque-*Imams* could deliver *خطبہ* who were licensed by the State. Iqbal approved of this reform and explained that in a modern Islamic State the separation of the department of religion from other departments of the State is only "functional": and does not amount to the separation of "Church" from the "State". He argues that since religion and State are one, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in a modern Islamic State, to look after the mosques and religious schools, formulate a modern syllabus for them, affiliate them with the universities and appoint only those persons as mosque-*Imams* who are qualified.

Now we turn our attention to the question as to what measures did the conventional Islamic State adopt for the eradication of poverty and ignorance among the Muslims. There are precedents set in the Republican period of Muslim history when the government took steps to provide basic necessities of life like food, clothing, housing, education or health facilities to its citizens, although the sources for providing these facilities were confined only to the taxes approved by the *Shari'ah* and no permanent governmental system was evolved for the realization of this objective except through the collection of *زکوٰۃ* or *صدقات*. However, Iqbal is of the view that the modern Islamic State must endeavour to seek further guidance from the Qur'an and *Sunnah* to resolve the problem of economic backwardness of its citizens.

Iqbal is against the adoption of the capitalist or socialist

systems of economy. In his opinion, the aim of a modern Islamic governmental should be to establish a welfare State of the middle class. He thinks Islam does not completely eliminate the power of capital from its economic system, but while retaining it, recommends the establishment of a structure which is based on a balance between capital and labour اقتصاد.

Placing reliance on *Surah al-Zuriyaat*, verse 19, *Surah al-Baqrah*, verse 219 and other Qur'anic welfare rules of law, Iqbal arrives at the conclusion that any legislation which is made for the welfare of the community as a whole cannot be opposed by the *Shari'ah*. For the realization of these welfare objectives, he lays stress on the proper organization of the system for the collection of *زکوٰۃ* and *عشر* as well as the strict enforcement of Islamic law of inheritance as the Muslim feudals in Pakistan, in order to deprive their female heirs of the right to succeed in the division of inheriting ownership of land, advance the plea that they follow the custom (*عرف*) rather than the *Shari'ah*. Iqbal is against the collection of *مخابرہ* from the tenants by the feudal owners. He is of the view that a landowner can retain ownership of land only to the extent that he can self-cultivate and that the rest of the land should be taken away from his possession and distributed among the landless tenants by the State on the payment of easy instalments. Iqbal is in favour of the imposition of agricultural income tax on the produce of landowners. In addition to that he is in favour of legislation to safeguard the economic rights of the landless tenants for such legislation, according to him, is in conformity with the *Shari'ah*.

Iqbal was aware that a welfare State cannot be established without resources. Therefore, he was in favour of encouraging a free-market economy and in order to procure capital for investment in industry he held the view that bank interest did not fall in the category of *ربوئی*. He was in favour of continuing the division between public and private sectors of industry, but believed that the State must make laws fixing the minimum wages of labourers and industrial workers, and the governmental permission for the

establishment of any industry must contain conditions to the effect that the industrialist shall make provision for the residence, education for children and medical relief to the labourers, industrial workers and their families, and on injury or death by accident, provide compensation to the affected ones and gratuity on retirement.

The Iqbalian model of a modern democratic Islamic welfare State exists only on paper. It has never been worked out properly and implemented effectively in Pakistan.



THE ROLE OF THE MUSLIM WORLD LEAGUE

ABDULLAH ABU-ESHY*

The Muslim World Leagues (MWL) headed by the Secretary General, His Eminence Dr. Abdullah Bin Abdul Mohsin Al-Turki, extends all due gratitudes to the host country, Pakistan and to Hamdard Foundation and all those who contributed to the realization of this blessed International Conference.

When we talk about the challenges and opportunities of the Muslim *Ummah* (Nation) we are addressing a big and contemporary issue.

Discussing first the challenges, we can talk about challenges from within and from without. The challenges from within were reflected in irresponsible acts of terror carried unfortunately by devious groups amongst us. Added to this type of challenges are the disunity and fragmentation noticed in the Muslim World.

As for the challenges from without, they are many but we will concentrate our discussion on a contemporary one, i.e., defaming the religion of Islam and labelling its followers as terrorists.

When one talks about opportunities which exist to help face

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such challenges, one should address them in respect of the aforementioned types of challenges.

So, in relation to the challenges from within, one can state that an Islamic Declaration was adopted prohibiting acts of terror and regarding their perpetrators as criminals, observing that the causes of extremism and terrorism in some Muslim societies are due to the factors enumerated in the Appendix from Nos. 1 to 6.

But for the sad fact of disunity and fragmentation amongst Muslims, the chance has been seized by the MWL in its intended formation of the Supreme Council of Prominent Muslim Scholars of the Muslim World.

Then, we talk about the chances for the challenges from without. Since there is no international definition of the term terrorism, the MWL worked out a factual definition of the term so that justice and security are ensured and legitimate rights of all the people are protected. The Fiqh Council stated in its declaration: "Terrorism is an atrocity committed by individuals, groups or even States against religion, life, mind, property and honour. It includes all forms of threatening and killing, harming environment and national or natural resources."

By making this clear definition, the MWL is trying to provide a chance for fair-minded people not to be victims of the distorted image about the concept of *Jihad* and the rulings related to certain punishments in Islam, not to mention the defamation of people who defend their religion, territory and homeland against occupation, while it is a legitimate right in the international laws.

Also, the MWL is in the process of establishing an International Forum for Dialogue and it has stated the message, the objectives and the means as follows:

Description of the Forum

It will be an international non-profit organization concerned with strengthening means of understanding, peace and co-existence among followers of the main world cultures and religions.

Objectives

- To encourage promotion of the principles of peace and justice as well as moral values that uplift one and reform him internationally.
- To minimize the impact of misunderstanding among followers of different cultures and religions.
- To provide appropriate means for encouraging positive attitudes on major international issues of common interest.

Means

- To hold international conferences and symposia.
- To collect, analyze and classify all the published materials related to the dialogue.
- To publish reference studies for educational, cultural, media institutions.
- To co-operate with similar organizations and individuals on dialogue matters.
- To create a distinctive website for the Forum.

APPENDIX

1. Adherence to individual *Fatwa* leads to confusion and lack of security in the society.
2. Opposition of religion through mockery with an explicit aim of keeping it away from the affairs of day-to-day life, while turning a blind eye to atheists' attitudes towards religion and its followers.
3. Obstacles in the path of propagation of true religion based on the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* in some societies.
4. Social injustice in certain societies as well as the lack of essential services such as education, health care and employment. Bad economy, lack of work opportunities and unemployment cause a lot of suffering to the people and push them to many unlawful activities.
5. Failure to apply the Islamic *Shari'ah* in predominantly Muslim societies and adoption of the man-made laws in its place.
6. Lust for domination prompts many adventurers to cause chaos in the society and destabilize the social security in order to achieve their evil ends.



GERMANY AND ISLAM DIALOGUE FOR THE FUTURE

DIETRICH REETZ*

Today we live in an era of generalisations and prejudices. Muslims around the world rightly complain about assumptions being made about Islam in the West that tend to stereotype the religion of Islam and the way of living in Muslim countries. But the same holds true for the so-called West. Germany is an example of the complex relationship between internal developments and external events. As part of the Western world it seeks to promote global understanding while it is faced with its own requirements and compulsions.

First, I will briefly talk about the situation of Muslims living in Germany. Then, I will sketch the relationship between Germany and Muslim countries. In the end, I will comment on the requirements for better understanding between the Western and the Muslim countries in a rapidly globalising world.

Currently about 3.5 million Muslims live in Germany. They constitute almost 2.8 percent of Germany's population of

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82.5 million people. This is remarkable in the sense that their numbers have doubled since 1987. It reflects certain recent trends of immigration in connection with the civil war in the former Yugoslav States.

The Muslim community in Germany represents a diverse cosmos of cultural, linguistic and doctrinal traditions, of pious and secularised lifestyles. Two-thirds of the Muslims are of Turkish origin who came to Germany as contract workers in the sixties and early seventies, or who fled repressive political conditions under the military regime in Turkey. Approximately one-fourth of the Muslims (650,000) are now German passport-holders. There is a slow but growing trend of conversion to Islam in Germany. About 120,000 Muslims are ethnic Germans who converted mostly in connection with marriages to Muslims, but also on their own choice. Muslims of other ethnic stock include 170,000 from Bosnia, 115,000 from Iran, 81,000 from Morocco, 71,000 from Afghanistan, 51,000 from Iraq and 38,000 from Pakistan.¹ These regions of origin mirror the geography of recent political and religious conflict more than economic deprivation.

The vast majority of them are hard-working and law-abiding citizens who are highly respected in the German society. However, conflict and tension also exist and they become partly inflated by political contingency and partly by the media. Some of the problems are a reflection of the particularity and diversity of their social and cultural milieu, the demands of which occasionally clash with integration into the German society, and also with each other. Immigrants bring some of the conflicts of their home countries to their new place of residence where old feuds continue and new ones are started. The Muslim community comprises strongly secularised Muslims as much as those who organise themselves for religious renewal and awakening. Orthodox groups are present, reformist sects and groups such as the *Alevites* (400-600 thousand) and the *Ahmadiyya* (60 thousand) who have fled from persecution in Turkey and Pakistan. Also extremist groups are represented. Groups such as *Hamas*, the Algerian

GIA, the *Khilafat State*, the Lebanese *Hizbollah*, the international *Hizb ut-Tahrir* or the mainly Pakistani *Khatm-e-Nabuwwat* increasingly make their presence felt in Germany too. I remember that some years ago I was consulted by the Internal Security Services (*Verfassungsschutz*) about the nature of the controversy between the *Ahmadis* and *Khatm-e-Nabuwwat* people as the latter had physically threatened and abused *Ahmadi* asylum seekers in a hostel.²

Previously the political class had largely remained oblivious to the presence of Muslims in Germany although the history of immigration of Turkish workers had not been without a political conflict. Social issues dominated their presence earlier while references to Islam became public issues at a much later stage. Since the late 1990s, public debate has intensified in Germany about the role of Islam and the integration of Muslims in the society. At issue are the integration into Germany's society within the parameters of the constitution and the respect for individual and human rights by the demands and practices of Islamist groups. While Germany in many ways is a secular polity where freedom of religious – and also non-religious – belief is a fundamental principle, the separation of State and religion is not complete. The Christian churches have been privileged by German law in certain ways – as, for instance, the State collects their membership fees through the tax system – even though the German constitution does not stipulate Germany to be a Christian State.

It is particularly in the field of education where the parameters of integration have recently been scrutinised more intensely. There is no uniformity in German educational policy as it is not a federal but a State subject with the states adopting different concepts. The left-leaning social-democratic states had previously opted for a multi-cultural approach where schools opened in areas with large migrant communities, were teaching also Turkish or Arabic. Recent studies reveal that a significant number of second-generation immigrant children speak little or poor German. This has often hampered their chances of

better education and employment opportunities. The number of Turkish unemployed and lower-educated youth is much higher than among their German equals. Now emphasis has shifted to compulsory German language tests and a much stronger insistence on learning good German at an early age which is seen as a better way of preventing immigrants from remaining at the social margins of society.

Religious instruction at schools has also become a bone of contention. It is supposed to be a voluntary subject in every school, organised by religious communities with logistic support from the State. This constitutional right is now claimed by non-Christian communities, notably Muslim organisations. There is no common organisation representing Muslims in Germany which makes it difficult for them to be heard on issues such as religious education. Due to doctrinal differences of Muslim groups, they could not agree on a common curriculum which until now delays the first State-sponsored Islamic instruction in German schools.

The headscarf controversy which became prominent in France has also reached Germany. The question was if wearing the headscarf by teachers and female students in state institutions violated the separation of State and religion considered to be the basis of secularism. In Germany a female teacher, Fereshta Ludin from Afghanistan, moved against the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg the federal constitutional court, which declined to ban the headscarf as the current legal situation did not warrant such a ban, but left it open to individual states to pass new laws to this effect. This has already been done in three states (Baden-Wuerttemberg, Lower Saxony, and Saarland). But again there is no unanimity in the legislation. The Berlin city government proposed a law which is more even-handed but also more radical in that it targets all religious symbols – Christian included – causing strong protest from the Christian churches in turn.³

Public debate in Germany also took note of major court cases against Islamic terrorist suspects. But Germany's Ministry

of the Interior in charge of counter-terrorism activities made it a point to state in its annual reports that neither the religion of Islam nor the personal beliefs or practice of Muslims are subjected to scrutiny.⁴ One prominent case was instituted against the leader of a Turkish extremist group *Khilafat State*. His name was Metin Kaplan and he was called the Caliph of Cologne. The organisation, founded in 1984, was banned in 2001 as it was alleged that it aimed at removing the current political order in Turkey to introduce *Shari'ah* law there and was ready to use force for this purpose.⁵ Germany had expelled him but he was successful in preventing his repatriation through the courts as he claimed he would not have a fair trial in Turkey.

Other major cases concerned suspects from the so-called Hamburg cell, the group of Muslim immigrants who allegedly helped prepare the September-Eleven attacks in New York. The prosecution was not very successful in getting a conviction of the two Moroccans, Abdelghani Mzoudi and Mounir El Motassadeq, as corroborating evidence from prime suspects under detention in the US, Khalid Sheikh Muhammad and Ramsi Binalshibh, who were arrested in Pakistan, could either not be obtained or did not support the allegations. But the Minister of the Interior, Otto Schilly, may not even succeed in expelling them from Germany without conviction. If they can claim that they face the danger of being handed over to US security agencies where they might face torture, the courts are expected to issue a stay order against their expulsion.⁶

Public issues concerning the internal and external relationships of Germans with Muslims and Islam have heightened interest in information about Islam. Germany has a long tradition of studying Islam and its various cultures and has in turn attracted cultural ambassadors from these regions. Most popular in South Asia is Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003) who had specialised on Iqbal, his poetry and *Sufi* Islam. Prominent Muslim leaders had visited Germany or studied there, with Muhammad Iqbal (1873-1938) and Zakir Hussain (1897-1969) being the most well-

known examples. As a historical footnote, it may be remembered that during the World Wars launched by Germany both the Wilhelminian and the Hitlerite regimes attempted to exploit relations with some countries and groups in Islam to their advantage. More recent historical research confirms that so far largely unnoticed Arab and other Muslims also faced Nazi repression during the Second World War.⁷ Currently, 24 German universities offer Islamic studies courses attracting around 3,000 students. 34 chairs of Islamic studies are held by academics valued for their linguistic and cultural competence.⁸ Research institutes, such as the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies in Berlin where I come from, engage in academic inquiry into the recent history and current development of various Muslim societies.⁹

Growing public interest is also reflected in the emergence of approximately 30 Internet web portals that seek to inform Germans about Islam and Muslims, to serve the community of Muslims living in Germany, often with a regional focus.¹⁰

It should be no surprise that these issues have found increasing expression in Germany's foreign policy too. Germany was affected by events of September-Eleven in several specific ways. The repercussions for Muslims living in Germany were a concern as much as their relationship with non-Muslims. Would extremists take advantage of the situation and also create tension in Germany? Some groups and forces connected to the perpetrators of the attacks had obviously lived in Germany for some time and, as was alleged, hedged some part of the conspiracy right there without anyone taking notice.

Germany then quickly became involved in international counterterrorism measures and, together with Pakistan, joined the US-led anti-terrorism coalition in Afghanistan. It contributed forces to peace-keeping through ISAF which it headed together with the Netherlands in 2003. Germany helps with the training of the Afghan police force. It got directly involved with the peace process through the Petersberg conferences in Bonn and Berlin in 2001 and 2002 which laid the foundation for a new constitution

and the revival of democratic politics in Afghanistan.¹¹ While this process still looks fragile and haphazard, there is no alternative to it. In this connection, Germany decided that it needs to know more about those countries where the majority of the population follows Islam. It therefore created the separate office of a commissioner of dialogue with the Islamic world and cultural dialogue in general, currently headed by Ambassador Dr. Günter Mulack.* He is responsible for inter-departmental coordination and also, within the framework of the Afghanistan Stability Pact, for the coordination of the cultural reconstruction of Afghanistan. The office has hired specialists largely with an academic background and competent in Arabic, Persian or Turkish forming a separate task force. They are attached to the Foreign Service for two years. These advisers are posted to German embassies in 26 countries to study related international events, to contact major stakeholders of civil society, including the media, and to launch and conduct separate dialogue projects. Already they are said to have contributed to a higher quality of information on these countries and a higher awareness of Islamic affairs.

The office also administers a Special Fund for the European-Islamic Dialogue (EIID) to the range of approximately 5 million Euros in 2002 and 2003 each. The money is spent through projects facilitated by German foreign cultural and academic organizations such as the Goethe Institute, the Academic Exchange Service, DAAD, or the German Foreign Broadcaster *Deutsche Welle* (DW). The range of activities financed from EIID resources is wide; examples of measures already implemented include:

- A workshop on the reconstruction of the judicial system in Afghanistan in cooperation with the University of Kabul, with the participation of jurists from Germany and Islamic countries;
- Creation of the Internet Portal "*Qantara*" in German,

*He regretted being unable to attend the Conference but has nevertheless conveyed his greetings.

English and Arabic as a joint project of Deutsche Welle, Goethe Institute and the Federal Centre for Political Education, and www.gantara.org designed to facilitate communication between citizens from Muslim countries and Germans;

- Advanced training for female Muslim teachers in Germany;
- Advanced training for diplomats from the Islamic world in Germany; and
- Courses in languages and applied geography for Turkish *Imams* before their appointment in Germany, in cooperation with the Turkish Office for Religious Affairs.

Keeping in mind the severe budgetary constraints in Germany, separate funds for 2004 are no longer available. Now the emphasis has shifted to ensuring the continuity of the dialogue commitment.

The office states as its long-term objectives that it seeks to improve mutual understanding and respect to strengthen tolerance. This is also seen as a specific contribution to crisis prevention and to fighting the causes of Islamist-supported terrorism. To achieve these objectives the dialogue aims at young people in Muslim countries where 60% of the population is younger than 25 years, and devotes particular attention to women.

These comments show a great variety of forms through which Germany is connected with Islam and the Islamic world. Recent events have not only a negative fallout for this relationship, but we can also draw a positive lesson from them. They demonstrate to us that we live in a relentlessly globalising world. Events and developments in one part will invariably affect faraway regions. We need to know more about each other and understand that we sometimes use the same words with a very different meaning. Take for example the concept of secularism. Even in the West, there is no unanimity on its usage. Politically it means separation of politics and religion, but it also implies religious freedom and the defence of this freedom. Sociologically, the

academics talk about secularisation processes in terms of waning interest in and practice of religion. In South Asia, this term evokes deeply contradictory emotions. In Pakistan, some political and religious groups regard it as a byword for forcible State-sponsored atheism. In India, it is enshrined in the constitution and has become a defence line of civil liberties in a context where secularism means the equal protection of competing religious practices. What is important is to widen our horizon and broaden our perspective so that we would look at this common world not only through our own eyes but also from the perspective of those with whom we are connected. Today more than ever, there is a strong case for a broad-minded and tolerant dialogue. By this we will not respond to any kind of pressure or do someone a favour; this is first of all in our own enlightened self-interest. We cannot realise the aspirations of our own people without connecting with all the other peoples in the world.

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8. Ekkehard Rudolph: *Islam und Wissenschaft*, at <http://www.magazin-deutschland.de/content/archiv/archiv-ger/02-02/art7.html> saved on 17 August 2004.
9. See the website at www.zmo.de.

10. A typical example is www.islam.de, the website of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany (*Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland – ZMD*), the leading Muslim umbrella group in Germany. It sees itself primarily as facilitator of contact and communication between Muslims and non-Muslims towards the state and its administration. The portal also provides a link list of German-language websites on Islam and Muslims: <http://www.islam.de/?site=muslimfuehrer/islamimweb>.
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III

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



ECONOMIC CHALLENGES BEING FACED BY THE MUSLIM *UMMAH*

ISHRAT HUSAIN*

The topic assigned to me is very important and difficult, because we can all indulge in rhetorics or in pious hopes. But I think we have to get down to realities in order to move forward. Unless we are realistic and do not carry out a wishy-washy kind of diagnostic, we will not come to grips with the problems which are facing the Muslim *Ummah*. I am afraid, we will not be able to make any practical headway. I have been participating in many international seminars and conferences dealing with this particular issue. There were all beautiful speeches with a foray of clarity of thoughts, but practically we are not moving forward; we are actually going backward.

