Islamic Summit
Protecting the Rights of Muslim Minorities: Rohingya Case

Author: Ramsha Nadeem

Disclaimer: The work presented here is expressly the intellectual property of the author and National MOIC Pakistan and any copy, reproduction and reference of it, in part or whole cannot be used without the express written permission of the author and National MOIC Pakistan, failure of which will result in the author and/or National MOIC Pakistan initiating legal proceedings against the offender.
National MOIC Pakistan

The Islamic Summit

The Islamic Summit, composed of Kings and Heads of State, and Governments of Member States, is the supreme authority of the Organization. The first Islamic Conference was convened in Rabat in September 1969 as a response to the burning of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem earlier in August of same year. This summit resolved that Islamic nation states should foster "close cooperation and mutual assistance in the economic, scientific, cultural, and spiritual fields." (Encyclopedia.com, n.d)

The Session of the Islamic Summit Conference:

The session of the Islamic Summit Conference takes place once every three years to discuss, take policy decisions and provide guidance on all issues pertaining to the realization of the objectives and consider other issues of concern to the Member States and the Ummah. The last Summit of 2016 was hosted by Turkey. Islamic Summit can also call Extraordinary / Emergency Islamic Summits on various issues. Recently, an emergency Summit was called on by Turkey after Trump's decision to relocate its embassy. In addition, the Summit declares Communiqué which is considered as a press release. This committee also produces resolutions.

Protecting the Rights of Muslim Minorities: Rohingya Case

Some Research Institutes estimate that there are about 1.6 billion Muslims in the world i.e. nearly one-fourth of the world's population. According to the Pew Research Center in 2015, there were 50 Muslim-majority countries. As per 2010 statistics, the Muslim population of Europe is estimated at 43.8 million, or 5.9% of the continent’s population. In several
National MOIC Pakistan

The Islamic Summit

non-Muslim majority countries in Europe, the Muslim community accounts for over 5% of the population, and in Russia, 10% of the Country’s population is Muslims. In the present age, more than one third of the world’s Muslims are living as minorities in non-Muslim countries; it is a fact which has posed challenges not only for the host countries but also for the Muslims themselves (Masud K. Muhammad, 2002). Muslims in India are the third largest Muslim population in the world, after Indonesia and Pakistan with the population of more than the combined populations of two biggest Muslim countries in the Middle East: Egypt (94 million) and Iran (82 million) and three times the population of UK in Europe. Even after this, Muslims in India are facing many problems including communal riots, education, poverty and language. They cannot practice their religion freely. The irony is that India calls herself as a secular state but has been trying to oppress Muslims not only in her own state but also in occupied Kashmir since always. The policies have been made and implemented according to which Muslims are punished ruthlessly when they slaughter cows on several occasions. In other countries of the world where Muslims are in minority are also facing problems like racism, Muslim women are being prohibited from wearing Hijab/veil, discrimination, harassment on the basis of their ethnicity and immigrant background etc.

The Rohingya, who numbered around one million in Myanmar at the start of 2017, are one of the many ethnic minorities in the country. Rohingya Muslims represent the largest percentage of Muslims in Myanmar, with the majority living in Rakhine state (BBC, 2018). The simmering tension between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in Western Myanmar first escalated in June 2012 to a violent conflict then erupted again in October of the same year. The violence led to the loss of over hundreds of lives, destruction of thousands of homes and displacement of thousands of people. These atrocities did not emerge suddenly,
the Rohingya have faced decades of discrimination and repression under successive Burmese
governments. The fact is that Rohingya is not included among the 135 ethnic groups in
Myanmar recognized by the government. According to the 1982 citizenship law, there are
three categories of citizenship: citizen, associate citizen and naturalized citizen. Citizens are
descendants of residents who lived in Burma prior to 1823 or were born to parents both of
whom were citizens. Associate citizens are those who acquired citizenship through the 1948
Union Citizenship Act. Naturalized citizens are persons who lived in Burma before 4 January
1948 and applied for citizenship after 1982 (Kipgen Nehginpao, 2013). Effectively denied
citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law, Rohingyas are one of the largest stateless
populations in the world.

