

ISLAMIC VOICE: PAKISTAN'S CONTRIBUTION IN IGOS, THE CASE STUDY OF ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

(O.I.C).

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The main theme of this article is two fold: Firstly, to determine what role has been played by Pakistan in the resurgence of Islam through integration of Muslim states in a paramount organization that is Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), and Secondly, what has been role of the Organization of Islamic Conference in the world politics since its inception in 1969. In order to assess the performance and role of Pakistan in OIC and the OIC itself, we need a good understanding that what really are the basic functions of an international organization. For this purpose first we will present a Conceptual Framework and will apply it to the case of OIC so that we will be in a better position to categorize the role of Pakistan in each of the function of OIC as an International Organization. The assessment of an International Organization can be approached from different theoretical perspectives. Some analysts utilized the concept of level of institutionalization in order to assess such performance. According to this approach, four basic indicators are used in order to probe the level of institutionalization, named, (i) Adaptation, which refers to the successful adjustment to a changing environment, (ii) Complexity, by which is meant the multi-functionality of the organization, (iii) Autonomy, the reference here is the existence of organizational values and norms separate from those of the member states, and (iv) Coherence, which refer both to the internal organizational coherence and the loyalty of the member states. This approach lies

in its ability to specify operational indicators for assessment the performance of an international organization. However, one can argue that it over-emphasizes the institutional indicators of the performance assessment.¹ Other analysts utilized the concept of effectiveness as a central concept for the assessment of the performance of an international organization. This concept reflects a function-oriented approach to performance assessment. According to this approach the first thing is to identify the declared and latent functions of the organization and the different variables influencing the performance of these functions. In this respect one may identify four major functions of an organization, such as: Collective security, the peaceful resolutions of inter-member disputes, foreign policy coordination, and the promotion of technical cooperation.²

I. Collective Security

The concept of Collective Security refers to a set of arrangements taken by certain states in order to deter aggression by an outside on any contracting state through collective action. Collective security has been defined as a system whose basic goal is security and main mechanism is collective action. The failure of the organization to establish a series of collective arrangements to deter aggression inevitably weakens the connection of the loyalty between the organization and member states, as they will look elsewhere for security. Now if we apply this function to the case of OIC the charter of the OIC lacks a clear statement on the establishment of a system of collective security for the member states. It only referred in article II to set of objectives and principles indirectly related to the collective security, such as Art. II (A/3, 4, and 6) which refers to

the “elimination of racial segregation, discrimination and the eradication of colonialism in all its forms”, and to “the necessary measures to support international peace and security founded on justice,” and “the strengthening of the struggle of the Muslim peoples with a view to safeguard their dignity, independence and national rights,” respectively. Further, Art. II (B/5) stipulates the abstention from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity, national unity or political independence of any member state, as one of the principle of the charter. Taken together, those articles present a two dimensional conceptualization of collective security (i) creating an international environment favorable to the security of member states; and (ii) taking special measures against specific adversaries. Art. II (A/4 and B/5) embodies the first dimension and Art. II (A/4) obliges member states to abstain from the threat or use of force as a foreign policy instrument in their mutual relations. On the other hand, Art. II (A/3, 5) obliges the OIC to pursue a collective policy against racialism and colonialism as threat to the security of the Muslim states, and against Israel in the direction of the restoration of the Palestine rights and territories, without specifying their scope. Finally Art. II (A/6) commits the OIC to support the struggle of the Muslim peoples, by which is meant, the Muslim minorities.

As for as the OIC is concerned some of the major events, which fall in this category, are the case of Soviet and US occupation of Afghanistan (1979 & 2001), Palestine, Arab-Israel conflict and the recent case of Iraq.

II. Peaceful Resolutions of Disputes

One of the basic functions of the international organization is to develop a set of widely agreed-upon arrangements to settle disputes, which may arise, among member states and to apply these arrangements effectively. The concept of peaceful settlement of disputes has been explicitly articulated in the charter. Art. II (B/4) defined “the settlement of any conflict that may arise by peaceful means such as negotiation, mediation, conciliation, or arbitration” as one of the principle of the charter. This is contrary to the concept of collective security, which was referred to indirectly. Art. II (B/4) merely reiterates the traditional principles of international law concerning the peaceful resolution of conflicts. One cannot help noticing that this article has not benefited from the Islamic concept of the resolution of disputes, which does not rule out the use of violent means as means for the resolution of conflicts between Muslims. In this respect, the OIC failed to develop an “Islamic” political theory practice for the peaceful resolution of inter-state conflicts.

The analysis of the actual role of the OIC in the resolution of inter-state disputes reveals that it actively intervened in only five disputes, namely, the Pakistan-Bangladesh dispute in 1971-74, the Iraqi-Iranian conflict in 1980-88, the Senegal-Mauritanian dispute in 1989, the Iraqi-Kuwaiti conflict in 1990-91, and the Afghan civil war 1989.