Let me share with you the hard facts which must be realized. If you look at the Human Development Index (HDI) which is an indicator of how far a country has progressed on basic societal values of education, health, literacy and income, none of the Muslim country is among the top 25 countries. I emphasize

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on the word "none", although 12 Muslim countries are among the top richest countries of the world. So we have richness in income but poverty in human development. That is the situation we should seriously think about. On the other hand, if we take the bottom 25 countries of the human development index, sixty per cent of them are Muslim countries. If you take countries of high human development indicators following the top 25, there are only 9 percent Muslim countries. Ninety-one per cent of the countries are non-Muslim. This is a stark reality facing us in today's world. We have many high-income countries with oil and natural resources. Some of them have billionaires among them. But look at the plight of the general population living in those countries. That is the starting point of my topic.

We have to turn this situation around. There are measurable and achievable objectives that we have to achieve. Let us not indulge in too much fancy talks, words, and setting up of new institutions. Institutions of every kind are found in the Islamic World. You name it and we have it. I counted that certain officials of some Muslim countries spent half the year attending the various conferences, seminar, meetings, organized by the various institutions, such as the OIC, Islamic Development Bank, Islamic Chambers, Islamic Financial Services, Islamic Insurance, etc. We are fond of establishing institutions and consider that by organizing institutions and conferences, etc., we have made a lot of achievements. I think it is a fallacy. We should think about allocating human and intellectual resources to find practical solutions or we will just waste our time in introducing and talking to each other and making sermons and delivering big flowery language speeches. The sooner we realize it the better that the revival of truly active scientific institutions is a great urgency – and I think that is what Mahathir bin Mohamad said in this august Conference. Unless we equip ourselves with modern science and technology and participate actively in the acquisition, retention, production and dissemination of knowledge, we will not be able to go anywhere. The paradox is that we have plenty of scientific

institutions, which are spending a lot of money. Somebody in the Islamic Bank told me that most of their grants money goes to supporting these institutions in the Islamic World.

We have to clarify what are the objectives of the *Ummah*. I submit that the Muslim *Ummah* should remain a responsible member of the international community and remain committed to utilizing the vast opportunities provided by the Globalization and financial integration for the benefit of its populations. Those who argue for the isolation or withdrawal from the international economic system, are doing great disservice to the ordinary Muslim, whether he is living in Senegal, Brunei or Chechnya. That is the basic objective. I would like to argue that this is what we should be trying to move forward to and achieve.

Secondly, I am convinced, based on my own understanding of the comparative economic systems, that the Islamic economic system is the most ideal economic system in the world. So far as efficiency is concerned, the market allocates resources most efficiently. It, therefore, generates growth and incomes. However, the market system is flawed as far as the equitable distribution of wealth and income is concerned. The socialist system, which has failed as evident from the collapse of the Soviet Union, was very well-placed as far as the equity and distribution of wealth were concerned. From the cradle to the grave, all the needs of the individual in that society were taken care of by the State. But the system failed as far as the generation of wealth and growth were concerned. It wasted its resources because of inefficient allocation of resources.

The beauty of the Islamic economic system is that it combines the good features of the capitalist and socialist systems of economies. It believes in private property, it believes in individual liberty, it believes in free trade, it believes in market mechanisms which are the foundation of capitalist economic system. At the same time, it enjoins upon every well-to-do Muslim to distribute a part of his/her income towards those who are at a disadvantage, are poor and vulnerable, cannot feed themselves and otherwise

would become a nuisance to the society. This compulsory distribution of a part of one's income which is a pillar of Islamic economic system is a strong improvement that overcomes the weakness of the capitalist economic system. In the capitalist system, the rich is getting richer and the poor is getting poorer. In the socialist system, there is no poor and everybody is equal, but wealth is not generated. In the Islamic system, the rich and the poor both have equal opportunities to make progress and advance according to their preferences, enterprise and abilities. But it does not discriminate against the weaker segments of the society.

In practice, however, I believe the prerequisites of a well-functioning Islamic economic system are missing in every single Muslim country. There is no single country in the world which fulfils those pre-conditions for a well-functioning Islamic economic system. The Islamic system models emphasize on integrity, honesty, truthfulness and transparency. Most of the businesses or the individuals in any country of the Muslim *Ummah* are not practising these values or displaying these particular pre-conditions. If they were, I can assure you we would at least have 10 to 12 countries belonging to the top 25 countries in the HDI. Why do I say so? Because the Islamic economic system ensures equality of opportunity for everyone to improve himself, to acquire knowledge, to have access to income, education, literacy, basic health and basic necessities of life, and that collectively it will improve the economic efficiency and lead to higher growth and welfare for the majority of the population. When the majority of the population improves its lot, the country itself moves up in the ladder.

I would like to elaborate on this particular issue. Those of you who were trained in the Western economic field might question how come the Islamic system is superior to other economic models which are prevailing in the world. Eighty per cent of the world's wealth is concentrated in the thirty non-Muslim countries, which are practising the capitalist system. Yes they are. But look at the inequity even in the United States. Out

of 250 million population, they still have 41 million individuals who are living below the poverty line, who do not have access to health care. They cannot go to the doctor of their choice, because they do not have the health insurance to pay for the doctor's fees. Every year there is an addition in the list of American billionaires. But at the same time there is an increase in the number of people who live below the poverty line. This position prevails in almost all the rich countries, except the Nordic countries where the social welfare system is highly developed but the taxation rate there is extremely high. The State extracts 50 per cent income of the people as taxes and provides them health, education, pension and other welfare payments. That is very much a practice akin to the Islamic economic system. If you are really looking for a practical manifestation of the Islamic economic system you will find it in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Those are the countries which combine the efficiency of the market with the equity provided by the State. Private enterprise is engaged in the production, distribution and trade activities. The government does not produce goods. They do not have many State-enterprises. The State takes care of the basic necessities of life such as education, health, pension, etc., and that is a very good model for us to follow.

The Islamic economic system is in theory superior to other models, as it tries to promote a balance between market, family and society and that is the foundation of the Islamic system. You respect your elders, you take care of your family, you are a responsible citizen in the neighborhood and in the community in which you live. You are loyal to the State, you are paying all your dues and taxes and cooperating with the State and at the same time you are participating in the market by selling your goods and services without any hindrance and restriction. This balance between the market, the family, the society and the State is the major foundation as to why Islamic economic system shall achieve the best results as far as the efficiency and equity are concerned.

How can we do that? We can do that by promoting both material and spiritual urges of the human beings by fostering peace of mind and enhancing family and social solidarity, because we are accountable for our deeds of this life to the Almighty in the life hereafter. God is going to examine not only whether we have carried all the rituals of Islam, but also what we have done as far as our family and fellow human beings are concerned, and how much good we have done to the community and the neighborhood where we live and to the State we belong to.

This spiritual obligation on the part of the Muslim distinguishes itself from the pure selfish and self-indulging model of the Western economies, where every thing revolves around "me". At the age of 16, the parents ask the children to leave the home and the teenagers go and get the education themselves. In the Muslim society, this is the obligation of the parents; the parents do not ask the children to leave their homes until they stand on their feet. The child in return, as an obligation, serves the parents when they get old. It is the old age security system and an inbuilt system of educating the children. The State provides the infrastructure in the Muslim society. The State may award scholarships and support the private sector education institutions, and those who are poor whose families do not have a certain level income, will be given scholarship for higher education. That is an obligation of the State. It is the behaviour of the individuals that is very very important as far as the model of the Islamic economic system is concerned. Our behaviour must display honesty. We should not maintain two books of accounts. We should pay our taxes. We must be truthful; we must not say that "اللہ کی قسم میں آپ کو کل پہنچا دوں گا" and turn up after one month. Truthfulness, integrity and honesty are the values which are required for true Muslims to account in the life hereafter for their actions in this life.

We should all strive to improve the functioning of the Islamic economic system. In that system, we would not have so many law suits as we have in the courts today. Litigation is not

something to be encouraged in Islam. Yes, mediation and arbitration among the parties to resolve the issues are a robust part of the Islamic system. Hundreds of thousand cases of contract violations are lying in the courts and businessmen are going bankrupt and people are losing money, because of not having an Islamic economic system. The particular approach of integrity, trust and truthfulness of the Islamic system leads to higher production, higher growth and better standard of living for the poor. This is a virtuous circle which I want to share with you to underpin what the pure Islamic system is all about. We all pay a lip service to it. Unfortunately, we are far from being an Islamic State and far from being true Muslims. There is a lot of gap between our word (قول) and action (فعل). Unless this gap between our words and deeds is filled, I do not think Muslims have a bright future. To participate in the tough challenges of the globalized world, requires competition, and for competition we require not only acquisition of knowledge, but also updating of knowledge and skills constantly.

There are 180 countries which are competing with Pakistan. If Pakistan and other Islamic countries of the OIC do not prepare themselves to be competitive, are not able to produce goods and services, do not do research and development work, and do not have a grasp over the new knowledge of science and technology, I do not think the Muslim *Ummah* has a very bright future. This is the biggest challenge as far as I can see. Everybody wants to listen to good things. Let us start to call a spade a spade and face the realities. Let us try to resolve that we would become very important citizens of this world whereby at least 10 out of the 25 top countries in the HDI one day will be the Muslim countries. The majority of them will be in the HDI category and there will be no Muslim countries in the bottom 25. If we can set those measurable, quantifiable and achievable objectives, the future of the Muslim *Ummah* will be quite bright.



THE CHALLENGE FOR THE MUSLIM *UMMAH*

AHSAN IQBAL*

Today, we find that there is more uncertainty, complexity, and turbulence about the future as we enter into the twenty-first century. The condition of today's Muslim *Ummah*, in particular, and the world, in general, is best depicted by a Chinese saying: "We are like a big fish that has been pulled from the water and is flopping wildly to find its way back in. In such a condition the fish never asks where the next flip or flop will bring it. It senses only that its present position is intolerable and that something else must be tried."

Before we look at the specific challenge which the Muslim *Ummah* faces, we must understand the new global context in which we live today. Our generation is witnessing unprecedented changes in human history and progress. This period of unprecedented change and volatility, could also be described as a period of punctuated equilibrium as described by Lester Thurow, former Dean MIT, in *Future of Capitalism*. Punctuated equilibrium state, a biological concept, involves change of environment in

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which all those species which cannot cope with the new environment become extinct and are replaced by a new breed of species possessing the requisite skills. Human history has lived through different stages of punctuated equilibrium from the period of the Agriculture man of 10,000 years, the City/Town man of 5,000 years, to the Industrial man of 300 years. The life cycles of human development are shortening at a speed never seen before. The dawn of the twenty-first century is said to be another milestone in our history – the beginning of “Knowledge and Information Revolution” era.

It is said that the paradigm shift rate (i.e., the overall rate of technical progress) is currently approximately doubling every decade; so, the technological progress in the twenty-first century will be equivalent to what would require (in the linear view) the order of 200 centuries. In contrast, the twentieth century saw only about 20 years of progress (again, at today’s rate of progress) since we have been speeding up to current rates. So the twenty-first century will see almost a thousand times greater technological change than its predecessor.

As we move into this new age of our history, new challenges and opportunities await us. The change from one phase of history to another is not easy but this is not to say that it must be painful. Sometimes, pain is necessary but it is not a virtue in its own right. We can drastically reduce the pain of this transition with the knowledge and resources at our hand and with better strategies. But, to do so we need a new vision, new mental blocks, and new approaches. Old solutions and recipes are no longer relevant and will not deliver now because the forces of change that we are facing today are very different from the past. It is said that a great many nations are in deep political and economic crises today, but not exactly because they are doing fundamentally the wrong things. Rather, they are doing the right things for times they no longer live in.

In the new world, development and wealth creation paradigms are changing very fast. Under the new Knowledge

Revolution, knowledge becomes the key to development and security. The power of brain and intellect has replaced the machine and muscle power. Creating knowledge societies, knowledge economies, knowledge companies, knowledge workers, and knowledge leaders are the new set of key success factors for any society. This implies that we must look at economic development and the meaning of national security with new perspectives. Old approaches will not work and the traditional ideas will not deliver. We need to search for new answers. In order to live and succeed in this era, we must create strong knowledge foundations in our societies and links even with the most traditional areas. Therefore, while it is customary to highlight some pressing political conflicts facing the Muslim *Ummah*, we should not overlook the need to contextualize the present condition and challenges of the *Ummah* in the new emerging scenario of the Knowledge Revolution.

The picture today both at global and regional levels looks very bleak and depressing for the Muslim *Ummah*. But, I would like to quote here Mr. Edgar Mitchell, an astronaut, who said: "Civilization is in a critical state and mankind is at an evolutionary crossroads. On one hand, problems and conflicts have arisen which are global in scale and have brought society to a condition of escalating planetary crises. On the other hand, humankind's potentials for creative change, fulfilment, and benevolent control of our environment have never been greater." At the turn of the new chapter in the human history, it is very common these days to take a depressive view of Muslim *Ummah's* predicament by looking at the recent tragedies in Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The images of Muslims suffering on television screens send shock waves from Morocco to Indonesia and cause anxiety in Muslims hearts and minds. It is also true that the severe nature of the suffering shakes every thinking soul. But we must not be carried away by these events in our analysis of the *Ummah's* future.

Let us look where was the *Ummah* at the end of the

previous century's first quarter. Almost all the Muslim countries were tightly under the grip of colonialism. There was no hope and sign of recovery. Where are we today? Muslims are a population of 1.3 billion people, which is twenty-two percent of the world population and greater than the combined population of the USA, Europe, and Japan, with 900 million living in fifty-six independent countries and about 400 million spread over other countries. The Muslim countries are endowed with important economic resources like oil (fifty percent of the world's oil export), agriculture, coal, iron, uranium, tin, rubber, copper, etc. There are visible signs of movements for political emancipation in all countries; there are emerging models of economic success like Malaysia and Dubai; at last there is eagerness on development of education; new political and economic institutions have sprung up like the OIC, the IDB, the ICCI, the COMSTECH, etc., though much is desired from their performance; there is an emergence of Islamic financial institutions and instruments in international markets with over 100 Islamic Banks holding assets of over US \$90 billion; and a rising Muslim world media is emerging in shape of Al-Jazeera, ARY, GEO, etc., to cover national and international events from local perspectives. This is the brighter side of the picture. But, it must not stop us from looking at our deficiencies.

Unfortunately, despite the fact that it is gifted with very talented human and material resources, the Muslim world has emerged as one of the poorest, most illiterate, malnourished, and the least gender sensitive regions in the world. No Muslim country figures in the top bracket of Human Development Index (HDI). Of its 1.3 billion population, around 522 million or nearly half are in the category of absolute poor on the basis of a-\$-a-day income poverty. More than one-half of the adults are illiterate and more than half of these illiterates are women. Some 276 million people have almost no access to any health facility, the majority of the population has to drink unsafe water and as much as 10 million people suffer from avoidable disabilities. The region with the world's 22 percent population has 2 percent of the

world's GDP, 1.5 percent of the world's FDI, and 1.3 percent of the world's trade. With twenty-two percent share of the world population, Muslims share of the world income is less than 6 percent. The growth rate of Muslim countries has been 4.7% in 2003 compared with 5.2% of all developing countries. Likewise, they lag in all other economic indicators like savings rate, capital formation, etc. In the wake of the US war against terrorism, there is a negative media campaign in the West against Muslims which makes things more difficult.

In this situation where does the Muslim *Ummah* stand? The question boggling every mind today is what should be the strategy of the Muslim *Ummah*? How should we react? What are our options? Should we respond reactively or develop a proactive response and a roadmap for the future? As Toynbee said, history is a series of challenges and responses. It is our response to the present challenge that will shape the course of history.

To come up with the right response, we have to ask the right questions. It is in the quality of questions that germinates the seeds of success or failure. Those who ask wrong questions get wrong answers. Therefore, it is critical that we set the right discourse in our societies because it is here that we failed earlier first when Muslim Civilization began its decline and later when the Industrial Revolution started in Europe and North America. In order to find answers to some of today's pressing challenges, we must first ask ourselves why we failed collectively to take notice of our decline, why were there no effective intellectual movements to wake up the Muslims, why we failed to take notice of the Industrial Revolution? Why were we slow to embrace modern and new technologies? Why did the Muslim demand for books grow too slowly to keep the printing press an economically unviable technology until the eighteenth century, while the Jewish refugees from Spain began printing books for the Ottoman Jews as early as 1493? Why did it take the Muslims centuries to recognize the limitations of their prevailing social and economic structures in relation to the evolving ones of Europe?

In my opinion, the main barrier lay in a system of education that taught people a finite set of information rather than how to use their own judgment, exercise their critical faculties, and experiment. Somewhere between the tenth and the eleventh centuries, freedom of innovation ended and the door of *Ijtehad* was closed. In treating Islamic learning as having attained perfection and the Islamic world as having become self-sufficient, it gave legitimacy to values, attitudes, and practices that promoted stability and discouraged inquisitiveness. It helped support an educational system that emphasized rote learning and memorization at the expense of problem solving. This decay in the educational system was fundamentally responsible for the failure of the Muslim societies to shape public discourse in a manner that could have saved us from decline and ensured continued growth and freedom.

This was in sharp contrast with the original learning model, which the Muslims followed from the Qur'an. Muslims throughout the Qur'an are exhorted to scale knowledge in order to better understand the Creator and His works. In the Qur'an, Allah doesn't command human beings to recognize Him; instead, He prompts human minds by inquiring and reflecting upon His signs of creation and then find the answer that there is a Creator behind such a marvellous universe. "And He has made subservient to you whatever is in the Heavens and whatever in the Earth, all from Himself, Surely there are signs in this for people who reflect" (*Al-Jaasiah*, V:13). The Qur'anic Model of learning can be abbreviated as *IQRAA* (Inquiring, Questioning, Reflecting, seeking Answer, and Applying). Following this model, a large circle of Muslim scholars grew who advanced learning in many branches of knowledge by scientific reasoning and experimenting. They paved way for the blossoming of the Islamic civilization. History shows that, with the beginning of the Abbasid State, a scholarly renaissance commenced, hardly less important than the one which transformed Europe during the 17th century. The political and social authorities of the day encouraged learning and knowledge development. Therefore, it is incorrect to say that

Islam is a hurdle to development of Muslim societies. It is our faulty thinking and working models, which we have not shunned even after winning freedom from colonialism, that block our progress.

Until we change our present learning models based on dogma, rote learning, memorization, and closed minds, there is no chance that we will be able to rise to the occasion. By proper introspection, we can turn the crisis into opportunities, which requires leadership and courage. We must shun the *status-quo* mindset which fails to recognize change, negates reform, justifies poor governance, and ignores human development. Instead we need to adopt new-knowledge-economy mindset which seeks to prepare us for new competitive world by developing world class policies, institutions and practices, guarantees implementation, promotes societal cohesion, ensures political stability, creates new and winning opportunities by sharing with people a vision for a better future, forging networks and alliances, harnessing positive synergies, creating winning mentality, unleashing enterprise, and building strong ethics and values. The new Knowledge Economy requires more than motorways and waterways. It requires building information ways for the flow of information and ideas as computer literacy replaces pen literacy as the benchmark of education. It demands creating life long learning models and knowledge based organizations with global perspectives, which excel in attracting, training, using, and retaining talent. Growing bellies and shrinking minds is a recipe for disaster in this age. Hence, the priorities have to be changed.

The challenge of modern age demands courage to face three realities at once: First, what values do we stand for – and what steps to take to fill gaps between those values and how we actually behave? Secondly, what are the talents and skills of our people – how to fill gaps between those talents and skills and what the knowledge economy demands? Thirdly, what opportunities do the future hold? – how to build bridges between those opportunities and our ability to capitalize them? To accomplish

this, we need to develop the Leadership Capital of our communities that understands the new context and can lead transformation of their respective people towards becoming creative, competitive, and high-quality and productivity-driven entities. This requires reforming our education and training programmes to match the new challenge. If we failed to rekindle minds of our youth with continuous quest for learning and to create a dynamic learning environment that breeds inquisitiveness, creativity, inquiry, and reflection by undertaking education reform we will miss the great Knowledge Revolution opportunity just as we missed the Industrial Revolution opportunity.

This is a gigantic task, which requires cooperation at all levels. On cooperation, we have a mixed score card. In political arena, though the OIC has not been an effective body, yet the IDB has earned some credibility in the economic area. But, the scope for economic cooperation still remains unscratched. I think we must adopt non-traditional approaches to cooperation and shift the focus from government to government (G2G) cooperation to people to people (P2P) cooperation. In this area we can learn from the European Union and the ASEAN. A civil society-led initiative on the social development in Muslim countries must start to mobilize decision-makers and opinion-leaders in their countries towards responding to the gravity of problem. An OIC Summit on the Knowledge Economy and the Emerging Technologies must be held as early as possible so that the Muslim countries can develop a collective vision and roadmap of developing the knowledge capital.