According to 2016 World Report ‘Violence over the past five years has left 220,000 people
displaced nationwide—120,000 in Rakhine State and 100,000 in Shan and Kachin
States.’ While in August 2017, more than 671,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled Burma’s
Rakhine State to escape the military’s large-scale campaign of ethnic cleansing. The atrocities
committed by Burmese security forces, includes mass killings, sexual violence, and
widespread arson amount to crimes against humanity’ (Human Rights Watch, n.d). In the
context of these details, OIC member states must need to design a framework to protect their
Muslim brothers not only in Rohingya but wherever the minorities are ill-treated. Muslim
communities in countries like India, Burma, and America become targets of hate crimes. The
Muslim communities live in constant fear of being attacked by extremist groups; they are
denied even the most basic human rights.
National MOIC Pakistan

The Islamic Summit

The member states vowed to the OIC charter and are hence responsible for providing protection, aid, and assistance to their Muslim brothers in times of need "to assist Muslim minorities and communities outside the Member States to preserve their dignity, cultural and religious identity", OIC Charter (1972).

Under the Islamic Summit and this agenda of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries, all the OIC member states will look into the issues Muslim minorities are facing all over the world and what measures should be taken in order to protect Muslims from the oppressors as it is our obligation not only religiously but also morally to must do whatever we can do to protect Muslims where ever they are. Not only this, but also all the possible measures need to be taken in order to eliminate the feeling of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments from minds of non-Muslims.
National MOIC Pakistan

The Islamic Summit

References:


National MOIC Pakistan

The Islamic Summit


Further Readings:


In Collaboration with

Directorate of Youth Affairs
Sports & Youth Affairs Department
Govt: Of Sindh

Islamic Summit
Efforts to Counter Terrorism, Extremism and Sectarianism

Author: Sundus Alam

Disclaimer: The work presented here is expressly the intellectual property of the author and National MOIC Pakistan and any copy, reproduction and reference of it, in part or whole cannot be used without the express written permission of the author and National MOIC Pakistan, failure of which will result in the author and/or National MOIC Pakistan initiating legal proceedings against the offender."
The Islamic Summit is composed of Kings and the Heads of State and Governments of the Member States, and it is the supreme authority of the Organization. The Summit is responsible to take policy decisions and provide guidance on all issues pertaining to the realization of the objectives and consider other issues of concern to the Member States and the Ummah.

The Session of the Islamic Summit Conference

The session of the Islamic Summit Conference takes place once every three years on a particular theme where various issues come under discussion. The last Summit of 2016 was hosted by Turkey. Islamic Summit can also call Extraordinary / Emergency Islamic Summits on various issues. Recently, an Emergency Summit was called on by Turkey after Trump's decision to relocate its embassy. In addition, the Summit declares Communiqué which is considered as a press release. This committee also produces resolutions.

Effects of Terrorism, Extremism, and Sectarianism on the Muslim World

These evils are so intricately embedded within the Islamic world that at times it seems almost impossible to eliminate them. These are so deeply rooted within the Muslim World that it wouldn’t be wrong to say that, one or the other form of these is present within almost all of the OIC countries.

Intolerance is increasing rapidly within the OIC states. Intolerance leads to extremist views and ideologies. The lack of education about such issues among the Muslim Ummah has resulted in various conflicts erupting within different parts of the Islamic World.
Islamic Summit

The Islamic world is divided into two blocs on the basis of sects, the Sunnis and the Shiites. Intolerance and hatred for the other sects is one of the major causes of conflict among the Muslim Nations. These divisions are spread across the entire breadth and width of the OIC geography. ‘The Sunni-Shia conflict is 1,400 years in the making, dating back to the years immediately after the Prophet Mohammed’s death in 632. It is the theological divide that really drives the wedge between the two countries, however, with each unable to accept the legitimacy of the other nation’s dominant faith.’ (Hall, 2013)

These three terms are some how interlinked. Sometimes certain acts of terrorism have also been associated with extremism, because we've seen several examples where extremist ideology derived people to commit terrorist activities. Like in the case of Rohingya Muslims, the extremist views of the Buddhists have lead to the massacre/persecution of innocent Muslims.

At other accounts people who are deprived of basic rights may also turn to violence. Small pockets of people (small communities) which are not given their due rights, may start a liberation movement, which further transforms to a violent form known as an insurgency or results in an even worse form a full fledge civil war. The terrorist entities take advantage of such devastating conditions, and exploit the innocent people. The rapidly increasing youth radicalization is one such example. ‘Surging youth populations create an opening for violent extremists who successfully recruit from among deeply disenfranchised young people and those who have experienced severe violence. Many factors increase susceptibility to radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism. Exposure to traumatic stress and violence as a child has deep, long-term consequences that increase the risk of a variety of negative outcomes, including recruitment to violent groups.’ (Futures Without Violence Organization)
Islamic Summit

The Oil super-powers are in a constant battle to increase their influence in the Muslim world. In their struggle to counter each other’s influence in the Middle East, they are backing opposite parties in the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and Iraq. This war of influence has cost the Islamic world the lives of millions of innocent non-combatants, destruction of infrastructure, instability, economic losses, and increased hostility/tension among the Muslim nations.