III. Joint Foreign Policy

An international organization is an international actor capable of developing a foreign policy by its executive machinery on the basis of areas of agreement among member states. This function includes three basic dimensions: (i) the ability of the

organization to “homogenize” the foreign policy of the member states towards the main issues debated in the international system so that states will pursue “joint” or “similar” foreign policies; (ii)

The ability of the organization to “formulate” a foreign policy of its own based on the consensus agreement of the member states; and (iii) the ability of the organization to emerge as “an official collective spokesman” of the member states in dealing with other international actors.

The charter of the OIC entrusted the organization with the function of coordination of the foreign policies of member states. Art. II (A) stipulated that the objectives of the OIC shall be: (1) to promote Islamic solidarity among member states, and (2) to carry out consultations among member states in international organizations. Islamic solidarity means, joint foreign policies and obviously the ultimate goal of consultation in other international organizations is to arrive at common stand on foreign policy issues. The OIC played a significant role in coordinating foreign policies of member states at three levels. Bridging the gap between the foreign policies of member states, formulation of an “Islamic” perspective towards international issues, and emerging as the official collective spokesman of the member states. The OIC, however, has not been effective in emerging as the collective representative of the member states except in the area of Muslim minorities. In this issue the OIC spoke and negotiated with other states and organizations on behalf of its member states. In fact, the OIC charter (Art. II, A/6) gave the organization a special department to supervise its activities in the area of Muslim minorities, usually referred to, as the Muslim communities. The OIC spoke on behalf of

its member states with the governments of Philippines, Ethiopia, Cyprus, Bulgaria, and India to improve the quality of life of Muslims living in these countries.

IV. Technical Cooperation

There is a difference between technical cooperation (low politics) and political cooperation (high politics) based on assumption that if integrative efforts are to succeed they should begin with technical cooperation; this will necessarily spill over political cooperation. Because states are not prepared to give in control over areas related to their sovereignty and security, political cooperation is a non-starter as far as the integrative progress is concerned.

The charter of the OIC clearly mandated the organization to promote technical cooperation among its member states. Art. II (A/2) reiterated that the OIC will endeavor to “consolidate cooperation among member states in economic, culture, scientific and other vital fields of activities....” Since its inception, the OIC has been increasingly interested in technical cooperation issues. Whereas the first summit paid no attention to these issues, the succeeding ones developed a specific paradigm for technical cooperation. In order to implement this paradigm, the OIC member states signed many multi-lateral agreements and established a network of technical organization. At the institutional level, the OIC developed an extensive organizational network to supervise and activate technical cooperation. The Third Summit Conference of 1981 established three ministerial committees; each one of them is headed permanently by certain member state at the presidential level. These are: the Standing Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation (COMSTECH) which is headed by the President of Pakistan, the

Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) headed by the President of Turkey, and the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) which is headed by the President of Senegal. Each committee is entrusted with following up the implementation of the resolutions of the summit conferences in its respective area and devising new strategies to promote cooperation in that area. The OIC has also initiated a network of cultural and educational activities. For example, ISESCO supervises the Islamic universities of Niger, Uganda, and Malaysia and many Islamic cultural centers in Mali, the Comoros Islands, and Guinea-Bissau and has developed a special program for non-Arabic speaking Muslims. It also issues a quarterly magazine titled *Islam Today*. In the area of technical cooperation, the OIC achieved its basic targets.

Now having outlined the basic function of OIC as an international organization this conceptual framework will not be complete without a specification of the variable influencing such performance. The performance of an international organization depends mainly on a set of inter-related independent variables, namely: the institutional framework of the organization, its leadership, its domestic environment, and finally its external environment. As we are concerned more with the role of Pakistan in OIC so we will take these variables as parameters for the performance of Pakistan in OIC, as well. Considering, the magnitude of the topic, it is not possible to recapitulate the OIC policies in all these four above-mentioned areas, and then, to highlight the role and performance of Pakistan in each and every case. Hence, we have identified few case studies for each of the four sections. Our criterion for selecting a case study has been based on the distinctive role played by Pakistan as well as the significance of that issue in the international

politics. An attempt has been made to give a very brief background of an issue before narrating the OIC involvement and the role played by Pakistan in the developments, as well as the impact of their policies and decisions on the situation. Reproductions of the texts of the OIC resolutions and the speeches made during its forum have been carefully avoided.

4.1 Pakistan and Collective Security

As it has been said earlier that, instead of describing the role of Pakistan in each and every case in the above four mentioned sections, we will select the case study for each section. Hence our case study for this section is the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 27th December 1979.