While we highlight the injustices being done to the Muslims we should not just blame the circumstances; instead, we must show responsibility by also accepting and rectifying our weaknesses and turning crises into opportunities by taking bold and decisive actions in order to transform our societies into truly progressive, knowledge-led, just, and tolerant societies as envisioned by the teachings of Islam.



NEEDED INITIATIVES TOWARDS GREATER ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ABDUL HAFEEZ SHAIKH*

Networks are the dominant form of socio-economic organization of our age. I attended the last meeting of the OIC, and I discovered an abundance of networks. If you look at the electric power and oil and gas pipelines, they are organized under a network. If you look at the Internet and the communication system, there exists a network. Land, airline and sea transportation are organized under networks. We have learning and information networks. We have ideological networks, country networks, trade and investment networks.

Let us now look at the situation of the OIC countries. These countries have a population of 1.25 billion. They are rich in natural resources, i.e., oil, minerals and raw materials. They have 40% of the total natural resources of the world. Oil export is the most prominent, as the OIC countries account for 50 per cent of the world's oil export. The total GDP of OIC countries is very

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low – only 5 per cent of the world's GDP. It needs to be re-emphasized that even though the OIC countries have 50 per cent of the world's natural resources, the share of the world's GDP is only 5 per cent. Yes, only 5 per cent income is generated in the OIC countries while they have one-fifth population of the world.

Another amazing feature of the 57 countries, which are members of the OIC, is that most of this income is generated by only 6 Islamic countries. I also discovered that 42 Muslim countries are very heavily indebted and 22 are the world's least-developed countries. The other thing which struck me most is that there is a huge disparity in income distribution in Islamic countries. The gap in the per capita income of the richest Muslim country, Qatar, and the poorest, Nigeria, is 186 to 1. So the 57 Muslim countries are almost insignificant economic players in the world, there is a substantial disparity among them, and most of them are least-developed countries.

When we look how they are participating in the global trade, we discover that they have only 8.6 per cent share of the export and 6.5 per cent share of the import. When we look at the investment side, we discover that of all the foreign investments in the world, the OIC countries together account for one and a half per cent. When we look at the portion of FDI of developing countries, it is revealed to be 16 per cent.

The alarming thing about this whole picture of the income of the OIC network is that while the income of other countries is growing, the income of these countries has been almost stagnant. So the gap is actually increasing – which is alarming. If you look at the last 20 years, the region, where most of the Muslims are living, has been the area of least growth. This is a snapshot of what is happening in the OIC economic network.

I started questioning myself why it is so. Why is it that as an economic network we are doing so badly? Why this network is not working? I came to the conclusion that since for any network's fruition its members must possess network fitness; this

network is not functioning because it does not possess that fitness. What are the factors which bring about network fitness? What are the things we should be looking for in the Muslim countries? I think there are four contributors to networking capacity and fitness for a country and its individuals. The OIC countries show deficiencies in these contributors as they indicate the following:

- Weak Human Development,
- Weak Connectivity,
- Weak Investment Policy Regime, and
- Anti-Private-Sector Bias.

Let us look at these one by one. First, the Human Development. Almost with respect to all of the human development indexes, the OIC countries do terribly badly. Somebody pointed out that all the universities in the OIC countries are less in number than the universities in Japan alone. Somebody also pointed out that all the PhDs generated in all the Muslim countries are less in number than those who are recruited by a single institute in India. Networking requires certain thresholds of human development which the OIC countries as a group do not possess.

The other requisite for networking fitness is that you need to be able to communicate with each other. If Razzak Dawood Saheb wants to strike a deal, he should be able to pick up the phone and talk to the person concerned anywhere in the world. If you look at the connectivity, you will find a very low level in the OIC countries. We are unable to communicate, we are unable to connect and, therefore, we are unable to network.

Look at the figures of aircraft departures. I think there are only the airports at Dubai and Istanbul in the entire Muslim world from where airplanes to and from all directions fly and land. Pakistan and Indonesia are the two most important Muslim countries. I had gone to Jakarta and when I was returning I had

to go from Jakarta to Singapore, Singapore to Colombo, Colombo to Dubai, Dubai to Karachi, and from Karachi back to Islamabad. To attend the meeting of the Islamic Development Bank at Almaty I had to go to Karachi from Islamabad, Karachi to Dubai, Dubai to Istanbul and Istanbul to Almaty. Although it is a two-and-a-half-hour flight, Kazakhstan is a far-off frontier. We made a fuss and now we have a direct flight for Kazakhstan. This is the state of affairs when it comes to connectivity and ability to interact on network in the Muslim countries.

The third deficient area is that of the policy regime. If you want to strengthen the networking to have new injections of capital, you need other people to own your policies and participate in them. Economists can tell you what are the ingredients of a good policy regime. If you want to develop your economy you need investment. You need simple and well-defined rules for FDI, a liberal foreign exchange regime, good infrastructure, free trade regime, predictable and simple tax regime, transparent and swift judicial system and international conventions/WTO membership. When we look at the Muslim countries, we find that hardly any country possesses these. It is not a surprise that there is one-and-a-half per cent FDI that goes there, because the rules and procedures are very arbitrary; one is totally at their mercy. This again contributes to low network fitness.

Finally, you should have a private sector that can stimulate the network. What you want is that you should be able to have people to do the networking to strike the deal and to put all these nice things on paper. What is going on in the 57 Muslim countries? When I surveyed five of these countries, the main features that I found were that they are characterized by State monopolies and slow privatization. If you make a list of top 100 companies in the OIC countries that were there 25 years ago, you will find that 99 percent of them are still in government control. I should know, because I am trying to have them privatized. State monopolies are still suffocating the private sector and its

networking capacities. Private sector is the engine of networking. However, as a group, the OIC countries have an anti-private-sector bias, leading to State monopolies, slow privatization, government controls and discretionary powers enjoyed by officials. These are the main areas, to which you may add others, which contribute to low fitness of network.

I now want to make a big point as to how we can increase our mutual trade. Factors that will allow us to promote intra-OIC investments are the same as those that will allow us to promote investments in general. However, mutual trade and investment will not be increased if we keep saying that because now the globe is so interconnected, it is very hard to find out the nationality of the capital. At one time I happened to be an advisor to the Saudis. They always talked about Saudi capital that is outside the Saudi Arabia and is in billions of dollars. They made speeches that they would like this money to come back. I told my friends that if they wanted the Saudi money to come back, it would never come back. We Pakistanis want money – money from Germany, Japan, Qatar or any other country. Countries which have got money from the OIC countries are those which are simply saying that they do not care about the nationality of money.

Therefore, if we create a general network fitness, the intra-OIC investments and trade will automatically begin to increase. This is a significant point. I give some suggestions how we can focus on intra-OIC trade and investment. I am not saying that we are completely oblivious of the things we can do, but we are not conscious of their potentials. The important thing is that we should focus on getting our economy right, on improving our network fitness to compete in the world and on enhancing our capacity to attract everybody. This is not going to be very exciting but some times boring things turn out to be the right things.

What have we been doing as 57 countries together for intra-OIC trade? I was really struck by the amount of efforts

that have been made by these countries. Some of the important initiatives that have already been taken are as follows:

- 1) Proposal for an Islamic Common Market, 1974
- 2) Islamic Development Bank (IDB), 1975
- 3) Islamic Commission for Economic Cultural and Social Affairs, 1976
- 4) Statistical, Economic, and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries, 1977
- 5) Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research, 1978
- 6) Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), 1979
- 7) Standards Committee, 1980
- 8) Export Financing Scheme, 1988
- 9) Trade Preferential System, 1990

All these past efforts have not given the desired results because there had been a gap between the rhetoric and the reality and a gap between the target and the achievement. The OIC network is not working as a network. They dream too much and they do not follow it up. Let us look at another network, e.g., the European Union Network, which is a successful network, because it is tightly integrated. Characteristics of economic networks may differ, but one thing is common in the successful ones: they all have reasonable/realistic targets and aggressive implementation.

I started thinking of making my own plan of action, which I thought could be adopted by the OIC Summit subsequently and, in fact, by the Islamic Development Bank as they were having a meeting in Istanbul. But I discovered that there was already a plan of action, adopted in 1994. The OIC adopted the strategy and the plan of action to strengthen economic and commercial cooperation. It was adopted at the government level. It is widely quoted but not followed.

We need a new approach, not simply a plan of action. The new targets must be realistic and constantly revised. The process must fully involve the private sector. A lot of economic activities in the OIC countries have been government to government. This is the main reason why there has not been any real subsequent result. So then, the new approach we need is essentially that the targets must be very simple, very realistic and must fully involve the private sector. Better aim at achievable targets than aim at the moon and the stars.

Looking at the network fitness challenges, we find the clusters where networking could be enhanced. Which clusters within the OIC economies can be promoted to create the greatest network effect? These are ASEAN, EVRAZES, SAARC, AU, D-8, ECO, ARAB MAGHREB UNION, and GCC.

The Muslim countries should be able to practise the network like those of Malaysia and Indonesia, which have honed their network skill through the ASEAN. Not an entirely Islamic network, ASEAN has benefited only two Muslim countries. Therefore, I think that all those areas where the OIC countries are key players, they should try to spark the networks. By doing so they will enhance the networking fitness and in turn enhance the networking capacity of the entire OIC.

One of the other grouping that I think is very interesting and which has tremendous potential, is the D-8; it comprises Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Turkey and Pakistan. D-8 is a more manageable network. Unfortunately, Saudi Arabia is not a part of the group. Pakistan would like Saudi Arabia to be a member. When we were in the Tehran Summit, we offered that experts should meet in Islamabad to bring the trade barriers down among the D-8 countries, and they have since met. Some results are already beginning to emerge. Because these eight countries can exchange their experiences, they can try to improve their policy regimes and also can try to bring their private sectors together. As a result, the trade among the D-8

countries has increased from \$ 14.5 billion to \$ 21.3 billion over 1999-2002.

What are the change agents for the OIC economic network and how can they be supported?

The change agents are:

- 1) Financial Services,
- 2) Energy,
- 3) Agri-Business, and
- 4) Information and Communications Technology.

The change agents are companies or groups within the OIC network such as innovative next-generation companies, medium-size export-oriented companies, large enterprises and service sector professional firms. These require necessary network fitness, to be globally connected to remain potent. There are three major initiatives which, I think, need to be developed and we are already in a process of developing them. Let us hope we will be able to adopt them in the Istanbul Summit.

Initiatives should be taken on Joint Investment Promotion Team of the OIC economic network. But again emphasis should be laid on the private sector rather than the public sector. There should be an Islamic Direct Investment Acceleration Scheme, and a communication and knowledge sharing initiative.

These are just some pointers. We should have a Devos-type Summit of the OIC Network. I think that would be more fruitful than a Summit of the ministers. Islamic Direct Investment Acceleration Scheme, which would focus on managing funds, should be having the same role as that of IDB. The funds should be managed by the private sector, and they should identify projects within each country. Fund managers are to raise and invest money and create an Islamic market index. The IDB and the OIC economic network should contribute to it.

The most important initiative, which the time has suggested,

is the communication and knowledge sharing initiative. In this respect, there are the following seven ideas that can be developed:

- 1) Create in-depth online information exchange feasibility studies;
- 2) Fund think tanks to develop commercially viable products and initiatives;
- 3) Fund private sector research and training;
- 4) Strengthen and support business association, e.g., Islamic Chamber of Commerce;
- 5) Encourage private sector initiatives and business-to-business dialogue;
- 6) Create associations of investment agencies; and
- 7) Create a mechanism for infrastructure growth and development.

These initiatives would increase the network fitness and improve the potential for deals and so on.

Today, everyone talks about the resources we have. I think what we need is a new approach to increase the leverage of the institutions that we have like the IDB. We have the resources to revitalize the OIC for economic development in Islamic countries. Our principal challenge is to unfetter our imagination and pursue the challenges with vigour and determination. Clarity of purpose, consistency in implementation and cohesive leadership are required. What I want to emphasize is that unless there are players – the people of private sector – there would be no game. We need to bring in these players. So far, we have been just trying to play matches with managers and coaches only.

These are difficult times. Wherever I go, I find Muslims somewhat depressed, somewhat pessimistic or overwhelmed. But the greatest advantage we have is that we have been told that we must never be depressed. Everything that Allah has bestowed on us will come to fruition. Life has to be lived according to

certain ideals, and everything we face in following the ideals is a trial and a test. There are so many things that we have as Muslims; above all is our faith. It tells us to deal with every situation through continued effort and by following the divine teachings. If we continue on that path, we will have the spiritual strength to deal with the adversities. We will also be able ultimately to realise our potentials.



TOWARDS SOLID ECONOMIC TIES THROUGH JOINT INFRASTRUCTURAL AND COMMERCIAL VENTURES

RAFIQUE AHMAD*

Main Theme

The focus of this write-up is on highlighting the role that joint infrastructural and commercial ventures can play in providing a solid base for economic cooperation among countries which constitute the vast Muslim *Ummah*. The Islamic World's great potential in terms of natural and manpower resources is well-known. Its geographical compactness and physical contiguity gives it the added advantage of developing a viable economic bloc or sub-groups of this bloc. But this potential lies unutilized in spite of the formation of the OIC and several other regional and sub-regional Islamic groups. There have been many get-togethers of the Heads of Muslim States and Ministers but they have not cut much ice. Even a beginning for the movement of goods and resources among Muslim countries on a significant scale has not

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taken place in spite of a plethora of official statements, treaties and agreements made for promoting ties in different sectors and fields.

The major reason for this inertia seems to lie in the absence of stakeholders, eager to undertake mega inter-state infrastructural and commercial ventures. Such ventures prepare the groundwork for bigger economic co-operation; Europe started its journey towards full integration by creating in 1952 an inter-State resource-based integrated commercial venture known as the European Coal and Steel Community. This venture provided a solid ground for more unifying steps in subsequent years, like the establishment of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in 1958, formation of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1959, and a host of other measures for merging monetary, exchange and currency systems, culminating finally in the emergence of a fully integrated European Union in 1993.

No venture worth the name can take off the ground successfully without solid homework. The growth of Europe into one entity owes much to the conceptual and statistical groundwork done by the famous research-oriented body known as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) set up in 1948, four years before the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community, as mentioned above. The fact is that this body not only prepared initial ground for the EFTA but since then has continued to play a vital role in bringing European countries together economically, politically, and even socially.

The setting up of a high quality OECD-type applied research organization and undertaking of some viable joint infrastructural ventures are all the more necessary in view of the serious economic challenges being posed to Muslim *Ummah* by the fastly expanding globalization process. A beginning in this direction, needs to be made immediately. The scope for the construction of inter-State economic infrastructure on joint basis in the Islamic world is very vast and realizable. The OIC members, especially those lying between South, Central and Western Asia, represent

one vast physically integrated tract so that a viable inter-State transport network can be constructed. Similarly, an ECO Gas and Oil Community can be formed by Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey and Central Asian Republics because these countries abound in gas and mineral resources. Other infrastructural, commercial, and marketing ventures can be undertaken jointly on regional and sub-regional basis, depending upon the availability of natural resources along the common borders or neighbouring countries. North African, Middle Eastern and South East Asian members of the OIC have rich potential for venturing on joint infrastructural projects, thereby preparing the ground for solid economic ties as well for meeting global economic challenges.

Elaborations

TWO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

With the collapse of communism, a new corporate capitalist global culture has come into existence. As a result of this phenomenon, the Muslim world, and for that matter all developing countries, are currently facing two serious challenges to their socio-economic structure. One is the onslaught of economic globalization and the other is the emergence of multinational or transnational corporations (TNCs).

Many believe that unfettered international trade can prove economically and financially beneficial to all countries. However, in actual practice, this process involves the most fundamental redesign of the globe's political and economic arrangements and is being increasingly exposed to public scrutiny and criticism. For example, contrary to the claim of widespread beneficial outcomes, globalization has led to the spreading of poverty, unemployment, industrial dislocation, environmental pollution, financial instability, and domestic social disintegration, especially in the underdeveloped or partially developed world.

Today, more than half of the top 100 economies in the world actually consist of transnational corporations. It is estimated that two-thirds of the world trade is controlled by just 500 corporations, and a mere one percent of the TNCs own half of the total stock of foreign direct investment. Further, the WTO's free market policies are creating global conditions in which the TNCs and their banks can move their capital, technology, goods, and services freely throughout the world.

The result is that regulations of nation States or democratically elected governments are becoming ineffective. In effect what is taking place is a massive shift in power, out of the hands of nation-States into the hands of the TNCs and banks under their control. The UNCTAD's World Investment Report of 1999 puts the number of the TNCs or all categories (excluding financial institutions) at 60,000 with about 500,000 subsidiaries around the world. Over 15 percent of their total assets are held by the top 100 TNCs.

EXPANDING REGIONALISM

The unequal distribution of gains from trade and investment between developing and developed countries resulting from globalization has strengthened sentiments for regionalism. It is believed that during the 21st century at least three biggest regional blocks will dominate the world trading order – namely the EU (European Union), the NAFTA (free trade area of Mexico, Canada and the United States), and the APEC (Asia and Pacific Economic Cooperation, including East Asian Countries, Australia, and North and South America). Actually during 1990s, the EU and the APEC alone accounted for 87 percent of world exports and imports. Now even the WTO itself recognizes regionalization as beneficial to the expansion of world trade.

The expanding trend towards regionalization is primarily due to greater economic benefits which regional corporation brings in terms of utilization of advantages of larger internal markets

and economies of scale. The United States and the European Union in particular are among the persistent initiators of integration projects in their parts of the world. Further, so far as developing countries are concerned, regional association leads to increased competition within their own territories, without exposing their markets to the floods of cheaper goods from advanced countries. Apart from this, the great divide among the rich and the poor countries also stands in the way of full globalization of world trade.

WTO AND REGIONAL BLOCKS

The OIC countries can meet the above challenges by promoting regional or sub-regional economic and trading blocks. It may be said that current agreements under the WTO, signed by most OIC members, may stand in the way of promoting regionalism. However, a close look at post-Uruguay Round Agreements shows that this is not so because of the following reasons:

- a) The WTO's Article XXIV permits customs unions and free trade areas to continue to exist, though it demands that they should gradually merge with global trading system within a period of ten years. Stronger economic groups like the APEC and the EU do not seem to be prepared to accept this 10-year exemption limit and want it to be extended to 26 years.
- b) The WTO has allowed customs unions, free trade areas, and looser geographical blocs to act as a single unit in their negotiations and dealings with it. For example, 15 member States of the EU normally coordinate and spell out their positions in their in-house meetings but the European Commission alone speaks for the EU at almost all WTO meetings. Thus the WTO accepts regional blocs as separate independent entities.

- c) The WTO agreement contains a number of specific measures and clauses to safeguard economic interests of countries which are adversely affected by the free flow of goods and services across the globe. Article XIX of the GATT Agreement 1944 and the 14-article agreement on safeguards spells out actions which an injured party can take to provide a safety net to its economy.

LESSONS FOR MUSLIM *UMMAH*

The Muslim *Ummah*, as represented by the OIC, can learn quite a lot from ongoing trends towards economic regionalism. Currently, the OIC consists of 54 independent Muslim States, accounting for 24 percent of total global area, 1.3 billion of the world population, and over 44 percent of the world oil production. However, in spite of possessing a mighty development potential, it is a weak group on the world scale, accounting for only a small part of the world GDP and exports and imports. About half of its members are among low-income countries.

Thus, regional integration within the OIC is not an easy task because of the striking heterogeneity of its member States with respect to physical resources, economic performance, and socio-economic structure. Perhaps no other regional group has a similar territorially contiguous but economically heterogenous profile. This suggests that the concept of a free trade area may be more viable than customs union for the OIC region as a whole.

Simultaneous to this, specific sector-or-resource-based integrated projects can also be initiated. Europe started its journey towards full integration by (i) creating in 1952 a resource based integrated project known as the European Coal and Steel Community and (ii) establishing a European Free Trade Area in the late 1950s.

The prospects for strengthening sub-regional groups within

the OIC are bright in view of economic heterogeneity of the Islamic world. Although several such groups have come into existence, they have not yet become strong enough to accelerate the process of integration.