The ongoing conflicts are being prolonged due to the rivalry between the major powers of the OIC countries. Aid and assistance is provided to militant groups just to get the upper hand in a conflict. The Muslim states do not seem interested in resolving conflicts, rather they are busy in achieving the ultimate goal that is the status of the most influential state in the OIC geography.

The role of Saudi Arabia and Iran in supporting different factions in civil wars is not hidden from anyone. ‘And of course the current civil war in Yemen has become a sectarian proxy war, with Iran backing the Shia Houthi rebels who overthrew the country’s Sunni-dominated government, while a Saudi-led coalition has since intervened to reinstall the Sunni leadership.’ (Hall, 2013)

Measures to counter sectarianism, extremism, and terrorism:

These three issues require urgent attention of the entire Muslim World. Divisions among the Muslim world have resulted in devastating conditions.

First of all, by using the platform of OIC the Muslim Nations must condemn all the terrorist or extremist activities and the various factions involved in such activities, clearly stating that they
Islamic Summit

do not support any group involved in violent uprisings. They should commit to not provide any militant group with any sort/form of aid or assistance.

Secondly, the wealthier and more economically stable states can provide aid and assistance to such nations who are struggling to provide their people with basic necessities. Help in strengthening or building a state’s socio-economic capacity can prove to be an effective step to counter extremist ideologies which may also arise due to lack of basic needs.

According to the OIC charter, all Muslim states must respect each other’s territorial integrity and political independence. The Muslim countries should adopt a policy of noninterference; not to interfere in the internal affairs of another state, ‘to respect, safeguard and defend the national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all Member States;’ -OIC charter. They all must try to resolve disputes among themselves by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and law as defined by the charter.

Political support should be provided to people demanding the right to self-determination, which are still under foreign occupation, so that they are not exploited by terrorist or extremist entities. Another measure can be to ensure the provision of human rights. All Muslim states have an obligation to ensure the provision of human rights across the OIC geography. They should use their influence to stop the violations occurring anywhere in the Islamic world. ‘Countries where terror attacks are concentrated are highly correlated with those where the state commits gross human rights abuses, according to research underpinning the annual Global Terrorism Index. Human rights abuses drive violent extremism, making a measured and proportionate law enforcement and security response essential to breaking the cycle.’ - (Holmer, 2016)
Islamic Summit

Several high level conferences under the auspices of OIC should be convened in all parts of the Islamic world, to formulate a collective response and strategy for eradicating and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

To eliminate sectarianism and to increase harmony among the Muslim Nations, steps should be taken to improve understanding and respect for all sects, religious values, and cultures. Sessions and workshops could be arranged in different states to increase intercultural understanding, and to increase tolerance for others. ‘There is a need to look at Muslim diversity with respect, humility, responsibility, and celebration rather than through the prism of sectarianism. Let there be no bloodshed just because one sect believes and practices its faith in a particular way.’ (Khaki, 2013)

This committee will highlight the need to cautiously and carefully identify who the real enemy is. More importantly, this committee is designed to come up with possible and effective solutions for such disastrous issues.

This committee will compel the delegates to suggest confidence building measures which can help eradicate extremism, sectarianism, and terrorism. More importantly, it will also focus on the need to intensify consultations and coordination among the Muslim Nations to increase solidarity and to ensure peace.

References:

Islamic Summit


OIC Charter. Retrieved from:

https://www.oic-oci.org/page/?p_id=53&p_ref=27&lan=en

Futures Without Violence Organization. *Youth, Trauma & Radicalization*. Retrieved from:


Further Readings:

Global Terrorism Index. (2016). *Institute for economics and peace*. Retrieved from:


Statistical Information on Terrorism in 2016. URL:

https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2016/272241.htm

A Theory of International Terrorism (Chapter 2, page 77 - 79). Retrieved from:

https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=LTZ6S_9QA7QC&lpg=PA77&dq=state%20sponsored%20terrorism%20oic&pg=PA77#v=twopage&q=&f=false
Islamic Summit

Islamic State Practices, International Law and the Threat from Terrorism: A critique of the Clash of The Civilization in the New World Order. (Chapters 6 and 7). Retrieved from:


CONVENTION OF THE ORGANISATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE ON COMBATING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. Retrieved from:

http://www.oic.org/english/convention/terrorism_convention.htm


Passive Sponsorship of Terrorism. Retrieved from:

http://web.mit.edu/SSP/seminars/wed_archives04fall/byman.htm