Soviet Union had considered Afghanistan to be under its legitimate sphere of interest and had been interfering in its internal affairs, for over a century. A series of domestic upheavals in the 1970s, finally led to a successful coup by some military officers, belonging to the pro-Communist People Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in April 1980. Due to innovative policies of the new regime especially on women and education and its land reforms met with stiff resistance, mainly because of the traditional hatred of the largely illiterate and conservative population of Afghanistan for ‘atheist’ communists. A substantial number of people crossed the Durand line (Afghanistan – Pakistan border), regrouped themselves under religious leaders (whose authority had been challenged by the leftist regime at Kabul) and started launching cross-border guerrilla attacks. As the fall of this unstable government became inevitable, Soviet troops finally invaded Afghanistan on 27 December 1979, to save a communist set-up from collapse. President Hafizullah Amin was killed and Babrak Karmal, then the Afghan

ambassador to Hungary and a former PDPA stalwart, was installed as the puppet President.³

The OIC, which had been indifferent to the developments in Afghanistan till this point, came into action when a non-Muslim power physically occupied a Muslim country. It became an Islamic cause for the OIC. Here we can observe four distinct phases in OIC's activities on Afghanistan. In the first phase (1979-88), the Organization gave full support to the Afghan opposition guerrillas to throw out the Soviet forces. The OIC involvement in the second phase (1989-92), starts from its desire to root out the leftovers of Soviet occupation, i.e., the Soviet-installed communist regime in Kabul and when this objective was achieved the third phase began, from (1992-2001) during which OIC had tried to mediate an end to the civil war. The last phase began immediately with the attacks on the World Trade Center and in response to that act U.S and its allies destroyed the Taliban's regime that took control over 90 percent of the country and became relatively stable Government of Afghanistan in the last few decades.

First Phase (1979-88):

When Pakistan saw Soviet tanks driving into Kabul, it requested the convening of an extraordinary ICFM session, with the active support from several other Muslim states. It was the first ever extraordinary ICFM session in OIC history which took place in January 1980 at Islamabad. It emphasized upon the situation arising out of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The Conference discarded Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, condemned it in the strongest terms and described it a violation of the OIC Charter and that of the UN. To quote the language of the OIC:

“...[The Conference] denounces and deplors it as a flagrant violation of international laws, covenants and norms...condemns this aggression and denounces it as an aggression against Human Rights and a violation of the freedom of people, which cannot be ignored.”⁴

The Conference decided to suspend the membership of the puppet regime of Babrak Karmal, though the request of the Islamic Alliance for the Liberation organization, for grant of an observer status was not acceded to.

The Conference call for an immediate, total, and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet forces and decided to withhold recognition to the “illegal regime in Afghanistan”, recommended a boycott of Moscow Olympics, scheduled for July 1980, made appeals to the world community to support Afghan resistance movements and urged the Muslim states to provide financial support to Pakistan so as to help it deal with the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan.⁵

The session was highly cognizant of the fact that this Soviet intervention had given some western powers an excuse to pressurize some Muslim countries to provide military bases under the pretext of providing security. The conference drew attention to the ‘current attempts by certain Western powers to exploit this situation [Soviet invasion] for reintroducing imperialist intervention in the Islamic World.’⁶

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union tried to win over some sympathy from the Muslim world, when on 4 February 1980, the Soviet foreign minister communicated an offer to Syria, that if and when the Israelis withdrew from the occupied Arab lands, the USSR would also vacate Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan question naturally remained the top of the agenda at the regular 11th ICFM, which was held in Islamabad (May 1980). Kabul regime's request for an invitation was rejected by the OIC on the grounds that the regime could not be called the representative of the Afghan people as long as the Soviet troops were not withdrawn. The Kabul regime promptly offered Soviet withdrawal subject to positive guarantees by Pakistan, Iran, and the US, that they would not allow access to Afghanistan from Pakistan and Iran. While Iran and the US were skeptical about the proposal, Pakistan rejected it utterly as a tactic to influence the forthcoming 11 ICFM to adopt resolutions. ⁷

The 11th ICFM repeated all the decisions of the previous OIC session, condemned the Soviet Union and called for immediate withdrawal of foreign troops and restoration of the Islamic and non-aligned character of Afghanistan. It also called for full support to the frontline states, which were, in this case, Pakistan and Iran. (In a couple of years, the number of Afghan refugees in these two countries reached up to 3.5 million and 2 million, respectively, becoming a serious economic burden for them.) The conference formed a committee comprising Pakistan, Iran, and the OIC Secretary General to seek ways and means for a comprehensive solution of the severe crises and offered the OIC's good offices for mediation between the opponent sides. The committee first held talk with the leadership of the *Mujadhideen*, as the guerrillas came to be known. It also wanted to hold talks with the Kabul regime without recognizing it; a condition that Kabul would not accept. The committee then also considered sending a mission directly to Moscow. Meanwhile, since a number of countries had already announced contributions for the Afghanistan Fund, another committee comprising Pakistan, Gambia, and Saudi Arabia was formed to administer the money. ⁸

Two important points regarding these two ICFMs are considerable. One that on both the occasions pro-Moscow countries Syria, Libya, PLO, and South Yemen had strongly opposed condemnation of the USSR, and but for the tactful diplomacy by some Muslim states, the conferences were nearly ruined. A justifying feature for the pro-Moscow lobby was the equally strict attitude of the Conference towards the United States (for the Camp David accord. Iran-hostage crisis, and support to Israel, etc.) and other Western 'imperialist' powers. Even the Soviet Union itself, which was annoyed at the harsh resolutions against her, called over the ICFM resolutions against the United States. Thus not only did Muslim unity on Afghanistan, as on the Palestine issue, remain unchanged, but also, the OIC came out as a radical, non-aligned, and anti-imperialist organization.