The essential prerequisites for effective economic cooperation are the ability and the willingness to implement jointly agreed measures. For this, a certain degree of structural congruence between cooperating partners is necessary, along with an adequate functioning of their political infrastructure.

Seen from this angle, the political economy of most OIC member States is in need of reform and structural adjustments. European experience has shown that free trade is possible even under conditions of markedly different economic potentials, provided there is a proper legal, administrative, and political framework, with governments willing to engage in regional cooperation and capable of providing trust and predictability.

JOINT INFRASTRUCTURAL VENTURES

In spite of the well known economic and social benefits of regional and sub-regional associations, the OIC countries have not yet made any significant progress in this direction. Six Gulf States formed in 1981 a sub-regional cooperation structure called the Gulf Cooperation Council. Similarly, five Maghreb countries, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya announced the constitution of a union in 1989. Another organization by the name of ECO was setup in 1985 by Iran, Turkey and Pakistan and was further expanded in 1992 to include Afghanistan and six post-Soviet Russia Central Asian Muslim Republics. These organizations, and especially the ECO, have prepared many action plans and have formulated long-term perspective of economic development but they have not yet acquired a respectable regional stature.

There are many domestic and international reasons for this state of affairs, but two most vital bottlenecks are non-development

of basic infrastructural relationships and shyness to establish a workable free trade area.

The level of infrastructural development in a country is a crucial factor determining the pace and diversity of economic development. Economic infrastructure, in a broad sense, refers to the underlying amount of physical and financial capital embodied in roads, railways, airways and other forms of transportation and communication plus electricity, gas, financial institutions, and public services like water supplies, health and education. However, in a narrow and most essential sense, it covers (i) infrastructure of road and other utilities which result in lower transport and communication costs so as to facilitate inter-regional trade, (ii) electricity and gas which stimulate manufacturing and other productive activities, and (iii) production-related research and development network.

The scope for the construction of the above-mentioned three types of economic infrastructure in the Islamic world is very vast and realizable. The OIC members, especially those lying between the South Asia and the Pacific Ocean, represent one vast physically interconnected tract so that a viable transport network can be constructed and steps taken to maintain it. Similarly, sources of energy, particularly gas and oil, are available in abundance in several Islamic countries. Further, there is no dearth of scientific and professional manpower, a large portion of which is being fruitfully utilized by advanced countries and which may return to home countries if favourable conditions of work and suitable incentives are provided to it.

It is high time that, learning from the success story of the West-based transcontinental corporations and projects, the OIC members give serious thought to the undertaking of joint infrastructural ventures, particularly in the gas, oil and transport sectors. Europe had started its journey towards integration in 1952 by establishing a jointly-run European Coal and Steel Community. The ECO members can take a lead and follow the footsteps of Europe by setting up trans-State corporations or

authorities for the development of basic infrastructural sectors, as mentioned above. For example, an ECO Gas and Oil Development Community can be formed by Iran, Pakistan and Central Asian Republics because these countries abound in gas and mineral resources.

This type of venture will not only facilitate the widening of internal and external markets but can also bring in other benefits like greater economies of scale, expansion of manufacturing and trade activities, creation of employment, and acceleration of both investment and rates of growth. Similarly, Central Asian, Middle Eastern and North African members of the OIC can form regional or sub-regional transport development communities for laying down an interconnected network of motorways and railways throughout the Islamic world which is likely to dramatically boost up transcontinental flow of goods, services, and capital. The ECO can take the lead by setting up an ECO Transport and Communication Development Community. Though some oil-rich OIC countries are members of OPEC, their overall bargaining position *vis-à-vis* powerful Western world is not so strong. Distribution of petroleum is entirely in the hands of West-based TNCs.

The recent oil crisis has shown beyond any doubt that advanced countries are using oil as a very rich source of tax revenues for keeping their economies at high gear at the expense of both oil-producing and undeveloped countries. There is a need for the establishment of a joint Oil Exploration and Distribution Authority in the relevant Arab and other Islamic countries not only for strengthening the Muslim States bargaining in international negotiations but also for accelerating the pace of their own socio-economic development.

MUSLIM UMMAH'S OECD

Another vital area of joint infrastructural venture is setting up of an OECD-like research and development organization for stimulating economic cooperation among Muslim countries with

the help of a network of professionals and experts in relevant areas. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has played an important role in bringing European countries together economically.

Originally the OECD was set up in 1948 under the name of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and was instrumental in encouraging intra-European trade. It was expanded and renamed as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for promoting economic growth and employment with financial stability among member countries. Since then it has regularly and effectively fed the decision-making authorities of the EU with feasibility reports for integrating Europe into a solid economic union.

The OECD carries out its functions through a number of committees such as the Economic Policy Committee, the Scientific Research Committee, the Trade Committee, and the Development Assistance Committee, all of which are serviced by a large secretariat. It publishes regular statistical bulletins covering the main economic statistics of member countries and regular reviews or economic prospects of individual members.

IN SHORT

Side by side with joint infrastructural projects in the areas of gas and oil, transport, and scientific manpower as stated above, steps should also be taken to set up an ECO Free Trade Area. This concept is different from that of free trade which implies export and import trade without any barriers in the form of tariffs, quotas, or other restrictions. A free trade area refers to a form of economic integration in which member countries remove all import tariffs and quotas and export subsidies and other governmental measures to influence trade among themselves but each member is free to levy different external tariffs against non-member nations.

The goal of establishing an ECO customs union or common

market is difficult to achieve because it will require a fundamental redesigning of socio-economic and financial structure for which the ECO countries do not seem to be politically or economically ready yet. However, a beginning can be made by forming a free trade area on selective basis, if not covering the whole spectrum of commodities being produced within the ECO members. Pakistan and Iran have recently agreed to reduce customs duty on 647 trading items under the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). The scope of such agreements can be gradually widened to turn into a proper Free Trade Community.

While developing economic institutions and policies for cooperation we must evolve practices compatible with Islamic ideals of social and economic justice. It is perhaps worth recalling what Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the State Bank of Pakistan at Karachi on July 1, 1948:

“The economic system of the West has created almost insoluble problems for humanity and to many of us it appears that only a miracle can save it from disaster that is now facing the world. It has failed to do justice between man and man and to eradicate friction from the international field. On the contrary, it was largely responsible for the two World Wars in the last half century. The Western world, in spite of its advantages of mechanization and industrial efficiency is today in a worse mess than ever before in history. The adoption of Western economic history and practice will not help us in achieving our goal of creating a happy and contented people. We must work our destiny in our own way and present to the world an economic system based on true Islamic concept of equality of manhood and social justice. We will thereby be fulfilling our mission as Muslims and giving to humanity the message of peace which alone can save it and secure the welfare, happiness and prosperity of mankind.”

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A CASE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

MUHAMMAD IQBAL CHUDHARY* AND
SHAMSUN NAIHAR KHAN**

*"The best asset of a nation is knowledge and its
capacity to use it".*

Prof. Atta-ur-Rahman

The world today is a rapidly changing world, largely driven by knowledge revolution and science and technology. Countless manifestations of science have made lives of millions of people more comfortable and meaningful. However, there is an ever-growing gulf which divides the human race into the have's and the have-nots. How this gap can be bridged is a core issue which worries many of us.

The World of Islam

Over 1.3 billion people live in the Islamic world, i.e., one-fifth

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of the humanity in 57 Muslim countries, scattered in four continents. Three-quarters of world's oil reserves, one-fourth of world's precious metal reserves are in the Muslim world. This is the resource base of the Muslim world both in term of human resources and natural resources. But there are only 600 universities for over half a billion young Muslims. Among the top 500 universities of the world only two are from the Muslim world and both belong to Turkey. Science and technology expenditures are only 0.2 percent, well below the global average. Spending on defence is 4.7 percent, well above the world average. Frontier technologies are not available to Muslims on any price. They cannot send their children to learn frontier technologies. The cutting edge knowledge is not for sale. According to statistics, the total GDP of all the 57 Islamic countries is only US\$ 1,200 billion, while the GDP of France is US \$ 1,500, of Germany US\$ 2,500 and of Japan US \$ 5,000. The GDP of Pakistan is closer to US \$ 150 billion. The entire Islamic world, one-fifth of humanity, generates less than that of a smaller country of Europe. This opens before us the whole concept of knowledge-based economy.

Living in the Changing World

Brighter Side

Before discussing the issues related to the Muslim *Ummah*, we need to understand where we stand in today's world. The human family has over 6 billion people. One-fifth of the humanity survives on less than a dollar per day. About 1.1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water, 7.7 million children die before their first birthday, 20 to 30 percent population of sub-Saharan Africa is HIV positive.

We must also understand what would be the world in the next 50 years. The global population will increase to 9.5 billion by 2050, despite all efforts to contain it. The known fossil fuel

resources will be largely consumed in the next five decades and rain forests will be reduced by 50 percent. Life expectancy will be closer to 100 years in many parts of the world and 60 percent population of the world will live in urban areas.

The present and future world has many brighter sides and tremendous opportunities for bridging the gap. Internet is changing the meaning of time and space. Data and dollar can be transferred with the speed of light. There are over ten billion pages of information on the worldwideweb today. There is a tremendous information revolution where all types of information are available, often unhindered, uncensored and free of charge.

The second revolution which is happening around us is the emergence of 'New Biology', which is decoding the blueprint of life, learning to manage the placement and expression of genes and mobilizing micro-organisms to do our work in translating into a long and healthy lives for many of us. Through this we have the ability to control genetic disorders, diagnose and treat complex diseases, grow organs, and increase agricultural productivity. These are tremendous opportunities which the modern world offers to us.

Everyday innovations are altering the notions of development. In today's world, the nations are known for their achievements in education, health and science and technologies. The whole definition of development has been changed. Development is no more considered to be the development of infrastructure – roads, dams and bridges. It is now defined and measured with reference to education, enlightenment, tolerance, self-fulfilment and productivity. Education and science and technology not only have the highest rates of return in term of economic gains but are also critically important to meet the developmental needs including strategic requirements.

Darker Side

Unfortunately we are also living in a time marked with the

global conflicts, chronic deprivation, ethnic cleansings, highly distorted economic growth and environmental degradation. Along with this the Muslim *Ummah* suffers from many additional disadvantages including the worst form of dictatorial rules, illiteracy, negative perception and onslaught of biased Western media.

Global Conflicts

Never in the history of the world, the number and the magnitude of global conflicts were so severe as we have today. We see pictures of dying children, massacres in Palestine, Bosnia, Somalia, Kosovo and Kashmir. A Palestinian lady helplessly trying to stop, by her bare hands, an Israeli army bulldozer which is bulldozing her house, is a pathetic sight. This typifies what a large majority of Muslims is currently facing in a hostile world.

Terrorism and Poverty

Terrorism is affecting all parts of the world equally bad, leaving no option but to address this malaise at the global level. However, the world is still pondering over the basic definition of terrorism. Until a definition is universally agreed to, true global alliance against terrorism is not possible.

Muslim world is particularly a victim of both freelance and State-sponsored terrorism. Muslims struggling for their fundamental human rights are blindly termed as terrorists.

Absolute poverty is the root cause of many global conflicts. This is an indicator which makes the two parts of the world so different from each other. In the presence of such a disparity, the whole notion of one so-called global village is totally wrong. In the world with such contrasts, one can never subscribe to the idea of one global village. There is actually no one global village; there may perhaps be two or three global villages in the world.

I will never forget a picture of a very weak, hunger-stricken and quite under-nourished child of an African Muslim country with an empty bowl, published in the Life magazine some years ago. The same issue of the magazine published the picture of a healthy child in some Western country throwing half of the food which he could not consume. Those two pictures touched my soul deeply and helped me to realize the stark differences in the world, reasons for which are still unclear to many of us.

In comparing the differences of living standards between the developed and the developing world, we see two pictures, displaying the conditions in two villages: in one picture, African people are standing half-naked without food and shelter and in the other picture, Western people have abundant good food to take. Our children have no access to safe drinking water, while in Western countries children drink the purest and safest water.

Education

Education is considered as the vehicle for development. However, here also major gaps between the two worlds exist. The children in the West are using fast computers for learning complex mathematics and statistics, while our children are still struggling with the most primitive form of learning, with no access to even the basics of teaching tools. Even they are comparatively fortunate as a large majority of children do not have access to any type of education.

Lack of Stable Democratic Institutions and Traditions

The Muslim world is replete with dictatorial rules and worst forms of non-democratic practices. Unfortunately, these rules and practices are often justified on the basis of religion. Under these non-democratic rules, the weakest of the society suffers most, which include women and minorities. Afghanistan under

the rule of Taliban is one example which has damaged the image of Islam and Muslims. However, other examples can also be cited.

The Gap is Growing

The gap is unfortunately growing. The infant mortality is ten times higher in the least-developed countries than in the industrialized countries. There are more AIDS patients in Africa than in the rest of the world. Other infectious diseases are also much more prevalent in our part of the world. Weapons of mass destruction and tools of environmental degradation are ruining the world. Over 80 percent of humanity has no input in the knowledge innovation of today. Especially in our Muslim world, there is no mentionable input to knowledge, innovation and technology and hardly any understanding of the philosophy of technology.

The growing gap between the haves and the have-nots is proven from the fact that life expectancy in the West is already 78 years as compared to Sub-Saharan Africa, consisting mostly of Muslim countries, where it is 49 years only. The average per capita income of the developed countries is about forty times that of the least-developed countries.

Demographic Changes

We are witnessing a major demographic shift and age profiles of people are drastically different in the two worlds. Pakistan has a population of 141 million, exactly half of the USA population (282 million). But Pakistan has more young people than the USA (72 vs 71 million). 96 percent increase in the world population in the next 50 years will be in the developing world, including Pakistan, which will bring a major demographic shift in the world. In the next 50 years the developed world will contribute less than 4 percent to the overall increase in population, while 96

percent increase will occur in the developing world including the Muslim countries.

Investment in Health Care

The health profile of the Muslim world is among the poorest in the world. A large majority of Muslim countries is facing serious health challenges mainly due to poor primary healthcare, gender differentiation, poor reproductive health and low nutritional profile. The average age in the Muslim world is less than 60 years, far less than that in the developed world.

Investment in health care is an extremely important indicator for development. Out of over 1,400 new medicines introduced in clinical use in the last 25 years, only 14 were developed for tropical diseases, also called as poor-men diseases. No money is available if one wishes to study diarrhea or malaria. Multinational donors and large pharmaceutical companies are interested to finance research to increase the quantity of life rather than the quality of life.

Investment in Science & Technology

Investment in science and technology is a prerequisite for national competitiveness. Here too, the situation is dismal in the developing world. Research expenditures per person in developed world are 220 times greater than in the developing world. Sweden spends 3.70 percent of its budget on research, Japan 3.01 percent, the USA 2.63 percent, India 1.20 percent, Pakistan 0.8 percent and the Islamic world on an average 0.2 percent. As regards scientific manpower, the USA and Japan have about 70 scientists per 10,000 population, whereas the Muslim developing countries have not even one.

Brain drain – Major Dilemma

Brain drain is rampant and is further deteriorating the already

inadequate small pool of science and technology practitioners in the developing world. As the population of wealthy countries gets older and more people retire, lucrative employment opportunities are created which attract the brightest of our youth. As a consequence, more and more of our young people are immigrating to the developed world.

GDP Growth Rate

Economic growth of many developing nations is more like a weather report. If they have timely rain the GDP increases. If there is no rain the GDP growth drops. This illustrates the primary dependence of the developing countries still on agriculture while the developed world is taking big strides in industrial development.

The Likely Future

The current gap is likely to grow even wider perhaps to become eventually unbridgeable as the developed countries continue to master the tools of science and invention by vastly outspending the developing world in research and development and diverting some of the developing countries' most precious resources (human resources) for their own use. This is the likely scenario of the next fifty years. A vicious cycle is at work whereby the less-developed nations fall farther and farther behind the developed world with every passing day.

What to Do?

On the face of these challenges and under the impetus of globalization, the Muslim world is fast running out of options and time. For sure, 'business as usual' is not going to work very long. The question naturally is what should we do? Where would we like to be? Certainly not on the darker side of the world! We should sit together and reflect in the light of Iqbal's thinking. It

is the time of soul searching and critical thinking. Education is the light at the end of the tunnel. We have no option but to invest in the best asset we possess, our 1.5 billion people. We have to invest in education and science and technology which drive the engine of development and address the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Why Science and Technology?

"Science and technology can indeed help feed the hungry, heal the sick, protect the environment, provide dignity in work, and create space for the joy of self-expression." These are the words of a great thinker of our time, Dr. Ismail Seragaldin of Egypt.

Science and Technology for Sustainable Development

Chapter 35 of Earth Charter (Agenda 21) recognizes science and technology as an important factor for sustainable human development. C.N.R. Rao, a great thinker from the developing countries says: *"In view of the gravity of problems facing the developing world, the case of science is the case of basic survival."*

Why we need science and technology as the engine of development? Because economic reasons favour it; the internal rate of return (IRR) on scientific research is between 20-80 percent and is far higher than any other development endeavours. Technological tools involved in the development are often very sophisticated and their use requires a great deal of knowledge at the local level. We have to assess the risk and benefits of new technologies, but we have to invest in the education of science and technology. We cannot rely on the F-16 airplanes unless we have the entire technology that is not available to us at present. We need indigenous technology and indigenous science capacity to use local knowledge effectively.

a) Science for Policy

Cadres of local S & T experts are required for science-based decision. Unbiased advice should be sought by national policy-makers on technical issues and sectors such as strategic defence, health, industry, environment, etc.

b) Global citizenship

Participation as equal partners is necessary in international research programmes geared to solve the global problems.

c) Science for Society

Scientific training promotes free-ranging inquiry and expression, modernism, openness, tolerance and democratic values.

d) Science for Future

Creation, maintenance and continuing modernization of training of future generation of scientists is essential with respect to the educational base.

e) Technological Innovations

New opportunities exist in nano-science, information technology, health and agriculture biotechnology and renewable energy, etc., for rapid economic and social development of the Muslim world.

Recommendations

What needs to be done for capacity-building in science and technology and its application to development endeavours is

extremely important. Some specific recommendations are as follows:

1. A commitment that every Muslim country will spend at least 1.5 percent of GDP on higher education and science and technology.
2. Setting up of a Pan-Islamic Fund for Science and Technology in which proficient countries of the Muslim world contribute generously. This Fund should be used to create S & T infrastructure and develop human resources to solve strategic problems of the Muslim world.
3. Strengthening of existing S & T centres of excellence in science and technology.
4. Establishment of world class centres of excellence in frontier fields of Science and Technology.
5. Increasing mobility of scientists and researchers in the Muslim world.

At the end it must be said that the future of Muslim world is not very bright if we continue to ignore the breeze of changes. However, there is no reason to believe that this is our destiny. We need the right leadership and the right frame of mind today to have a better tomorrow.



IMPROVING TRADE RELATIONS AMONG THE MUSLIM COUNTRIES

A. RAZAK DAWOOD*

Introduction

Today we often hear and read about the importance of trade and economic cooperation between the Muslim countries. The notion of an economically integrated Muslim world has almost become a 'slogan'. Greater economic cooperation among the *Ummah* seems to have become synonymous with greater economic strength.

It is time that we move away from unsubstantiated rhetoric and enter the realm of positive skepticism and initiate a productive debate guided by the principles of reason and aided by the tools of research.

As a first step in understanding the incentives present and the eventual costs and benefits associated with an economic/trade union of Muslim countries, we have to first look at the

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current global trade environment and the degree of existing trade relations among the Muslim countries.

After analyzing the present pattern of trade, the next step should be to ask the relevant questions and raise the most pertinent issues regarding the feasibility and potential benefits of such an endeavor. This way we would not only have a clearer picture of the situation but after finding the right answers to the questions, a potential road map to greater economic ties.

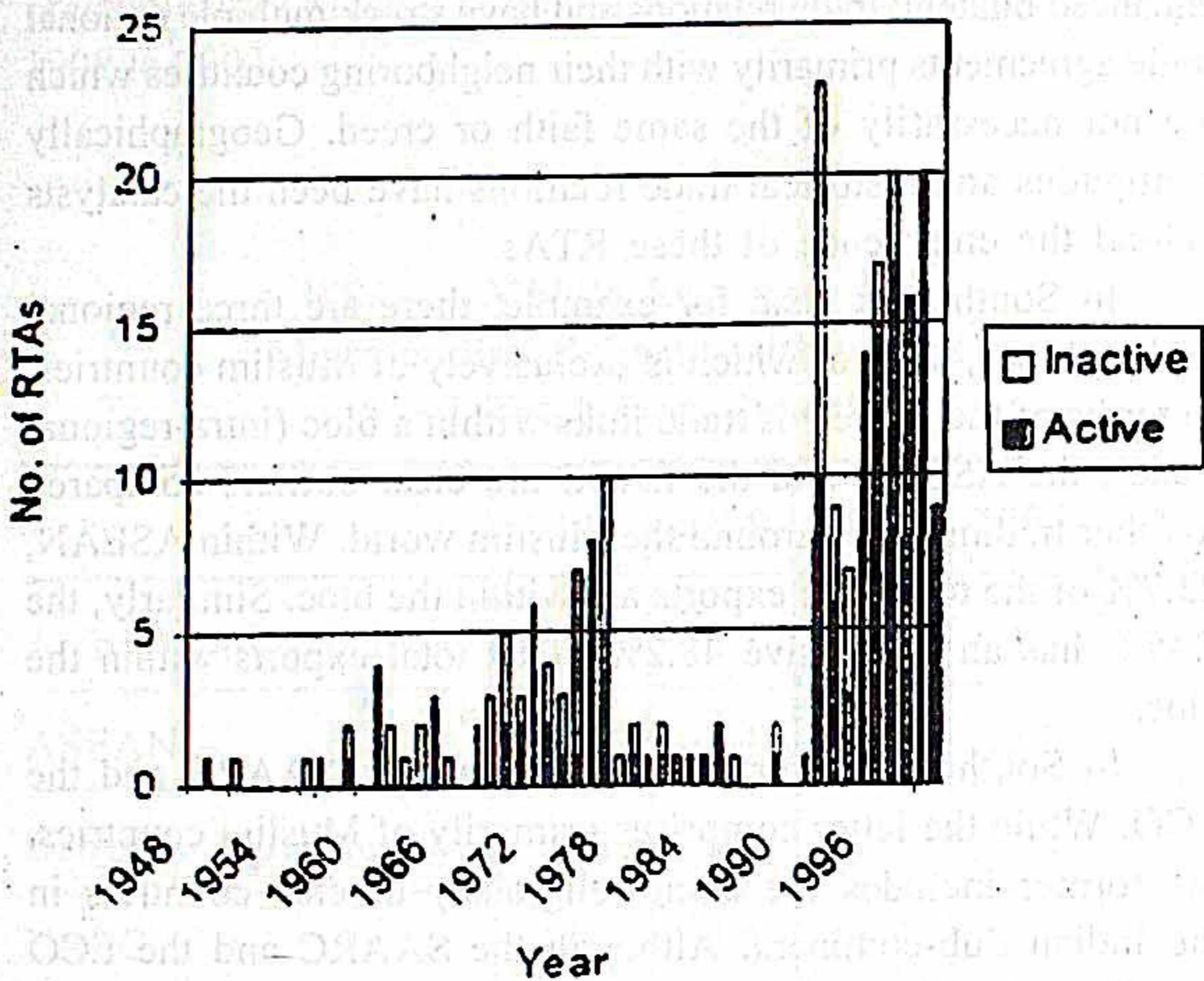
Globalism, Regionalism and Bilateralism: The Trade 'Spaghetti Bowl'

The late twentieth century heralded an era more commonly known as the 'age of globalization'. Today the world economy under the behest of the WTO is steadily moving towards free trade. In principal those nations which are part of the WTO protocols would eventually abolish all direct and indirect barriers to trade and would be set to enjoy the advantages of complete openness which the pundits of free trade vehemently preach.

The road to the eventual objective of an all encompassing economic orbit has many twists and turns. A closer look at the structure of trading relations between countries reveals that along with greater bilateral trade links there has been a proliferation in regional trade agreements (RTAs) across the world.

An RTA by definition offers its members more favorable treatment in trade matters than to the rest of the world although the coverage and depth of such preferential treatment varies greatly from one RTA to another. According to a recent WTO report: 'As of November 2000, of the more than 200 RTAs notified to the GATT or WTO since 1948, about 140 are in force, against only 45 ten years ago'. The following figure captures this almost exponential rise in RTAs in the past 10 years.

RTAs notified by year (1948 - 2000)



So in the backdrop of the global free trade aims of the WTO and the resultant rise in bilateral trade ties amongst countries, there are nation States which at a given time are members of multiple regional trade agreement. This overlapping of different types of trade relations has been appropriately referred to as the 'spaghetti-bowl' effect. For example, Pakistan is a member of the SAARC and also of the ECO, Malaysia is a member of ASEAN as well as of the EAEC (East Asian Economic Caucus), while both the countries are also members of the OIC.

Existing Trade among Muslim Countries

Muslim countries spread over Africa, Asia and the Middle

East have also been caught up in the tide of globalization and regionalism. In the past decade or so Muslim countries have both enhanced bilateral trade relations and have struck multiple regional trade agreements primarily with their neighboring countries which are not necessarily of the same faith or creed. Geographically contiguous and historical trade relations have been the catalysts behind the emergence of these RTAs.

In South East Asia for example, there are three regional trading blocs, none of which is exclusively of Muslim countries. In terms of the degree of trade links within a bloc (intra-regional trade), the ASEAN and the EAEC are clear outliers compared to other trading blocs around the Muslim world. Within ASEAN, 23.7% of the total bloc exports are within the bloc. Similarly, the EAEC has an impressive 48.2% of its total exports within the bloc.

In South and Central Asia, we have the SAARC and the ECO. While the latter comprises primarily of Muslim countries, the former includes the ethno-religiously diverse countries in the Indian Sub-continent. Although the SAARC and the ECO have been in existence for over two decades, both are still in the preliminary stages of initiating greater economic integration among their member States. The SAARC intra-regional trade is only 4.2% while the ECO is just around 6% of the region's total trade. It is interesting to note that in the first year following the partition of the Sub-continent, India bought 56% of Pakistan's exports while years later in 2001 the strain in political relations led to the share falling down to a meager 0.42%. Hence, the potential of the SAARC and also of the ECO is yet to be realized.

Within the Middle East, there is the ACM (Arab Common Market) and the GCC. These two trading blocs are entirely comprised of Muslim countries with still a low level of intra-regional trade, i.e., 4.8% and 4.6% respectively.

The continent of Africa has around 12 different regional trade agreements. With the exception of one, the Arab Magreb Union (UMA), all the rest are multi-religious. Intra-regional trade

within the UMA is just 2.7%. The following Table shows the degree of intra-regional trade (among different RTAs) in the predominantly Muslim region of the Middle East and Asia from 1998 to 2002:

**RTAs – Middle East and Asia
Merchandise Exports within Bloc
% of Total Bloc Exports**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Arab Common Market	4.8	3.3	3.0	4.5	4.8
ASEAN	21.9	22.4	23.9	23.3	23.7
Bangkok Agreement	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.5	5.6
EAEC	42.0	43.8	46.6	46.6	48.2
ECO	6.8	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.9
GCC	8.0	6.7	4.5	4.5	4.6
SAARC	4.8	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.2
UMA	3.3	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.7

Source: *World Development Indicators*, 2004, The World Bank.

As evident from the above Table, with the exception of the multi-religious the ASEAN and the EAEC in South East Asia, none of the regional trading blocs in the Muslim world has yet achieved a respectable level of trade and economic integration.

Outside these various RTAs the amount of trade among Muslim countries is also fairly inconsequential. A look at the level of trade among the members of the OIC divulges the situation. In 2001, the members of IDB (Islamic Development Bank), an organ of the OIC, exports were a mere 6.2% of total world exports. As for the trade among member countries, in 2001 the exports accounted for just 11% of their total exports. Similarly, the total intra-IDB imports in 2001 were about 14.1% of their total imports.

Finally, looking at the pattern of trade in the Muslim region, with the exception of exports of manufactures (machinery, transport equipment) from South East Asian countries and oil exports by the OPEC members, most of the trade among Muslim countries is in primary products, i.e., food and raw materials. Hence, not only is the volume of trade limited but so is the diversity of products traded, dampening therefore the scope of trade among these countries.

In stark contrast with the paltry level of trade within RTAs in the developing Muslim region, there is a high degree of intra-regional trade within the RTAs in the developed world. This can be seen from the following Table:

**RTAs – High Income Economies
Merchandise Exports within Bloc
% of Total Bloc Exports**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
APEC	69.7	71.8	73.1	72.6	73.3
EU	56.8	62.9	61.6	60.8	60.6
NAFTA	51.7	54.6	55.7	55.5	56.7

Source: *World Development Indicators*, 2004, The World Bank.

Unlike primary goods, capital-intensive manufactures produced in relatively high income countries are differentiated products, and, as the world demands variety, there are always markets for such goods. A good example of this type of trade is the Automobile Industry in developed countries. A French Peugeot is as much in demand in the UK as is a British Volvo in France.

The Pattern of Global Trade: A North-South Interdependency

The lack of intra-regional trade among the Muslim countries (South) indicates that a significant portion, almost 85%, is still with the developed countries (North). The prevalent pattern of North-South trade in the world is based simply and squarely on the principle of comparative advantage. According to this principle, a country well endowed in a factor resource, is likely to have a comparative cost advantage in the particular product which uses that factor intensively in its production.

Most of the Muslim nations are developing countries with similar type of resource endowments and hence production structures. These countries are either well endowed with less skilled labor or have large reserves of a natural resource such as oil. Therefore, such countries tend to enjoy a comparative advantage in either primary products and hence are net exporters of these, or, sustain their foreign exchange reserves through the export of natural resources, i.e., oil and gas. Thus, the fundamental reason for the absence of substantial trade amongst the developing countries in general and the Muslim countries in particular lies in the inherent lack of differentiation or diversity in the primary goods they produce.

On the other hand, the North or the developed nations, richly endowed with technology, capital and a highly skilled labor force, are net exporters of capital intensive consumption and investment goods. Therefore, as the developing countries clothe and feed the developed nations these in return fuel their industrialization and development by exporting the much-needed capital goods. This

interdependency of world production and consumption has been there since the colonial times and unfortunately many of the Muslim countries in the developing world find themselves stuck at the lower end of this global production chain.

It has to be kept in mind that if at the behest of a regional trade agreement a country substitutes capital imports from the West with those from a relatively high-cost member country, this would entail trade diversion instead of trade creation, eventually hurting the domestic consumer. Therefore, we are locked in this comparative-advantage-based pattern of North-South trade and to expect or impose a sudden change in this would be economically inefficient, at least in the short run. The irony however is that in this North-South-based trade environment, the primary product exporting Muslim countries often find each other a competitor rather than a partner.

Improving Trade Relations among the Muslim World: Problems, Issues and Suggestions

Although statistics show that trade within these regional blocs in the Muslim world is fairly low, before pronouncing on their future potential one has to consider the actual policies pursued within these trading blocs. There are still tariff walls and quota restrictions imposed by countries within the trading blocs against the products of member States. Hence, most of these Free Trade Areas are just so in name and as yet have not been established as such in practice. Therefore, the first logical step in order to realize the potential benefits of any regional trade agreement should be the removal of any such trade restrictions.

The fact that there is a proliferation of regional trading blocs in recent years is proof in itself that the participant countries see an economic incentive in regional integration. Within the WTO framework's MFN clause, the establishment of a regional trade area allows member countries to grant each other greater benefits compared to their non-member trading partners. As an example, the countries within the SAARC can have lower tariffs

against imports within the bloc relative to outside the trading bloc. This positive discrimination is one obvious incentive of establishing free trade areas. However, the Muslim countries and their regional trading blocs have not made full use of this. To date there are a number of Muslim countries which are not WTO members and therefore do not qualify for benefits from the MFN clause.

Given some of the prevalent inequities in the global trading structure, it is imperative that Muslim countries strategize to improve and diversify their existing production structures. Regional cooperation is essential in dealing and competing with the North on better terms. The benefits of regional co-operation can be realized amongst the developing countries and in particular the Muslim countries if they follow a stage-wise or step-wise integration process which is guided by mutually beneficial economic incentives and not by purely parochial interests.

The various steps needed in this direction include basic research to investigate the benefits and costs of economic integration to prospective countries, which is currently non-existent. Because if the participating countries do not clearly understand the benefits/costs of economic integration, their response to such initiatives would remain lukewarm, as has been the case in the past. Hence, individual countries in respective regional trading areas would need to know which sectors and groups in a country are going to benefit or lose from this arrangement. One of the prerequisites for such research is the availability of reliable database from the Muslim countries, which among other things may include social accounting matrices (SAM) required in general equilibrium type models for trade policy analysis. Based on this research, the participating countries may need some time to prepare their respective countries for RTAs before their actual integration takes shape. This research initiative can be taken at the level of the OIC by outsourcing trade policy research studies to the best institutions in the world.

There is a lot of scope for Muslim countries in increasing trade and economic links with South East Asian and East Asian

countries, which are at a higher stage of development and have a much more diverse and advanced industrial base. After fully opening trade within the smaller trading blocs, there can be a systematic move towards striking greater economic ties with other more economically developed blocs. Trade would not only lead to economies of scale but would eventually result in an exchange of production methods and technology across such blocs pushing the relatively poor countries on to a higher level of growth and development. An example of such step wise integration is the APEC which is a trade agreement among the NAFTA, the ASEAN and some other countries.

Another benefit of gradually moving towards a larger free trade area would be in terms of greater access to markets which otherwise would remain monopolized by the developed countries. This would not only be directly profitable for the Muslim countries but would also improve their bargaining power in trade relations with the West.

An aspect which has not been accorded much attention in the talk of benefits of greater trade links between the *Ummah* is the role of direct investment and capital flows within the region and from outside the region.

The rates of return in capital-scarce developing countries are much higher than in the West. Thus the diversion of direct investment and portfolio investment by especially the oil rich Middle Eastern countries from Western economies to the neighboring Muslim countries would result in long-term growth and prosperity for the region.

Not only would these trade and economic links attract investment within the member countries but would also increase the flow of foreign investment. Potential access to larger markets and factor resources coupled by the sense of greater economic and policy stability present within larger trading and economic blocs would attract more foreign capital to the region.

However, in order to attract more foreign investment it would be essential for countries in the regional bloc to both

improve their existing institutions, in particular those that enforce the rule of law, and reduce excessive bureaucratic regulation.

Finally, establishment of joint public sector investment programs, human development projects and mechanisms to ensure a transfer of technology among member States are other important beneficial aspects of a stage-wise greater regional economic integration.

Concluding Comments

This was a very preliminary attempt to look at the current situation, problems and potential for trade amongst the Muslim countries. The most important aspect underlying the discussion is the need for a strategy of integration which is stage-wise and is based on economic incentives and benefits rather than on purely religious or ethnic affinities. Once smaller RTAs within the Muslim World reach a certain level of maturity then we can move to inter-regional links and finally there can be wider integration with the *Ummah*. Such an approach would by itself create the opportunity for the Muslim countries to reap greater benefits from free trade and globalization.

An ongoing process is to have further discussion and debate on the issue at appropriate forums. Regional seminars, workshops and university-based research on this area is imperative. Dissemination of information and ideas along with greater coordination and cooperation between the private and the public sectors of member countries is crucial for building a successful mechanism for further economic integration. There has to be a thorough groundwork done before we take the steps towards improving our existing regional trade relations and before embarking on the next stage of inter-regional links.

My experience of moving towards an FTA with Sri Lanka, though still in the process, showed the high degree of commitment that is required over a number of years before such an agreement could be concluded.



THE ROLE OF THE ISLAMIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT IN THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES

AQEEL A. AL-JASSEM*

It is a great honor for me to be here today, amongst such notable thinkers and intellectuals. I wish to extend my thanks to the Hamdard Foundation Pakistan for inviting me to this very important Conference, the Inaugural of which we witnessed on Friday and had the unique pleasure of hearing Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, one of the dynamic leaders of the Muslim world.

As has been stated by the speakers in the Inaugural Session and has also been reflected in the papers presented in today's session, the consensus is something that we all know, that is, now the Muslim *Ummah* needs to think collectively and evolve strategies which could enable us to face the emerging challenges.

The topic of this session, namely Economic, Financial and Trade Status is the central point for any development. We have

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just heard two excellent papers by none other than Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh and Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood. With both these personalities, I have had the honour to speak at length, about the existing potentials within the Islamic world and how it has not been fully utilized and what should be the direction.

Their papers have addressed the pertinent issues for the need to devise ways and means for greater economic cohesion and to improve the trade relations among the Islamic countries. Both these aspects are attainable but, as has been pointed out by the speakers, the current level of intra-Islamic country trade shows a different picture. The papers while addressing the core issues provide a direction that needs to be followed, so that we could survive this period of economic stagnation.

The overall conditions for the private sector participation in the economic development have improved over the years in the OIC member countries, but further improvement is still needed. Encouragement of the private sector, specially for trade promotion, is an important plank of governments' policies. There are a number of constraints which have to be overcome in order that the private sector can play its role to the fullest. It is necessary to be clear that in order to promote trade, we must ensure security and profitability.

Investment is attracted mostly through private sector, which must be allowed adequate return on equity, and there must also be an assurance that industry would be enabled to generate funds within replacement, modernization and expansion.

The OIC member countries are characterized by diverse economic structures; some have minimal private sector activities and dominant public sectors. We also have members where private-sector-led growth is recognized as the key to economic development as a direct result of the government's proactive approach towards creating an enabling environment for private sector development.

For sustained economic growth and development, the public and private sectors need to complement each other in the overall

development effort. Therefore, we need to use this Forum as an opportunity to look into this and recognize the real benefits to all involved in strong partnership and the benefits this will generate for each of our countries and the *Ummah* as a whole. We need to redefine the relationship between the private and the public sectors.

At present, the level of trade among the Muslim countries does not reflect the available opportunities. The OIC countries import only 13.5% from the member countries (the share of fuel in this overall import is around 5.6%) and 86.5% of trade is being done with other countries. The reasons could be many, but I feel that we are at this present level because of lack of education, lack of infrastructure, narrow export-base and in addition to above lack of awareness about each others potentials.

Conferences like this are very important to connect the people and to synergize the strengths for the collective benefit. Export-diversification could be achieved by industrialization through developing SMEs and for this, joint ventures should be established with other member countries which have excelled in hi-tech resources and are converting their raw materials into manufactured goods by value addition.

With your permission, I would now like to briefly inform you of the activities the Islamic Chamber is undertaking for strengthening economic cooperation through public-private sector partnership. As many or some of you may know, the Islamic Chamber is an affiliated institution of the OIC established in 1978 following the decision of the Seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers. Among its activities is the holding of annual Private Sector Meetings, Investment and Privatization Conferences, Workshops on Small and Medium Enterprises, Seminars, Training Programmes, Exchange of Trade Delegations, holding of Exhibitions and development of Database.

Co-operation is a powerful instrument, through which nations combine their strengths, resources and are empowered. To enhance the economic cooperation among the member countries,

and realizing the need and utility of the public-private sector interaction, it was during the 1st OIC Business Forum held in Putrajaya in 2003 that the Islamic Chamber forwarded the idea of holding economic conferences on an yearly basis along the lines of the DAVOS Economic Summit.

Later on, I discussed the idea with Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the then Prime Minister, H.E. Ahmet Needet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Abdelouahed Belkeziz, Secretary General of OIC, and H.E. Ahmed Mohammad Ali, President of IDB. *Alhamdulillah*, the idea was well received and now in November during the 20th Session of the COMCEC an OIC Economic Conference is being held in Istanbul on 23-27 November 2004, which in future would be held regularly.

Before I conclude, I would like to inform this august gathering about our future events:

- The Second OIC Business Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 5-6 October 2004
- The First Forum of Tourism, in Riyadh-Saudi Arabia, 6-8 December 2004.
- The First Forum for Muslim Businesswomen, in Sharjah-U.A.E, 4-6 January 2005. The theme of this Forum is to strengthen the socio-economic capacity of the Muslim businesswomen in order to enhance their role in the economic development of their respective countries
- The 11th Private Sector Meeting in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, 5-7 February 2005
- The International Islamic Economic and Cultural Conference, in Lahore-Pakistan, March 2005
- The First OIC-China Joint Venture Investment Conference and Trade Fair in Beijing, China, 20-22 April 2005
- The 4th Meeting of the OIC Task Force on SMEs in Bangkok, Thailand in 2005

Now, I would like to conclude my remarks by referring to the general idea that has emerged from the sessions held so far.

There is a need for the *Ummah* to join its ranks on all levels, particularly on the economic level, for each nation to work individually and collectively for the betterment of their people, and I would like to refer to a Malaysian saying quoted by Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad during his Keynote Address: "It is better to have a slice of a cake of a growing economy than a slice of a cake of a diminishing economy."