And two, all the OIC resolutions on the Afghan crises were implemented. Nearly all Muslim states, even Indonesia, broke diplomatic relations with Kabul, substantial funds were raised for the support of the Afghan resistance groups, the boycott of the Moscow Olympics as far as the OIC states were concerned was almost universal, and in November 1980, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning the Soviet armed intervention by a massive majority of 111 votes. It can be argued here that this could have been accomplished because of Washington's crusade against the Soviet invasion. But observing that the OIC offensives against Israel and the USSR were equally successful in those years, the contribution of the OIC, in its own right, cannot be underestimated.

The 3rd Islamic Summit held in Taif, Saudi Arabia (1981), ignored Kabul's warning and, debated the Afghanistan situation thoroughly, re-affirmed that complete Soviet pull-out was the only answer to the problem, and asked the OIC Committee on Afghanistan to

step up its efforts for the resolution of the conflict.⁹ Consequently, the three-member Committee met Prof, Abdul Rab Rasul Siyaf, a prominent resistance leader, at the Mont Pelerin in Switzerland but the mission was failure as the *Mujahideen* leadership refused to negotiate with the puppet Kabul regime. The Committee nonetheless reaffirmed the OIC support to *Mujahideen*.¹⁰ The Afghanistan Committee was later enlarged to five with the induction of Tunisia and Guinea. It launched another diplomatic offensive in August 1982 asking Russia to initiate a dialogue but she turned down this request.¹¹

Pakistan always looked towards the Islamic Conference not only for the financial support to feed 3.5 million Afghan refugees but also for the political support as well, by the 1984, Soviet Air Force had began regular bombardment of Pakistani territory. The 15th ICFM held in Sana'a, (1984) 'deeply deplored the violation of Pakistani air space and bombardment of its territory...resulting in loss of life and property and expressed appreciation for the restraint shown by Pakistan. In return for the OIC support, Pakistan had limited its own options by involving the whole Muslim world in the Afghan crises and by declaring to go by the OIC decisions on Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan issue figured in every OIC conference during this period. The OIC's consistent position was that the Soviet occupation, as well as its installed Kabul regime, were illegal and have been imposed against the will of the people of Afghanistan. Nothing less would be acceptable from the restoration of sovereignty as well as restoration of Islamic Identity of Afghanistan. The OIC factor has become so important that when in August 1984 a US Senate staff study asked the government to recognize a Mujahideen government-in-exile, it recommended that the aid to such government be channeled through OIC.¹²

In 1986, Soviet leader Mikheal Gorbachev sent feelers about his leaning to get out of the Afghan dilemma. His famous 6 August message to the OIC Secretary General was obviously welcomed by the OIC. In a message to the leader of the 5th Summit held in Kuwait (1987), Soviet Union gave the assurance that it would withdraw her troops as part of general agreement to stop out side meddling in the affairs of sovereign, Muslim and non-aligned Afghanistan. As in the same year 8,000 soviet troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan.¹³

The OIC closely monitored the Geneva negotiations, welcomed the UN-brokered Geneva agreement (14 April 1988) between Pakistan and Afghanistan, with the USA and USSR as guarantors and finally expressed satisfaction when the last Soviet contingent left Afghanistan on 15 February 1989 in accordance with the timetable.

Second Phase (1989-92):

Afghanistan's regime had not been recognized by the OIC for years, as it was being ruled by the troops of a foreign country. But after February 1989, when the Soviet troops had left Afghanistan, President Dr.Najibullah's government was non-representative totalitarian regime much like other totalitarian regimes in other parts of the Muslim world. So, that the OIC recognition of the Kabul regime was rather unprecedented. On 23 February 1989, seven major Afghan *Mujahideen* groups formed an interim government with Prof. Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, as president and Rasul Siyaf as Prime Minister. The first cabinet meeting took place in an Afghan hamlet in the *Mujahideen* controlled area of the country. The 18 ICFM held in Riyadh (1989) hailed the heroic struggle of the Afghan people, the Soviet withdrawal, and the formation of the interim government, to which

recognition was given by a majority of thirty-five votes against ten and also Prof. Mojaddedi represented Afghanistan at the 6th Islamic Summit held in Dakar (1991).¹⁴

A review of the resolutions during these three years shows that the Organization saw the overthrow of Dr Najibullah's government as a consummation of the Afghan *jihād*. For this purpose, the OIC continued to give all political, diplomatic, moral, and material help to the interim *Mujahideen*-led government and most important of all, it continued to broker agreements among the *Mujahideen* factions, in case they started fighting amongst themselves. The OIC repeatedly offered all the warring factions, its good offices for smooth transfer of power. But, unfortunately, OIC couldn't prevent the Civil war, which was inevitable considering the traditional hatred for each other among different groups of Afghanistan.