Before concluding, I wish to extend, as a Kuwaiti national, to the new Government of Pakistan under the dynamic leadership of H.E. Shaukat Aziz, my sincerest good wishes and success. I would also like to congratulate my dear brother, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh, for his reappointment as Federal Minister for Investment and Privatization.

In the end, I would once again thank the organizers of this Conference for inviting the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry and for providing an opportunity to contribute these ideas.



MANY APPROACHES NEEDED ON MANY FRONTS

HUMAYOUN IHSAN*

The concept of functionalism and neo-functionalism and a great integrity of jurisprudence have been developed over time. Many commissions were formed and it took many hundreds of years to benefit and look and carefully study the common denominators available to them to work on those common denominators. Thereupon gradually was built the unified Europe.

It is true that Muslims must have the veto power; this veto power never has been a serious question. We must be very realistic. We do not deserve it in our present condition. Although obviously we would be more than happy to have it, our hands are not clean enough and strong enough to hold such a modern device. We need thoroughly to impeach ourselves before we could think about the participation in power politics. That a clash of civilizations exists is fairly obvious. The question is whether Muslims propose to participate in this clash. If they fall into the trap of the use of weapons and guns, it is too late for them to

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respond in such a way. They have never prepared themselves for that. They are now in no position to fall in this trap.

Western people have many good qualities; they have a civil society and they are very loveable people. At the same time, they have no compunction in killing people on a mass scale; it does not prick their conscience.

Muslim glory is a historical reality, but when Muslims were losing their glory why were not people responding to that? Are we not in the same state of psychology? Actually the Muslims adopted the easy course of submissiveness in activity and they slavishly pursued efficient Western models.

Dr. Dietrich Reetz in his paper highlighted human linkages and the potential of linkages between the Muslim and the Western worlds. When last month I attended a conference in Germany to read a paper there, I found myself that Germany is a great base for Muslims to introduce themselves and also to learn from the Western world. Dr. Reetz has mentioned Allama Iqbal in his paper as a great visionary. It is true that Allama Iqbal drew many principles from Nietzsche, Goethe and Kant for the Muslim *Ummah*. German philosophical traditions are still very relevant and are a model for the Muslim world. Dr. Reetz has also mentioned about many forums and opportunities available in Germany, and I think the Muslim world is not ready to match those opportunities. Nevertheless, it is to be constantly kept in mind that so many opportunities are available for Muslims in Europe. Great Islamic scholarship has developed and is to develop in Europe, because Europeans have a great tradition to think independently. What Mahathir Mohamad was mentioning and emphasizing passionately in his speech at the inaugural Session of the Conference was that "don't go into the petty things, look at the grand scheme of things." I am not saying that we must follow them, but we must likewise try to develop the Muslim scholarship as well.

Ahsan Iqbal has so much to say like everybody else. I really respect his positive approach. When we look at the Islamic glory,

some of the lay people like me, want to recapitulate it, that is, to have a replay of the history. I think this is a questionable desire, because at this moment we do not want to enter into the *Jahilliah* (ignorance) age, we are living in an enlightened world which has its own strong points as well as problems. Muslim glory, for instance, will not mean the glory of Spain ruled by Muslims. Spain must be ruled by the Spaniards. Muslim glory means that Muslims should go back to the holy Prophet's attitude that before addressing the world he asked questions about himself; so that he could be judged first: 'look at my integrity, my past and my deeds and then give me an opportunity to open a dialogue'. I wish that the Muslim leaders of today would likewise present themselves and ask: 'how much of a role model we are for you?'. If people accept them as such, only then they should start speaking. The relevance of the glory, according to my limited understanding, is resurrection of human beings. The glory is to be rebuilt from the ashes by the people of great qualities otherwise we would keep on repeating that in more than 1.3 billion Muslims there is no heir to the great Muslim civilization. Spiritual concepts are at status quo and such a great culture and history see no way forward only because in the present day Muslims the human qualities have no relevance to that kind of heritage.

Ahsan Iqbal rightly put emphasis on Industrial Revolution. But in between, there have been several other revolutions, that is, the Copernician revolution, the Newton concept, the Cardegian revolution, Francis Bacon's contributions, the Renaissance, followed by the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. I am not saying that we should go back to the Dark Ages again and come out of that step by step. What I am saying is that our educational system, as he rightly pointed out, is the answer to many of our problems. Our educational system must prepare people at a very early stage to come out of the darkness to the age of renaissance.

At the second stage, we must enlighten our students at the intermediate level. We must feed them with scientific concepts

and then at the graduate level we must prepare them for specialization. Unless we go through these steps, it is not possible to develop the human quality and mind, capable of meeting the scientific requirements of this age. You cannot suddenly produce a human being who can go into the sophistication of science, arts and philosophical concepts.

One of the conclusions that has come out is that we need to teach our people realism and a great sense of proportion. I, as a school teacher, very frequently face a situation that younger people expect too much too quickly from the society. Our people as a whole are not very hard working people. I am very frequently told that we are the best workers when we go abroad. Yes, we are the best workers. Unfortunately that is the quality of slaves; they do not work hard in their own environment and when the environment is changed, they are the best workers. We must tell our people to work hard in their own environment. Because of a prolonged non-merit system and corruption which has become a way of life in our society, people have become unrealistic and have unrealistic expectations. We need to build a civic and egalitarian society. We need to inculcate confidence and determination in our people.

As regards the political scenario, according to my way of thinking, the Muslim world is not apart or different from the rest of the world. The Muslims must know that they are the part of the world of today. They must learn that they have lost their space in this world. We know that the power principles of the West are not very fair. But if we need to earn our space back into this world, we must learn to cope up with the necessities of the time.

One aspect less discussed which, I think, is the essential part of today's politics, is the domain of the legal regime. Personally I feel the heat of conventions. I think Muslim societies in the last fifteen years have been badly trapped in these conventions. Saddam, as I think, was a wicked person. It was his historical mistake to attack Iran. It was another mistake to attack

Kuwait. He killed Shias and Kurds. But in late 1990s, not providing medicines to the Iraqi children, going beyond proportions just to kill a culture and to destroy a country, was something worse. Such sanctions cannot be legal. We must have legal treaties among ourselves, which should not go against the UN Charter and the established norms of International Law. But we must also invoke that we as Muslims have a responsibility towards fellow Muslims. I am not saying that only Iraqi children must have been provided with medicines; even children of non-Muslim countries must be provided with medicines.

Sanctions regimes are only political regimes. They are suffocating, and I do not think they are in accordance with the international law.

As a generally softening factor, there must be many cultural and sport links between the Muslim and the non-Muslim societies. We need to produce mentally and physically fit people for the modern day society.

I am concluding with a question: Under what conditions will cooperation emerge in a world of egoists without central authority? The answer to this is a strong government, supported by a disciplined corporate effort with the religious faith as its inspiration and with necessary political authority and technical equipment at its command.



CHANGING ROLE OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN THE MODERN WORLD

TALAT AYESHA WIZARAT*

Change is the only constant factor in history. It is the changing patterns of socio-political and economic interactions among groups of people which move society forward. Muslim society is no exception and generally speaking the role of Muslim women has been changing with the passage of time. The pace of change, however, has varied greatly in different Muslim societies at different times. The pace of change is attributable to a number of factors. The role played by modern education or the lack of it cannot be ignored. The level of economic development within Muslim countries is often related to social change, thereby affecting the role of women in society. The attitude of men and their approach towards the place of women in society could also have an impact on the pace of change.

An important factor to be taken into consideration at the outset concerns our perceptions about change. Change is often taken to be synonymous with progress. Is the changing role of

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Muslim women in the world of today truly a sign of progress? Another important issue to be tackled is how do we measure this process of change particularly if it is regarded as a sign of progress? What is the backdrop or yardstick to be relied on while determining whether change has indeed taken place?

Since the subject of discussion is the Muslim world and the role of Muslim women in particular, the search for relevant factors should begin with the Holy Qur'an, the sayings of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the role played by Muslim women in early Muslim society.

The Qur'an makes female education an obligation which all parents have to fulfil irrespective of the gender of their offspring¹. When acquiring education is determined to be a basic right of all Muslims, no distinction is made by the Qur'an regarding gender. It is interesting to note that the Qur'an does not prescribe any particular type of education for women. In accordance with Muslim philosophy of education, it has to be a healthy blend of religious and secular branches of knowledge. Since education is an essential ingredient of empowerment, by making it compulsory for Muslim women the Qur'an opens the doors of progress for them.

A second major area where Islam contributed towards improving the lot of women was the right to own property and the right of inheritance. This was a radical step which enhanced the status of women. So far as women's right to own property is concerned, even pre-Islamic Arabia offered a few examples of it, even though women were not given any share in the property of their parents.

Muslim women, besides enjoying the right of inheritance in the property of their parents and husbands, indulged in business and other occupations like farming, and owned property in their own name².

The Qur'an also makes it obligatory to acquire the consent of women at the time of marriage³. A Muslim marriage not based on the consent of women (or men) is not to be considered legal.

Women were allowed by the Prophet (ﷺ) to say their prayers in the mosque⁴. This was far from being a symbolic gesture as the mosque was the centre of all social and political activities in the Islamic society. All important decisions regarding war and peace were made there. Women participated in discussions and gave their opinions⁵.

According to some scholars, women have the right to form organizations to plead their cause. The Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have received at least two women delegations in his life time⁶. The rationale behind this was that issues confronting women could best be tackled by them while remaining within the framework of *Shari'ah*.

All these rights did not exist only on paper as frequently happens in some countries even today. They were actually enjoyed by Muslim women more than fourteen centuries ago.

A pertinent question to ask oneself at this stage would be why and how Muslim women lost the rights given to them by the Qur'an?

The answer is to be found in historical and sociological forces at work when Islam spread beyond the confines of Arabia. As it reached other parts of the world, it interacted with a myriad of cultures and religions. Although the core of Islam remained intact, the new converts arrived at a new cultural equilibrium by blending aspects of their old culture with the requirements of their new religion. This assimilation took different forms and reflected itself in a variety of ways. In many of these societies, women enjoyed a lower status. Feudalism and tribalism made things even worse for women. Honour killings, refusal to recognize women's right of inheritance, reluctance to marry them outside the family or seek their consent at the time of marriage and negation of women's right to seek education are fairly common in some Muslim societies even in the twenty-first century. These problems can to a large extent be attributed to feudalism and tribalism.

With the introduction of colonialism, things did not improve much even though some western scholars try to project colonialism

as a civilizing phase. Colonial powers were primarily interested in raw materials and markets, i.e., economic advantages. Their interest in changing the society was neither elementary nor sustained.

However, with the emergence of liberation movements directed against the colonial powers, women too participated in these struggles. In Palestine, Algeria and Morocco, women soon became involved in struggles to free their countries. They participated in the freedom struggles in a variety of ways. In Morocco women frequently carried messages and arms for the freedom fighters⁷. In the case of Algeria and Palestine⁸, women actually participated in armed struggle.

Muslim struggle for independence in South Asia was mostly a constitutional battle. Women played a role in this with active encouragement from no less a person than Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Iranian women played a direct role in bringing about the Islamic revolution in Iran even though the Shah had tried to win over their minds by giving them some social and political rights.

The role played by women in fostering the anti-colonial movement gave them practical experience of struggle in modern world. After this kind of experience it was simply not feasible for governments to try to exclude women from politics and social life of the country.

Many governments took steps to enhance the role of women in national life. The Peoples Party government in Turkey headed by Mustafa Kemal introduced many reforms which contributed to growth in the role of women. Colonel Abdul Naser also introduced reforms covering all walks of life. His reform programme had the effect of giving women substantial new powers. In Iraq after 1958, successive governments introduced far-reaching reforms. Educational faculties for women were greatly expanded, job opportunities were developed and family laws favourable to women were introduced. During 1960s, the Government of Pakistan introduced new laws which had the

effect of giving women more rights under the Muslim Family Law Ordinance. In Bangladesh, incentives have been given to promote female education. Grameen Bank has introduced schemes for empowerment of women. In Malaysia and Indonesia the percentage of educated women has increased tremendously. Women also play a much greater role today in economic and political spheres. The overall progress made by the two Muslim States is also reflected in the role of women. Mrs. Megawati Soekarnoputri⁹ got elected to the office of President in Indonesia which in itself is a clear indication of the changing role of women in the Muslim world.

Recently, women have been given 1/3rd representation in the parliament of Pakistan. This development is expected to lead to progress in promoting the interests of women. However, in spite of the presence of women in such large numbers, the national and provincial assemblies have so far not succeeded in introducing legislation to curb 'honour killings'.

A brief look at the role of Muslim women in non-Muslim societies will be in order. The Government of People's Republic of China in collaboration with some international institutions introduced radical schemes to empower women and to fight poverty. In the Xin Jiang province, these schemes have been particularly successful. According to some accounts, this step has already contributed to social change. Women are playing a greater role in decision-making at all levels¹⁰.

Muslim women belonging to middle class and upper middle class have long been active in the fields of teaching, medicine, politics, media and even entertainment. Indian government has tried to introduce legislation affecting marital laws but the Muslim community of India has not been supportive of the idea. These reservations are due to fears that the Indian government might introduce legislation repugnant to Islamic injunctions.

In Europe, the U.S. and Russia, Muslim women have faced challenges of a different nature. The governments and media in western countries often accuse Muslim community of suppressing the women-folk. However, the scarf issue has shown that Muslim

women are under pressure from the Western governments too. The Muslim women in France will now have to choose between their religion and their right to acquire modern education. This could carry long-term consequences for the role of Muslim women in Europe.

Muslim women in societies/countries struggling for independence are being increasingly confronted with challenging situations. Whether it is Palestine¹¹, Kashmir¹², or any other society¹³, women are playing a variety of roles. As mothers, they are responsible for creating awareness in their children to resist repression while also trying to protect them. They are working in various capacities in hospitals and schools. Their role in the resistance movement is documented and can hardly be ignored. For women still struggling to achieve independence, the nature of challenge is quite different. Those who live in non-Muslim societies are often called upon to choose between their religious obligations and exercise of their rights as citizens.

The rest of Muslim women (i.e., Muslim women living in States where Muslim population is predominant) have in some cases come a long way. Legislation favourable to women has been passed but its results have not yet reached majority of women. Legislation, although a necessary tool for protecting the interests of women and for empowering them, cannot be sufficient in isolation from other factors. A change in the mindset of men and women can come through education. Teachers, *Ulema* and the media can play crucial roles towards promoting this goal.

REFERENCES

1. Afzular Rahman, *Role of Muslim Women in Society*, London, Seerah Foundation, 1986, p. 9; Women have less rights than men insofar as men in number of wives, divorce and offering witness, where the witness of one man equals that of two women.

2. Islam gave this right to women more than fourteen centuries ago, a right which was not enjoyed by women in many Western countries right upto the twentieth century.
3. This right is not recognized even for men in some societies, parents often trying to monopolise the right to make matches.
4. Muslim women continued to enjoy this right even during the first caliphs rule.
5. Numerous examples have been quoted by scholars, such as Wahidudeen Khan, *Women between Islam and Western Society*, New Delhi, Spectrum Offset Printers, 1997, p. 140.
6. Fatima Mernissi, *Women and Islam*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1991.
7. Alison Baker, *Voices of Resistance*, New York, State University of New York Press, 1998, gives an excellent account of the role of Women in Morocco's war of independence.
8. For the role of Palestinian women see Leila Khalid, *My People Shall Live*.
9. Ms. Benazir Bhutto was twice elected Prime Minister of Pakistan; Turkey and Bangladesh have also had women Prime Ministers.
10. *Dawn*, 18th October 1996.
11. Several Palestinian girls have participated in operation martyrdom.
12. Aasia Andrabi and members of *Dukhtaran-e-Islam* have organized Human Right organization and organized demonstrations against Indian occupation.
13. In Chechnya too, women fighters have been in the forefront.



SELECTED COMPARATIVE MALE/FEMALE DATA IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES

SHAMEIM KAZMI*

In the context of the role of Muslim women in the modern world, it would be useful to highlight the demographic status of the Muslim world, based on the OIC Countries Census Survey. It goes without saying that both the sexes are the key resource for human development; serious effort is needed to mobilize these resources of the Muslim world to meet the challenges of today. According to the OIC countries' data, in most of the Muslim countries women outlive men, indicating a high ratio of aging female population. But none of the Muslim countries has a clear-cut policy for the protection of the aging and dependent female population. Even those Muslim countries, which claim to have a social policy, do not encompass the women and the girls. In the rural economy too, women are more active than men; however, these agricultural women remain an obscure component of the labour force. So far as adult literacy rate is concerned, in most of the Muslim countries the male/female ratio is 70:30%. According to the data, given out by the OIC, out of the 57 Muslim

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countries, only 19 have adult literacy rate above 80%. The countries having high literacy must give a helping hand to those countries which lag behind.

The core concern is to find the true identity of Muslim women, because Muslim women are in a conflict situation, searching their identity due to interpretation of the Qur'an and Islam by the politicians, dictators, fundamentalists and extremists groups. One Muslim leader ordains women to liberalize and shun the veil, and then another leader enforces strict *purdah* and *hijab*. In order to divert the attention from pressing national issues of poverty, security, etc., their first targets are usually women, and interpretation of the Qur'an is usually made according to their wishes and whims. I fail to understand why the issue of women to wear veil is more important and urgent than the issues of poverty, hunger and technological development.

Another important issue concerning women is trafficking. This reprehensible practice is being followed mostly in Muslim areas. Muslim women are being picked not only from Muslim countries but also from Muslim pockets in non-Muslim countries. Their touts are also Muslim men. Unfortunately for both the supply and use of women, the Muslims are responsible mostly. In many of the Muslim countries, *fatwahs* and ordinances are quickly passed related to women; protective laws on the contrary are few and less forceful. Women should be encouraged to read and understand the Holy Qur'an in their own language and obtain guidance for leading an honest life. No one has the right to give a *fatwah* against another Muslim that he/she is not a Muslim. Everybody is answerable to Allah for his/her deeds. Have we forgotten the Day of Judgment?

We can divide Muslim world into two blocs – rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots. Both blocs should rise from their prejudices and make deliberate efforts to bridge the gap between the haves and the have-nots, to change the life of the whole Muslim world. Why can the rich Muslim countries not come forward to help poor Muslim countries? The *Zakat* of rich

Muslim world may be used in raising education status of the poor Muslim men and women. Unless Muslims shun their racial superiority attitude and improve their arrogant behavior to consider women as a valuable asset of human resource, nothing can be done for the betterment of the Muslim *Ummah*.

Highlights

- Out of 57 Countries, 13 Countries have equal or more than equal female population, Indonesia having more females than males.
- Life Expectancy:
Women live longer than men, almost in all the 57 countries, U.A.E, Kuwait and Jordan having high female Life Expectancy Ratio.
- Urban/Rural:
70% Urban, 30% Rural, exceptions being Sudan and Sierra Leone.
- Literacy:
Out of 57 OIC Countries 19 have above 80% literate population, the highest being Tajikistan, and the lowest being Albania in the group.

DEMOGRAPHY

Country	Popul. (million)		Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)		Share of Urban Pop. (%)	Share of Rural Pop. (%)	Active Total Pop. (Million)	Active Pop. (Million) Male	Active Pop. (Million) Female	Total No. of Nurses	Adult Literacy Rate (%)
	Male	Female	Male	Female							
Afghanistan	1.7	1.72	43	44	23	77	1.09	0.67	0.42	11590	42.5
Albania	15.8	15.6	72	77	44	56	8.8	7.5	0.13	77520	85.3
Algeria	3.88	4.03	62	69	52	48	3.8	2	0.18	60030	67.8
Azerbaijan	0.4	0.28	73	76	90	10	0.28	0.23	0.05	2313	97
Bahrain	2.82	2.82	62	63	26	74	58.9	36.1	22.8	17446	87.9
Bangladesh	0.18	0.15	51	55	44	56	0.17	0.1	0.07	1867	51.3
Benin	7.5	7.38	42	44	17	83				1610	94.7
Brunei	4.26	4.46	48	49	50	50				4003	24.8
Burkina Faso			47	50	24	76				1160	72.4
Cameroon			58	60	32.7	67.3					44.2
Chad			45	46	44	56					56
Comoros			43	45	83	17					49.6
Cote d'Ivoire	35	33	72	68	45	55	17.9	14.6	3.3	129688	85.5
Djibouti			52	54	83	17					56
Egypt			52	55	32	68					71
Gabon			46	47	28	72					37.8
Gambia			59	68	33	67					41
Guinea			65	69	37.6	62.4					39.6
Guinea Bissau	100.96	103.46			43	57	92.77	54.9	35.97	85425	98.6
Guyana											87.3
Indonesia											

Contd....

Country	Popul. (million)		Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)		Share of Urban Pop. (%)	Share of Rural Pop. (%)	Active Total Pop. (Million)	Active Pop. (Million) Male	Active Pop. (Million) Female	Total No. of Nurses	Adult Literacy Rate (%)
	Male	Female	Male	Female							
Iran	33.8	32.7	68	70	66	34	19.9	16.6	3.3	152396	80.9
Iraq	8.9	17.44	58	59	67.8	32.2	4.85	4.35	0.5	12533	58
Jordan	2.87	2.54	71	72	79.8	20.2	1.14	0.99	0.15	2180	94.7
Kazakhstan	7.2	7.7	60	72	56.4	43.6	6.69	3.47	3.22	115006	99.4
Kuwait	1.51	0.97	75	79	100	0	1.4	1.05	0.35	10036	92.3
Kyrgyzstan	2.48	2.53	64	72	35	65	2.1	1.2	0.9	32500	98.7
Lebanon	2.01	1.32	69	73	90	10					86.5
Libya			70	75	68	12				27169	80.8
Malaysia	11.9	11.37	71	76	59	41	8.6	6.09	2.88	26029	87.9
Maldives	0.14	0.14	71	72	27	73	0.09	0.06	0.03	651	98.9
Mali			40	42	32	68				18134	26.4
Mauritania			49	53	60	40					40.7
Morocco	14.91	15.11	66	70	57.2	42.8	9.62	7.1	2.52		49.8
Mozambique	8.49	9.17	40	42	34	66	9.32	4.32	5	3664	45.2
Niger			46	47	22	78					16.5
Nigeria			45	46	46	54					65.4
Oman	1.44	1.09	73	76	77	23	0.28	0.23	0.05	8000	73
Pakistan	76.8	69.5	63	65	33.1	66.8	44.1	37	7.1	48809	51.6
Palestine	1.85	1.8	71	74	67	33	0.59	0.49	0.1	2562	91
Qatar	0.39	0.2	73	75	100	0	0.33	0.28	0.05	2296	81.7

Contd....

Country	Popul. (million)		Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)		Share of Urban Pop.(%)	Share of Rural Pop.(%)	Active Total Pop. (Million)	Active Pop. (Million) Male	Active Pop. (Million) Female	Total No. of Nurses	Adult Literacy Rate (%)
	Male	Female	Male	Female							
Saudi Arabia	13.2	9.5	69	76	87	13	6	5	1	37126	77.1
Senegal			51	54	49	51					38.3
Sierra Leone			36	39	38	62					36
Somalia			46	49	28	72					24
Sudan	16.52	16.25	57	60	38	62	7.9	5.5	2.4	16199	50
Suriname			68	73	50	50	0.09	0.05	0.03		94
Syria	8.98	8.57	69	73	50.1	49.9	4.82	3.93	0.89	28325	75.3
Tajikistan	3.2	3.3	64	70	28	72	1.85	0.98	0.87	28586	99.5
Togo			49	51	34	66					58.4
Tunisia	4.8	4.8	71	75	67	33	2.63	1.99	0.64	27050	72.1
Turkey	35.69	35.02	66	71	66.2	33.8	23.88	17.06	6.8	75879	85.5
Turkmenistan	2.22	2.29	61	68	45	55					98
U.A.E.	2.75	1.29	74	79	75.2	24.8	2.48	2.12	0.36	13211	78
Uganda	10.7	10.92	43	44	15	85	0.83	0.39	0.44		68
Uzbekistan	11.14	11.55	64	70	37	63	8.1	4.6	3.5		99.2
Yemen	9.8	10.1	56	58	25	75	3.62	2.73	0.89	8326	47.7
	<u>466.32</u>	<u>460.07</u>									

Source: Statistical Yearbook of The OIC Countries, 2004.

Published by:

Statistical Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries

Population in Millions — Male Female

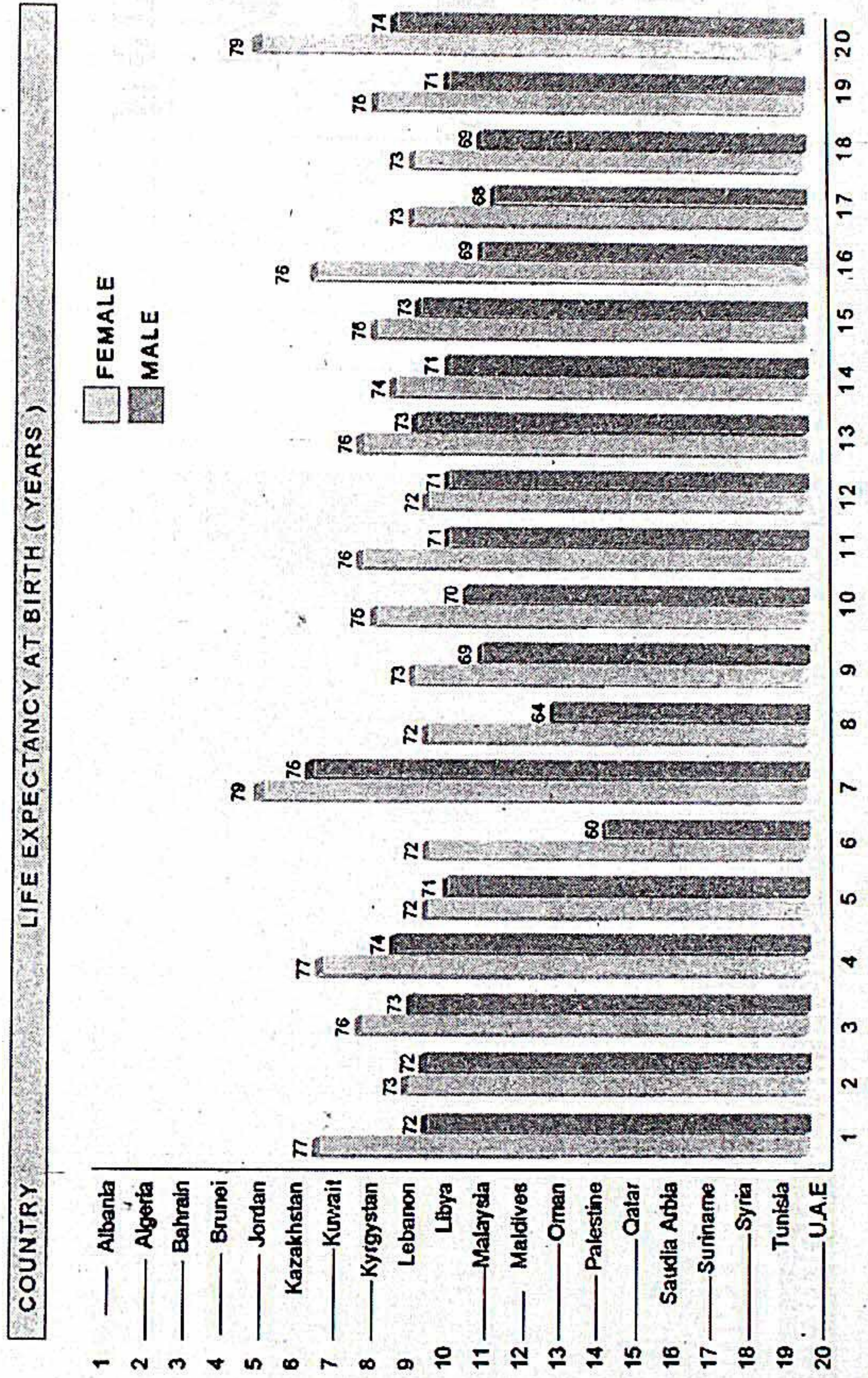
Female

Male

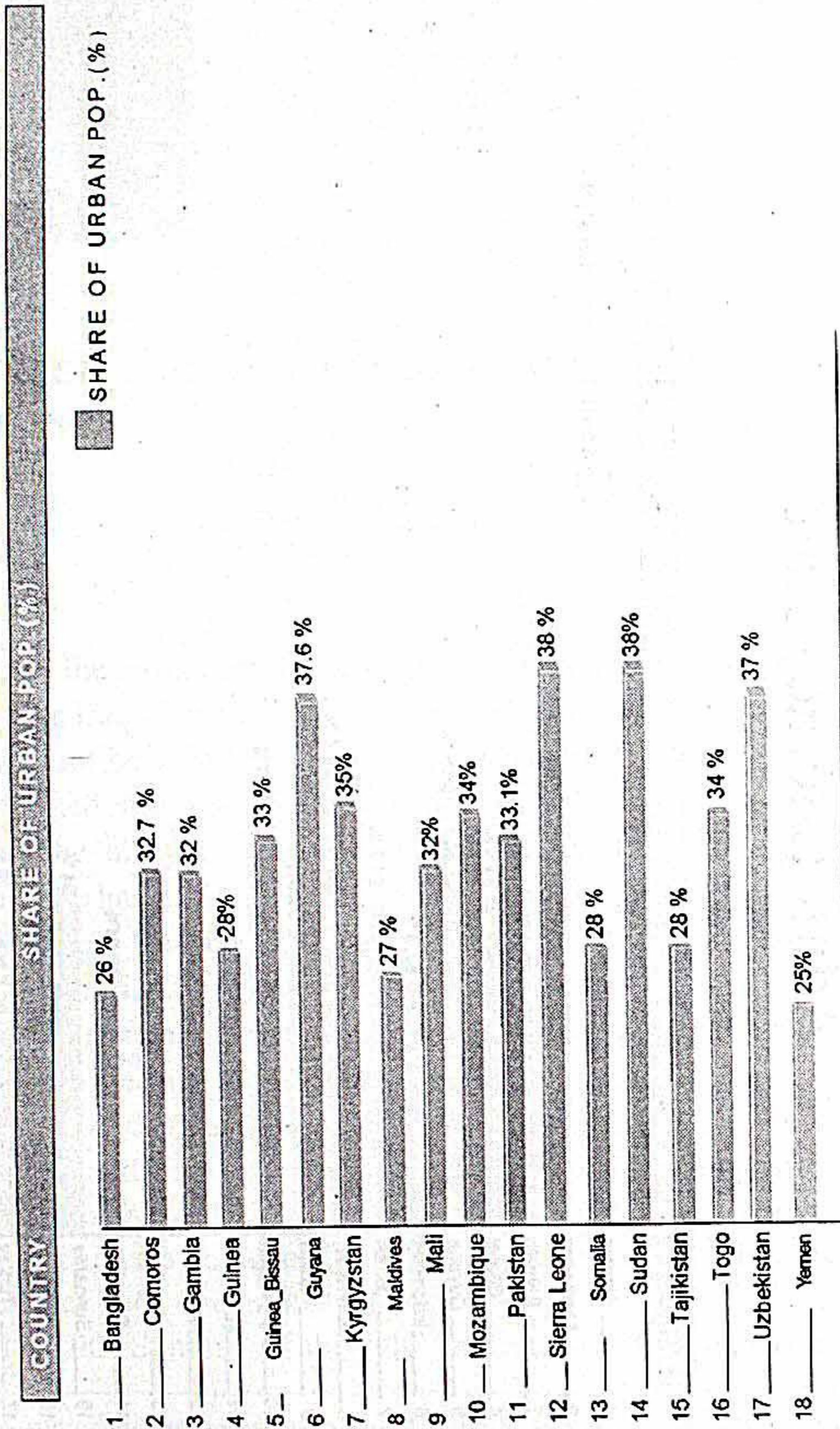
POPULATION IN MILLIONS — MALE / FEMALE

COUNTRY	FEMALE	MALE
Albania	1.72	1.70
Azerbaijan	4.03	3.88
Chad	4.46	4.26
Indonesia	103.46	100.96
Iraq	17.44	8.90
Kazakhstan	7.70	7.20
Kyrgyzstan	2.53	2.48
Malaysia	11.37	11.90
Morocco	15.11	14.97
Mozambique	9.17	8.49
Uganda	10.92	10.70
Uzbekistan	11.55	11.14
Yamen	10.10	9.80

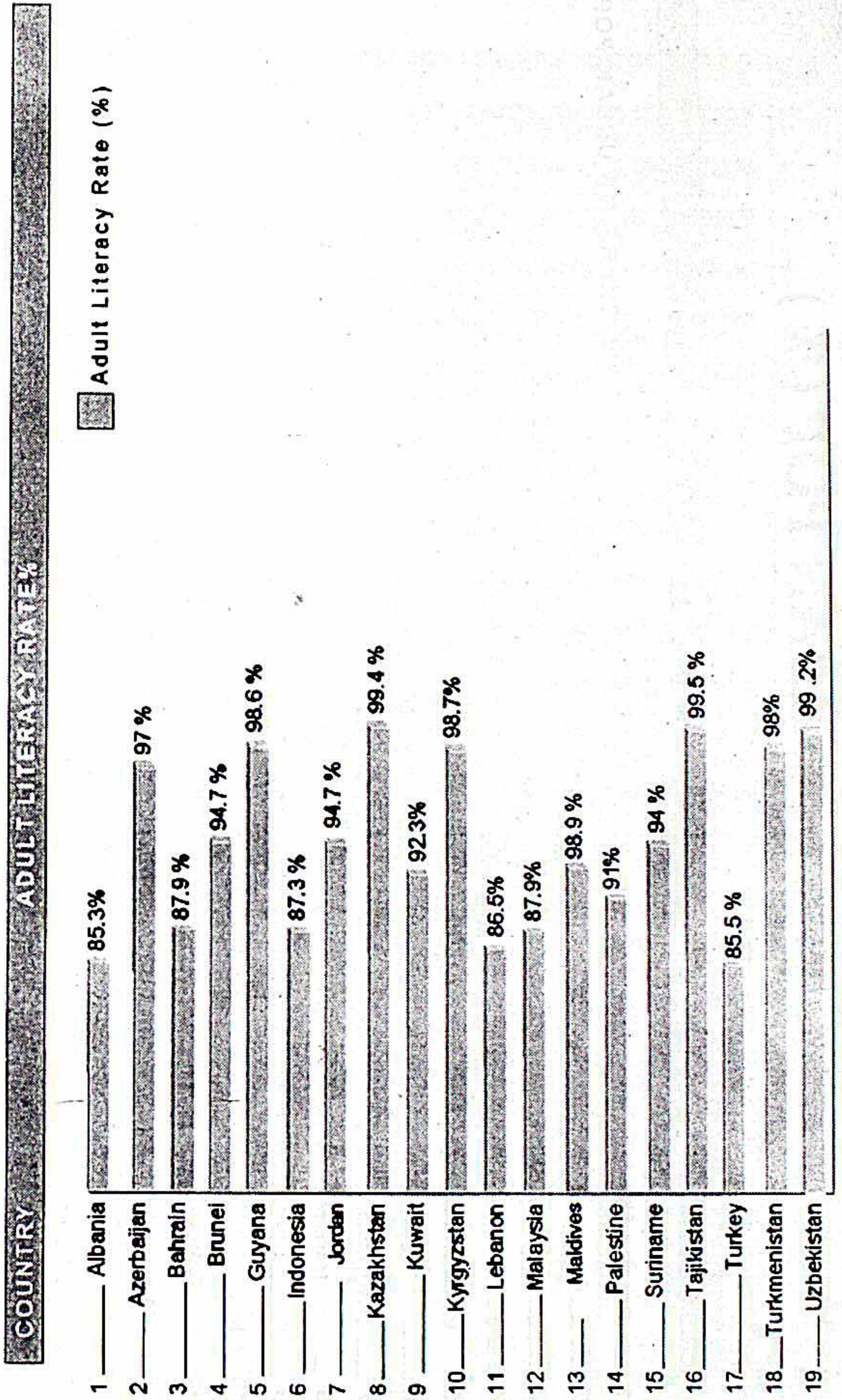
Life Expectancy at Birth (Years) Male / Female



Share of URBAN POP (%)



Adult Literacy Rate





NEED FOR AN ISLAMIC TV CHANNEL

BURHANUDDIN HASAN*

When the armies of Mr. Bush decide to trample any Muslim country like Iraq which has the guts to stand up to him, terrorism alone will not be able to stop the US onslaught. Only the unity and combined strength of the Muslim *Ummah* can do so. But how can the unity of the *Ummah* be achieved, when every Muslim State has its own axe to grind? Many of those who have the most potent weapon of oil have given it to the US and other Western countries on contract.

There are two international Muslim organizations, the OIC and the Arab League. Both have failed to achieve their mandate to unite the *Ummah*, and make it strong and powerful. They just meet, speak and disperse. The OIC had come into being after the burning of Al-Aqsa mosque to teach a lesson to the Jewish State and achieve a homeland for the Palestinians. Both missions have not yet been accomplished.

The 10th Summit of the OIC in October 2003 ended in

*A senior electronic media person presently serving as an Advisor to the Chief Executive of GEO Television.

Putrajaya, the capital of Malaysia, with a whimper after issuing a watered down communiqué on various volatile issues facing the Muslim *Ummah* today; notably terrorism and Iraq. More than 30 Heads of State and governments, who attended the 57-member OIC Summit in a tense atmosphere of crisis, pledged to contribute to multilateral efforts to counter this scourge. The Summit called for the signing of a convention to “distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate struggle for the right to self-determination of people living under occupation or foreign domination”.

This is probably the mildest statement that could have been issued by the OIC on the fast-spreading wave of terrorism all over the world, which the US and other Western nations have described as a crusade unleashed by Islam against freedom and democracy. The edict of “Axis of Evil” passed by the US President against some Muslim nations was conveniently ignored. The legitimate causes, which are contributing to terrorism in Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan, were not forcefully addressed. The most serious human rights violation by the US in the case of Muslim prisoners detained in sub-human conditions at Guantanamo Bay without trial was not even mentioned although it is being severely criticized by human rights activists in America and the rest of the world. The inhuman conditions in which these poor souls are living in cages behind barbed wires are not fully known to the world because the US government which claims to be the greatest champion of freedom of information did not allow reporters and TV camera crews inside the Guantanamo Bay compound to show and write about the miserable existence of the prisoners who are being called “detainees” to bypass the Geneva Convention with impunity. Such barbaric act of a country naturally provokes terrorism against it.

As regards Iraq, the OIC failed to condemn the unprovoked pre-emptive attack on it by the United States and Britain on the false pretext of the existence of weapons of mass destruction. France, Germany, Russia and many other European countries have taken the US and its allies to task for this wanton attack.

Members of American Congress and British Parliament have openly criticized it. The media in the US and all over the world have condemned the US and its allies, but the Muslim Heads of State quietly slept over America's capricious attack on a Muslim country and a member of the OIC.

The main hurdle in fostering unity among the Muslim *Ummah*, which is by and large comprised of the Third World nations, is their linkages with the United States and other developed nations of the world. This is their compulsion because they need the support of the big powers for their survival. Some need loans and aid for their economic development while most need military assistance for their defence. The oil-rich Muslim nations, barring a few, have outsourced their oil wealth to the US to sit comfortably and enjoy their billions of dollars for their luxurious living standards and protection from outside aggression. Only two oil nations, Iran and Libya, are maintaining neutrality at a great cost. Libya which had suffered paralysing economic sanctions imposed by America, has only recently succumbed to the US pressure. Only Iran, which Mr. Bush calls a member of the "axis of evil", has so far withstood American pressure and has openly declared its intention to produce nuclear weapons, knowing fully well the consequences of this bold step.

However, the Muslim world can still unite and cooperate in many areas keeping its linkages and national interests intact. Look at 25 European nations which have formed the European Union, despite having fought two world wars and many regional wars with each other during the last century. They have their linkages too, but with great wisdom and a spirit of tolerance they have sorted out their differences of the past 50 years and have formed a mega "nation" with broad economic cooperation, one currency, and no visa restrictions. Can the Muslim nations, which are on America's hit list after Iraq, not reactivate the OIC and the Arab League to face this impending threat, under the leadership of a great Muslim visionary like Dr. Mahathir Mohamad? They certainly can and should.

Only the OIC and the Arab League can effectively fight the menace of terrorism by preaching the real message of Islam which is the unity of the *Ummah*, peace and religious tolerance. In this age of satellite TV, this message can be preached to the world through a multilingual Satellite TV Channel which can debunk the false concepts of fundamentalism and radicalism spread around by misguided rulers and preachers. Only an Islamic TV Channel can counter these false concepts attributed to Islam. Muslim scholars from all over the world can also open the doors of *Ijtihad* through this TV Channel to interpret Qur'anic injunctions according to the needs of modern times.