Third Phase (1992-2001):

It was in April 1992 that Kabul finally fell in to *Mujahideen* coalition government. With the help of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the OIC, the Afghan factions agreed on a six-month interim arrangement during which Prof. Mojaddedi and later Prof. Rabbani were to hold power. The six months passed without any improvement in the rivalries and jealousies between different *Mujahideen* fractions. Again the OIC brokered the power-sharing Accord (6 March 1993), the third in a series. The earlier Jalalabad Accord and Peshawar Accords had already broken down.¹⁵ Article 10 of the Islamabad Accord gave OIC the mandate to monitor cease-fire.

In April 1993, the 21st ICFM, which, took place in Karachi, (Pakistan) noted that the 'successful outcome of the Afghan Jihad and the establishment of an Islamic government' with the satisfaction and asked the member states to help in the

reconstruction of the war-torn country. The OIC chief's special envoy on Afghanistan arrived in Islamabad on 9 January 1994 and started fresh talks with the Afghan Leaders.¹⁶ A special OIC permanent mission on Afghanistan was established in Islamabad on 3 April 1994.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the final two years extension to the tenure of Prof. Rabbani's presidency given by the Islamabad Accord elapsed on 30 June, while no solution was yet in sight for the years to come and, thus, Afghanistan was then plunged in to the civil war for years to come.

Meanwhile, Pakistan and the United Nations requested OIC to play its role as it was the only forum that enjoyed the respect of all Afghan sides.¹⁸ The OIC Secretary General Dr. Hamid Al Ghabid arrived in Islamabad on the 30 June 1994, the last date of the mandate given to the Rabbani regime by OIC, and started consultations anew. The OIC announce its own peace plan. The plan envisioned an interim government, a consultative assembly, free and fair elections, and reconstruction and rehabilitation work, but Rabbani rejected the plan in the early September 1994. Another major initiative taken by the OIC led to Tehran talks (28 Nov-7 Dec, 1994), which nonetheless failed. In July 1995, the OIC tried to hammer out the differences by floating a plan for talks in Jeddah. The Rabbani rejected it while some of the other factions including Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum had accepted it. In October 1995, October 1996, and November 1997, the OIC Assistant Secretary General, Ibrahim Bakr, came with three fresh attempts to mediate cease-fire but to no avail.¹⁹ Meanwhile, in September 1996, a new radical faction called *Taliban*, made up of tens of thousand of former Afghan students of religious school in Pakistan, captured Kabul ousted the Iran-backed Rabbani. Three months later, the 24th ICFM held in Jakarta, decided to declare the Afghan seat at the OIC vacant once again.

The *Taliban* claimed that when Rabbani was clinging to his seat after the lapse of the OIC-given mandate, and was rejecting the OIC peace initiatives one after the other, recognition to his government was not withdrawn by the OIC, and despite the opposition by all the Afghan factions, except Rabbani's himself, his nominees continued attending the OIC conferences. But now even the *Taliban* had emerged as the Victors, the OIC did not invite Mullah Mohammad Umer, the *Taliban*'s supreme leader, to the Islamic Summit. Meanwhile, Pakistan gave full protocol to the *Taliban*'s supreme leader at his arrival in Islamabad at the Islamic Summit held in March 1997, though he attended the conference as an observer. On the other hand, Iran gave full protocol to the ousted President Rabbani at the Tehran Islamic summit held in December, 1997, though there too the Afghan seat remained vacant as per the OIC decision.²⁰ In autumn of 1997, the new OIC Secretary General Izzeddienne Laraki claimed that the OIC was the only organization that enjoyed the confidence of all the factions in Afghanistan. He announced that OIC was shortly going to start fresh peace talks between the representatives of the *Taliban*-led government and the opposition Northern Alliance, led by the ousted president Burhanuddin Rabbani. The first-ever face-to-face meetings between the two sides since the rise of the *Taliban*, were co-chaired by the representatives of the OIC and UN. The talks made significant headway in the first four sessions but eventually broke down on the insistence of the opposition that the Taliban government should first lift the siege of the opposition-held Bamiyan province, for the talks to proceed. Lately, the OIC and the Afghan government developed friction over host of issues. The murder of nine Iranian diplomats in Afghanistan in 1998, led to a near war situation between Iran and Afghanistan. Another source of animosity was the harsh legislation by the Taliban

government regarding women's rights, educational institutions, and the control over electronic media. The OIC believed that the ultra-conservative and medieval laws of the Taliban were bringing a bad name to Muslims all over the world.

Phase IV (2001-present)

Despite all these issues Pakistan recognition and massive support to *Taliban* (which also effected her relation with some of the Muslim countries opposed to that faction), they became a nightmare for Pakistan as when world Trade Center (WTC) was attacked by a terrorist organization named *Al-Qae'da* who were under the protection of *Taliban* government. As compensation, US demanded for *Osama bin Laden* an originator of the *Al-Qau'da* network, which they had refused. Pakistan was faced its biggest Dilemma, as when US and its Allies decided to attack Afghanistan after giving them a sufficient time to reconsider their decision of handing over *Osama bin Laden* who was blamed for the 9/11 attacks on WTC. Pakistan had to opt either to go with US and its Allies in their so-called war against terrorism or to stay in support with their own installed government of Taliban in Afghanistan. The US and the West promised massive economic aid in return to their support with the war against terrorism. In order to protect her interest and to safeguard its image as moderate, progressive and anti-terrorist state Pakistan decided to go with the US and its Allies in the so-called war against terrorism. As president of Pakistan Gen. Pervaiz Mushraff address to nation expressed that "Pakistan comes first" which became so controversial after then. Through the use of Pakistani Air-space and the ISI (Inter Services Intelligence) providing intelligence information it was just a matter of days that US and its Allies were able to destroy the whole of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and what was hoping under the Taliban's rule that peace may be

accomplished, once again was pushed back to the environment of insurgency. Despite the shameful role played by Pakistan in particular and the whole of the Muslim world & OIC in general, now in the Post-Taliban era Pakistan is facing some of the unprecedented prospect of losing all political clout in a neighbor crucial to its security and stability. Pakistan, the last country to back the Taliban, signed up to the U. S. campaign and ended up assisting in the collapse of an erstwhile close ally it helped install in Kabul five years ago. The taking of the capital by the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, a loose coalition of mostly minority Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras, puts Pakistan in a difficult position on two counts. On the one hand, it puts a hostile group in power just next door, with the potential to create unrest along Pakistan's western border or, even worse, team up with Pakistan's archenemy, India. Conversely, the fall of the mostly-Pashtun Taliban has created feelings of bitterness and betrayal among ethnic Pashtuns, who dominate Afghanistan as well as the frontier tribal areas of Pakistan. The challenge before Pakistan now is to placate the divided and angered Pashtuns in Afghanistan and ensure representation for them in a proposed broad-based government. As Pakistani Senator Mushahid Hussain, said "On the one hand, we help the Americans to oust the Taliban and in the same breath we crib and cry that Taliban opponents, the Northern Alliance, are in power. You cannot have it both ways. Pakistan should accept whoever takes over Kabul." For M. A. Niazi, a prominent Pakistani political commentator, Pakistan is in a no-win situation. "We have earned the undying hostility of any government in Kabul no matter to which party it belongs. There are pro-Taliban Pashtuns, but no longer pro-Pakistan Pashtuns." Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf took an acknowledged gamble when he risked the ire of the Islamic community in the country to help the U.S. launch military operations against a Muslim neighbor. The dare paid off in short-term economic

assistance from Washington and the international credibility the Musharraf regime had sought since taking power in a military coup in 1999. But one could wonder whether Pakistan's U.S. connection will hold up in the long term. Khalid Mahmood, of Islamabad's Institute of Regional Studies, said Pakistan had gained nothing politically by siding with the U. S. -led international coalition. "The Americans have done nothing to rein in the Northern Alliance, which is now claiming to be a legitimate government and has an unfriendly record against Pakistan. She apparently has been let down on this account." Pakistan has a lot to fear from a government dominated by the Northern Alliance, which contains many of the same *mujahedin* who ruled in Kabul from 1992 to 1996 and caused chaos with non-stop factional fighting. Such instability could easily spill over the border and send a stream of refugees again fleeing into Pakistan. But the main factor in Pakistan's Afghan calculations is India. From its security point of view, it is all the more important for Pakistan to have a friendly regime in Afghanistan because it has a hostile neighbor on its eastern border. So far in the last 50 years, Pakistan has never deployed any troops on its western borders, but if an unfriendly regime takes over power in Kabul, Pakistan will be forced to redeploys its troops. Newspapers and commentators have used words such as "catastrophic" and a "nightmare" to describe the sight of Northern Alliance troops in Kabul. They are urging the Pakistani government to rethink its approach to regional politics. As M. A. Niazi said: "In the aftermath of the Taliban demise, there is need for a serious soul-searching exercise to determine which of our policies and which of our national aspirations are sustainable." What is more important for Pakistan's government in the post Taliban era, where US and its western Allies are blaming third world countries especially the Muslim countries for being involved in the terrorist acts is to take

appropriate measures to strengthen their relations with each other, and made a solid Muslim bloc in order to safeguard their own interest against the sole super power America and its western allies's hegemonic ambitions.

4.2 Pakistan and Peaceful Resolutions of Disputes

As for this section the most relevant case with our topic of study is the none other than the dispute between Pakistan and its counterpart Bangladesh previously called (East) Pakistan. To begin with we are giving a brief background of the dispute.