The OIC should also launch a TV news agency to disseminate the news of the Muslim countries in its correct perspective and without any bias and distortion to counter the mischief of the Western media not only on their TV Channels but also on the TV Channels of the Muslim world.

This is an urgent need of the time for the *Ummah*, which deserves active consideration by the OIC and the Arab League.

IV

ANNEXURES

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
MUSLIM UMMAH IN THE MODERN WORLD
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

A PREVIEW

Introduction

It is a common realization that over a period of time the West's material and technological development has outstripped that of the East. Forces of globalization and dominance of Western culture have become gradually pronounced as the old millennium has given way to the new. The reasons for these phenomena have since been pondered over by scholars and observers all over the world.

Within the East, the Muslim culture and polity have particularly felt the impact of these phenomena. This is so because, for a long time, Muslims had led the West in almost all fields of knowledge. For them it is difficult to reconcile with the fact that they are somehow being left behind in the many-sided advancements that are taking place in the world. Since Islam's ideological framework is distinctly different from that of the West's ways of thought and approaches, questions that arise about this lag relate in one way or the other to this difference, and thus touch on delicate sensitivities.

An unfortunate outcome of the 9/11 tragedy has been an increase in the misgivings about Islam in the West, which continues to be an alarming and disconcerting trend, despite the lip-service being paid by the power magnates in the West to the greatness

of Islam as a religion. This trend has made the Muslim *Ummah* ever more conscious of the gaps existing between it and the West, not only in material terms but also in conceptual terms.

Whether there is a scope for modernization without compromising on the basics, is the most crucial of the questions that arise in the conceptual context in the Muslim world. Besides, issues relating to a whole political, cultural, educational, economic and resource management spectrum continue to tax the minds of those who would like to see the Muslim world keep pace with the progress of the world at large.

Thus, there is a recognized need for serious and systematic analysis of the reasons for the growing disparities between the Western and the Muslim worlds. It is also necessary to examine objectively how the misgivings can be removed, confrontation avoided, and reconciliation brought about with the West, without sacrificing Islam's own cherished ideology. Furthermore, the parameters of a cohesive effort need to be examined in detail and set, to develop the Muslim world in consonance with the vast resources that this world enjoys.

The OIC Summit, held in Malaysia, has been timely in focusing on the major problems being faced and the broader issues coming up in the above context. While the Summit has brought them into the limelight, the problems and issues need to be scrutinized and examined in depth.

As an independent contribution towards that end, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan – a multi-directional institution devoted to educational, health and social services and development – has decided to sponsor an International Conference, to be held under the auspices of Shura Hamdard Pakistan – the Foundation's think tank and catalytic organ. The Conference is aimed at reflecting on the challenges being faced by the Muslim *Ummah* in the modern world, as well as to highlight the opportunities that may exist and the potential that may need to be tapped for development.

Venue and Date

The Conference will be held from 3-5 September 2004 at the Karachi Sheraton Hotel.

Conference Coverage

The three-day Conference will have five sessions, including an Inaugural Session to be held in the afternoon of Friday, 3 September. The Inaugural Session, besides having an Inaugural Address, expected to be delivered by the President of Pakistan, will be keynoted by Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, former Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Four Working Sessions, to be held in the mornings and the afternoons of Saturday, 4 September, and Sunday, 5 September, will cover the following themes:

- Political Environment, National and International Linkages in the Islamic World and Opportunities for Further Cohesion
- Economic, Financial and Trade Status – Challenges and Opportunities
- Human Resource Development – Status and Scope for Educational and Technological Advancement, Co-operation and Exchange
- Conservatism and Moderation – True Perspectives of Concepts such as ‘Fundamentalism’, ‘Terrorism’ and ‘Jihad’, and Parameters of Liberalism

The Conference will come to a close in the afternoon of 5 September 2004.

Organizing Committee

President

Mrs. Sadia Rashid

Members

Mr. S.M. Zafar

Justice (Retd) Haziqul Khairi

Dr. Abdul Matin

Admiral (Retd) Iftikhar Ahmed Sirohey

Mr. Mazhar Ali Khan Arif

Coordinator

Maj. Gen. (Retd) Ghulam Umar

Participants

The Organizers have invited renowned scholars, professionals, technocrats and opinion makers, from the Muslim world and beyond, to attend the Conference and contribute to the subjects outlined above. Similar contributors have been invited from within the country to give lectures and read papers, as well as to be the discussants of the various papers and lectures.

SHURA HAMDARD PAKISTAN

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Shura Hamdard Pakistan is the think tank and catalytic organ of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan – a multi-faceted institution strongly committed to educational, social and health development and welfare in the country.

Think tanks comprising eminent scholars, experts, professionals and technocrats are not an uncommon feature of various countries of the world. Through their collective efforts towards determining the best courses of action, such think tanks shape public opinion and assist the authorities of the country in understanding the present better and in planning for the future more effectively. Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said, a leading visionary, was the one who felt the need for such a think tank in Pakistan and made a beginning in 1961 with a consultative forum called *Sham-i-Hamdard*.

The objective of this forum was broadly to raise the overall intellectual level and understanding of the nation in consonance with the inherent greatness of Pakistan, a God-given new country in the world. In this forum, a selected person, of recognized merit and stature in any field of knowledge or walk of life, would present the essence of his thoughts and experiences, on a given subject, in one of the cities of the country, on a given day, and would thus not only endeavour to enhance common knowledge on that subject, but help in pointing the way towards desired avenues of action. This practice continued month after month for about thirty-five years. Over this long period, those who

contributed to these thought-provoking and action-guiding exercises belonged to such diverse fields, among others, as education, research, literature, legislation, justice, administration, and the armed forces.

Towards the close of 1994, Hakim Mohammed Said decided, after wide consultations, to broaden the scope of *Sham-i-Hamdard* and make its effect more pointed. He announced the proposed establishment of *Shura Hamdard*, that was to be, in its framework and approach, more distinctly a thinkers' forum. Those ladies and gentlemen who had, from time to time, presided over or spoken at *Sham-i-Hamdard*, were invited to become members of *Shura Hamdard*. Addressing them, Hakim Said made the following remarks:

'Esteemed Chairmen and Respected Speakers of *Sham-i-Hamdard*: You are certainly the elite intellectuals of Pakistan and have, as a whole, an edge over the Parliament and every Assembly. Please come forward and help me in this national service. I know very well, and you can also appreciate it, that holding the traditional *Sham-i-Hamdard* was easier and holding the *Shura Hamdard Pakistan* every month is a much more difficult and greater responsibility. In the interest of building up Pakistan, I accept this responsibility, while realizing that in this context your responsibilities would also be onerous. Let us work together with utmost sincerity, good intentions and impartiality, and consider it a national duty to laud those in authority for their good deeds and take exception to their errors.'

Responding to this invitation of Hakim Said, a large number of the country's men of thought and action agreed to go along with him. The first meeting of *Shura Hamdard* was held in January 1995. In the nine years since then, as many as 490 meetings have been held in various cities of Pakistan.

On the platform of this reconstituted forum, innumerable

national and international matters and themes have been deliberated upon so far. Among other important and sensitive issues, these have included matters relating to education, society, economy, regions, water resources, Muslim *Ummah*, external relations, research avenues, international developments and their far-reaching influences, and so on and so forth. A summary of the deliberations of each meeting is invariably circulated among the concerned authorities and organizations for consideration, follow-up and appropriate action. The deliberations thus are always action-oriented.

During the past nine years, several irreplaceable contributors, including the founder Hakim Said, have departed from this world. To cope with changing circumstances and emerging challenges, the search for and inclusion in *Shura Hamdard* of men and women having mature and positive thinking, and a zest for national service, continues in accordance with a set programme, and will continue, Allah willing, in the future as well.

May Allah continue to help and guide us.

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
MUSLIM UMMAH IN THE MODERN WORLD
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

PROGRAMME

INAUGURAL SESSION

Friday, 3 September, 2004

Afternoon

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 03:30 to 03:35 PM | Recitation from the Holy Qur'an |
| 03:35 to 03:40 | Translation |
| 03:40 to 03:55 | Introductory Remarks, Announcements
and Messages
Mr. Mazhar Ali Khan Arif |
| 03:55 to 04:05 | Welcome Address
Mrs. Sadia Rashid
President, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan |
| 04:05 to 04:15 | Message of the President of the Islamic
Republic of Pakistan
Dr. Ishrat ul Ebad Khan
Governor of Sindh |
| 04:15 | Keynote Address
Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad
Former Prime Minister of Malaysia |

After Keynote Address Overview of the Conference's Intended Deliberations and Expression of Thanks
Maj. Gen. (R) Ghulam Umar
 Conference Co-ordinator

Refreshments

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WORKING SESSION-1

Saturday, 4 September, 2004
Morning

Chairman: JUSTICE (R) H. KHAIRI

- **Political Environment, National and International Linkages in the Islamic World and Opportunities for Further Cohesion**

10:30 to 11:00 AM "Perspectives for Development and Co-operation among the Muslim Countries" — Paper by **Mr. Ahsan Iqbal**

11:00 to 11:15 "Efforts Towards an Effective Dialogue between Islam and the West" — Paper by **Dr. Dietrich Reetz**

11:15 to 11:30 "Challenging the Challenges" — Paper by **Admiral (R) Iftikhar Ahmed Sirohey**

11:30 to 11:45 Follow-up Remarks by **Prof. Humayoun Ihsan**

11:45 to 11:55 *Tea Break*

- 11:55 to 12:10 PM "Is Democracy Necessary for Muslim Polity?" — Paper by **Senator S.M. Zafar**
- 12:10 to 12:35 "Concepts of Nationality and State in Islam" — Paper by **Mr. Justice (R) Javid Iqbal**
- 12:35 to 12:55 Follow-up Remarks by **Mr. Mahdi Masud**
- 12:55 to 01:10 Follow-up Remarks by **Mr. Burhanuddin Hasan**
- 01:10 to 01:25 Closing Remarks on the Session by the **Chairman**

Lunch

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WORKING SESSION-2
Saturday, 4 September 2004
Afternoon

Chairman: ADMIRAL (R) IFTIKHAR AHMED SIROHEY

- **Human Resource Development – Status and Scope – for Educational and Technological Advancement, Co-operation and Exchange**

- 02:30 to 03:00 PM "Changing Role of Muslim Women in Today's World" — Paper by **Dr. Talat A. Wizarat**

- 03:00 to 03:20 Follow-up Remarks by **Ms. Shameim Kazmi**
- 03:20 to 03:30 Tea Break
- 03:30 to 03:45 "Science and Technology for Survival of Muslim *Ummah* in the Modern World"
Paper by **Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary**
- 03:45 to 04:05 Follow-up Remarks by **Dr. Nurul Islam**
- 04:05 to 04:25 Closing Remarks on the Session by the Chairman

Refreshments

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WORKING SESSION-3
Sunday, 5 September, 2004
Morning

Chairman: DR. A. MATIN

● **Economic, Financial and Trade Status, Challenges and Opportunities**

10:30 to 11:00 AM "Economic Challenges Being Faced by the Muslim *Ummah*" — Paper by **Dr. Ishrat Husain**

11:00 to 11:30 "Reasons for the Decline of Muslims and Steps Towards Resurgence" — Paper by **Prof. Saiyid Hamid**

- 11:30 to 11:45 Follow-up Remarks by **Dr. Rafique Ahmad**
- 11:45 to 12:00 PM *Tea Break*
- 12:00 to 12:30 "Means and Methods of Greater Financial Co-operation among the Muslim Countries" — Paper by **Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh**
- 12:30 to 01:00 "Improving Trade Relations among the Muslim Countries" — Paper by **Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood**
- 01:00 to 01:15 Follow-up Remarks by **Mr. Aqeel A. Al-Jassem**
- 01:15 to 01:20 Closing Remarks on the Session by the Chairman

Lunch

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WORKING SESSION-4
Sunday, 5 September, 2004
Afternoon

Chairman: SENATOR S.M. ZAFAR

- **Conservatism and Moderation – True Perspectives of Concepts such as "Fundamentalism", "Terrorism" and "Jihad"**
 - **Summary and Closing**
- 02:30 to 02:55 PM "Extremism in Today's World – Misconceptions and Reality" — Paper by **Mr. Karamatullah Khan Ghor**

02:55 to 03:20 "Muslim Ummah and Terrorism" — Paper
by **Mr. Afzaal Mahmood**

03:20 to 03:35 *Tea Break*

03:35 to 04:05 "Muslim *Ummah* — New Definitions
Needed"
Paper by — **Mr. Javed Jabbar**

04:05 to 04:20 Follow-up Remarks by **Dr. Abdullah
Abu-Eshy**

04:20 to 04:30 Highlights of the Conference by **Mr.
Mazhar Ali Khan Arif**

04:30 to 04:40 Closing Remarks on the Session by the
Chairman

04:40 to 04:45 Closing Remarks on the Conference by
President Hamdard Foundation Pakistan

Refreshments

MESSAGE

AKBAR S. AHMED*

Inter-faith dialogue spans religious, ethnic and geographical divide, as people look for solutions to fight prejudices. This is why it is imperative to safeguard and foster initiatives which aim to improve the troubled relations between the Muslim world and the West. The goal to create dialogue between the Muslim and non-Muslim policy makers, religious leaders, scholars, diplomats and students, etc., will begin the process of relationship and understanding that could only improve our interactions and future relations.

In the path towards this goal, it is important to incorporate perspectives, from both the Islamic and Western worlds, that educate and empower the participants to foster the notions of dialogue in their respective areas of influence. Part of our work in promoting intercultural understanding involves making people aware of Pakistani culture, history and legacy. Thus the example of Mr. Jinnah, the Quaid-e-Azam, is a crucial component of discussions; his life and work have raised much interest in the U.S., and that has doubtlessly contributed to bridging differences and building dialogue. We must strive to educate all levels of society in order to create and sustain a dialogue that furthers a better tomorrow. While people talk of a clash of civilizations, the idea and practice of the dialogue of civilizations must come forth from scholars and intellectuals.

All my good wishes and prayers for a successful Conference and follow-up initiatives.

*Ibn-e-Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies, American University, Washington D.C., U.S.A.



CO-ORDINATOR'S REMARKS

GHULAM UMAR

As the Co-ordinator of this International Conference, it is my pleasant duty to add, to the words of welcome of the Hamdard President, Mrs. Sadia Rashid, my own and those of the Organizing Committee as a whole, to all those gathered around here, sharing what is without doubt a noble cause and a lofty objective, even though the steps may appear to be modest.

My very special greetings and thanks to you, Governor Saheb that you could find time to be with us today.

And to you Tun Dr. Mahathir, we owe a deep gratitude for giving us a special consideration in your crowded world-wide engagements, and for having come over and having keynoted this Conference. It was great to listen to you speaking with courage and conviction, the two qualities required above all to the Ummah as a whole, if it has to build up its future confidently.

I think you will agree with me that we should wholeheartedly appreciate the efforts, in holding this very important Conference, of Hamdard Foundation and Shura Hamdard, the two notable entities in Pakistan which have been trying, and trying well, to continue to be the torch-bearers of a variety of social work and

welfare in the tradition of their founder, Hakim Mohammed Said Shaheed.

We have had a grand opening. A lot has yet to come. Mr. Mazhar Arif has already given you the rationale behind the selection of the title of this Conference: "Muslim Ummah in the Modern World: Challenges and Opportunities". I would add to it a brief preview of the deliberations proposed during the next two days that are expected to provide the exposition and elaboration of the subject in its major dimensions.

The Inaugural Session of today is to be followed by four Working Sessions. On the morning of Saturday 4th September, Working Session-1 is intended to survey the political environment, national and international linkages in the Islamic world and opportunities for further cohesion. Under this broad theme, you would listen to reflections on the political framework in the Muslim world, and thoughts on perspectives for development and cooperation among the Muslim countries. In addition, you would be given insights into the perceptions in the West of Islam and Muslims, as well as into efforts that are being made towards an effective dialogue between Islam and the West.

Working Session-2 that will be held after Lunch the same day, is intended to deal with the status and scope of human resource development for educational and technological advancement, cooperation and exchange. In this context, as can be expected, besides a critical review of human resource development as a whole in the Muslim World, you would be told about the needs and the avenues for technological advancement, cooperation and exchange. An important sub-theme to be covered will be Women in Development, that is to say, the changing role of Muslim women in today's world.

Working Session-3 will be held on the morning of Sunday, 5th September. The focus of this Session will be on economic, financial and trade status, challenges and opportunities. The Session would not only survey the economic challenges being faced by the Muslim Ummah, but would also reflect on reasons

for the decline of Muslims and would outline steps towards a needed resurgence. You would be told about the means and methods of greater financial coöperation among the Muslim countries, as well as about the means and methods for bringing about improvements in trade relations among them.

Working Session-4, to be held in the afternoon of the same day, will be the concluding Session. In this Session, the focus will be on conservatism and moderation in relation to the Muslim world. Naturally, the misconceptions and the true perspectives both would be brought into discussion. Extremism and terrorism would be deliberated upon and the concept of enlightened moderation will be explained. The Session, and with it the Conference, would end with a summary and closing remarks. The Conference would thus end, but of course the task ahead, towards which the Conference is a modest effort, would not end there.

Contributing to the deliberations in the Sessions during the coming two days we would have a good cross-section of distinguished scholars, professionals, technocrats, present and former diplomats, from within the country and abroad.

So, we have two exciting days ahead of us of this International Conference. I hope most of you present today would be present during the next two days. To those of you who find the time to attend and have the patience to sit through the Sessions, I can guarantee that the time spent would be worth it and the experience would be enlightening and rewarding.

CLOSING REMARKS

SADIA RASHID

At this stage of the Conference – after long hours of five Sessions – I do not want to take too much more of your time. I have only a duty – and a very pleasant one – to perform and for that I shall use as few words as possible, but with the hope that, although the words are few, you will understand that I am not just saying them; I **mean** them.

The duty that I have to perform, as President of Hamdard Foundation and of Shura Hamdard, is to express my warm and heartfelt thanks to everybody associated with this Conference.

I thank the distinguished participants for making their valuable contributions to the various themes covered by the Conference – participants who travelled in from abroad, those who came from various parts of the country, and those who joined us from Karachi itself.

I thank the Speakers of Shura Hamdard for providing us with their active support and valuable advice, as well as for chairing the various Sessions of the Conference.

I thank the Organizing Committee for its hard and sustained work in attending to every detail of the arrangements for the Conference, without which an event of this scale would not have been possible.

With regard to Shura and the Organizing Committee, there are a few things of which I would like to make more specific mention. First, talking of chairing the Sessions, today's Chairman and a long-time Shura member has been Mr. S.M. Zafar. For those of you unaware of his additional tie with Hamdard, I am

happy to announce that he has agreed to be the new Chancellor of the Hamdard University. Welcome aboard!

Secondly, I would like to make special mention of General Ghulam Umar who has been the Conference Co-ordinator. In fact, it would probably be no exaggeration to say that he has been the most 'committed' one of the Committee! A very special 'Thank you' to you, General Umar, and your team; specially Mr. Mazhar Ali Khan Arif whose writing skills must not be forgotten!

I thank the international and the national media for providing coverage to the Conference and for making its objectives and its deliberations widely known.

I thank all my colleagues and co-workers in Hamdard and Shura Hamdard, at every level, for diligently performing the duties assigned to them with respect to organizing and actual holding of the Conference.

Thanks also to the Management and Staff of the Sheraton Hotel for their help and co-operation.

Last but not the least, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am grateful to you for taking interest in the Conference and for attending it, since without an audience a conference or seminar means nothing. I have heard tributes paid to Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said, to Hamdard and to Shura. I am grateful for all those tributes. This Conference was a modest effort by us towards a cause that is dear to everyone in the Muslim world. The results may be modest but, if this memorable event has added at all to the understanding of the problems faced by the Muslim *Ummah*, and contributed even in a small way to pointing the way towards solutions of those problems, we would regard all our individual and collective efforts as worthwhile.

Thank you again, Ladies and Gentlemen. May Allah bless you all. And Godspeed to those who will be returning to their homes abroad!

With this, the Conference comes to a close. *Alhamdolillah wa shukran!*



Muslim Ummah in the Modern World Challenges and Opportunities

**Collected Papers and Speeches
presented at an International Conference
held in Karachi, Pakistan
3-5 September 2004
sponsored by
Hamdard Foundation Pakistan**