When Pakistan got its independence in 14 August, 1947, it was consisted of two geographically separate parts by distance of over 2000km having a hostile territory of India in between. Islam was the only bond that was keeping the two wings together. In 1967, a conspiracy was uncovered, exposing that some East Pakistani nationalist leaders, belonging to the Awami League, had planned the dismemberment of Pakistan with the active involvement of India.²¹ In the general elections of December 1970, the Awami League and Pakistan People's Party, romped home with trumping majorities in East and West Pakistan, respectively. The fact that neither of the parties could secure even one seat from the other wing showed up the cleavage that had developed between the two peoples. Much to the disappointment of the Pakistan's military and the establishment, the Awami league had got an absolute majority in Pakistan's united parliament, securing 160 of the 313 seats, since East Pakistan had, on the basis of its numerical majority, more seats in the parliament than west Pakistan. The government was hesitant to transfer power and the Awami League became impatient and started resisting State authority. President Yahya Khan, a West Pakistani, hit back by claming a ban on the Awami League, calling its

leadership conspirators and Indian agents. The Awami League lost no time in proclaiming an independent Bangladesh, forming a government –in-exile in India and sending armed infiltrators from across the Indian border. In the wake of that situation, President Yahya's above decision along with the military crackdown on the rebels came on 25 March 1971. India accuses West Pakistan of carrying out systematic victimization of the non-Muslims, especially the Bengali Hindus, in the erstwhile East Pakistan, and West Pakistan accuses both of killing ordinary civilians, woman, and children in hit-and-run terrorist attacks. East Pakistan had plunged into a civil war that culminated in a full-scale India-Pakistan war on 22 November 1971. To reduce the pressure on its struggling troops on the Eastern front, Pakistan attacked India from the West on 3rd December 1971.²² the fiercely contested fight raged on with fury for another fortnight. On the 16th December, Pakistan army commander in East Pakistan finding his forces in a no-win situation accepted the cease-fire on India's highly unfavorable terms, to avoid further bloodshed. East Pakistan broke away to become Bangladesh and Pakistan accepted a cease-fire on the Western front also, after a couple of days.

In June 1971, when the civil war was on its peak, the OIC experts' committee meeting to draft the charter was in session at Jeddah. The meeting strongly condemned external interference in the East Pakistan, without naming India.²³ A three-member OIC delegation comprising the Secretary General, Iran, and Kuwait, visited both parts of Pakistan, to try to mediate between the Pakistan government and the rebels. While India declined visas to the members of the OIC mission when they tried to visit India to meet the leaders of the self-proclaimed government of Bangladesh, on the grounds that the first OIC Summit held in Rabat (1969) had expelled the Indian delegation. Though India later

apologized to the OIC for the discourtesy shown to its mission, the immediate objective of torpedoing an initiative that could have saved Pakistan's territorial integrity had been realized. After two months prior to the 3rd ICFM held in Jeddah (1972), Pakistan (i.e. the former West Pakistan) released the Awami League Leader Mujib-ur-Rehman, who was undergoing a trial for high treason, and then allowed him to proceed to India-occupied East Pakistan, to become Prime Minister of 'Bangladesh'. The 3rd ICFM refused to recognize Bangladesh and declared its full support for Pakistan's Independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Both India and Pakistan were urged to vacate each other's territories captured in the war of 1971, withdraw their troops to positions behind their internationally recognized frontiers, and exchange prisoners of war in accordance with the Geneva conventions. The conference decided to establish a committee of reconciliation comprising Algeria, Iran, Malaysia, Morocco, Somalia, Tunisia, and the OIC Secretary General, that was asked to contact President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Islamabad and Mujib-urRehman in Dhaka, 'to bring about reconciliation between estranged brothers'. The Conference expressed deep sorrow over the tragedy that had happened to Pakistan and wished that 'future relationship between the population in the East (Pakistan) and West (Pakistan) should be decided upon by their elected leaders through a meeting between them in the atmosphere of freedom and dignity.'²⁴ the OIC Secretary General contacted both the sides and as soon as the replies were received, he sent a letter to the Bangladeshi Leader Mujib-ur-Rehman through the Indian embassy at Cairo, since Bangladesh had not been recognized and did not have any diplomatic mission in the Muslim states. It is not known whether the letter reached Dhaka or not, since the OIC Secretary General received a reply from the Indian Prime Minister Indira

Gandhi that said the Bangladeshi authorities were not in position to receive a 7-member delegation of Muslim states, since the OIC had not cared about the sufferings of the Bangladeshi people earlier, So this second mission failed.²⁵ Pakistan unilaterally released all the Indian POWs in order to increase international pressure on India and managed to get a resolution approved by the 4th ICFM held in Benghazi in 1973, censuring India for continued detention of the Pakistani POWs. Following the Conference, the OIC made the third major attempt to bring about reconciliation between Pakistan and Bangladesh but, Mujib-ur-Rahman demanded equal status as the head of the sovereign state, along with the Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Thus this attempt also failed.²⁶

Bhutto was under pressure of the emotionally charged Pakistani public not to recognize Bangladesh, while India was holding thousand of Pakistani POWs as to force Pakistan to recognize Bangladesh. Due to the efforts of the new OIC Secretary General, Hassan Tohami, Bhutto announced Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh, just one day prior to the 2nd Islamic Summit to be held in Lahore in 1974 in 'the spirit of the Islamic solidarity'. The OIC then persuaded Mujib-ur-Rehman to come to Pakistan to attend the Summit, which he did. The OIC as a collective body, and several Muslim states like Iran and Turkey individually, recognized Bangladesh on the same day.²⁷ India then had to release Pakistani POWs soon without any further delay, as Bhutto never forgot to insist that it was the OIC and the Islamic spirit, that made Pakistan recognize Bangladesh, not any external pressure. It was one of the great events in the history of the OIC and that of Pakistan. In 1988, fourteen years later, the OIC services were once again requested on the issue of the repartition of the 'stranded Pakistanis' in Bangladesh. It is well-known that a large number of Pakistanis refused to accept Bangladeshi nationality. In fact the first Vice

President, the Chief Justice of Supreme Court, and Secretary General of the ruling People's Party in the condensed Pakistan (former West Pakistan), namely, Dr.Nur-ul-Amin, Justice Hamood-ur-Rahman, and J.A. Rahim, respectively, to name a few, belong to the former East Pakistan. the ethnic Bihari community in East Pakistan was worst effected by the riots between pro-Pakistan and pro-Bangladesh activities, after the creation of Bangladesh, since the Biharis always called themselves Pakistanis, Bangladesh asked Pakistan to take them back. During Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's tenure, Pakistan accepted hundreds of thousands of Biharis who could trace any linkage with (West) Pakistan like kinship, employment, etc. Pakistan refused to absorb all Biharis on the Plea that till 1971, every person living in Bangladesh was a Pakistani and Pakistan could not now accept every citizen of Bangladesh if he insists on still being Pakistani. The 'Stranded Pakistanis' issue took emotional mood in Pakistan since Biharis had made a lot of sacrifices, when fighting for a united Pakistan. In July 1988, Pakistan and the OIC established a trust for raising funds for undertaking the gigantic task of repatriation and rehabilitation of 238,000 stranded Pakistanis.²⁸ later in 1991, the then Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif chaired another meeting of the OIC Fund which decided to go ahead with the repatriation. Only a few hundred people had been repatriated when the government dithered and the process dried up in the early 1998, the government of Pakistan decided to prepare an action plan for the prompt repatriation of stranded Pakistanis, after a meeting of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Bangladesh at Dhaka in January 1998. The process of repatriation of 'stranded Pakistanis' still remain very slow and have not marked significant progress up to this day.

4.3 Pakistan and Joint Foreign Policy

OIC has achieved much success in regard to formulating a joint foreign policy of its member states like Muslim Minorities in Chechnya, Philippine, Bosnia, and Jammu & Kashmir (occupied by India and considered it as its integral part). As we are more concerned with the role of Pakistan in these issues, so we are taking the case of Kashmir, because of the distinctive role played by Pakistan as from the rest of the member states of the OIC.

Pakistan and India emerged as two independent and sovereign states when British quit the subcontinent in August 1947, after eighty-eight years of direct colonial rule. The partition was made on the agreed formula according to which all Muslim majority provinces were to go to Pakistan while the non-Muslim majority provinces went to India. The formula was universally applied to all provinces of the undivided subcontinent, except for the state of Jammu and Kashmir, where India claimed that even Muslim population wanted to accede to India. The two countries agreed to maintain a status quo until it is determined according to the wishes of the Kashmiri people through a plebiscite. However mutual distrust soon resulted in hostilities in which India captured a substantial part of Kashmir. As the first Pakistan-India war of 1948 erupted, Pakistan forces recaptured several districts of the disputed region before the UN Security Council brokered a cease-fire. Its two famous resolutions of 13 August, 1948 and 5 January, 1949 provided for the immediate cease-fire, demilitarization of the Kashmir state, and a UN sponsored plebiscite in the region to determine the wishes of the Kashmiri Muslims about acceding to India or to Pakistan. In 1963, India annexed part of the Kashmir on a very flawed ground. India based its claim on the instrument of accession of a former Hindu prince of Kashmir who had been ousted in the Muslim insurgency in 1947. Pakistan

responded sharply to the annexation and the indecisive war of 1965 erupted. Again in the Simla agreement of 1972, both the countries agreed to resolve the Kashmir dispute amicably. Both the countries continue to be engaged in a bitter war of attrition over Kashmir for the last half a century.²⁹

Pakistan has always referred to the Kashmir problem in all the OIC conferences. At the 2nd Islamic Summit held at Lahore, Pakistan in 1974, Pakistan was not sure to gain enough support to get a resolution on Kashmir adopted. So the Pakistani leader Z.A Bhutto made only veiled references to the problem. The President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (part of the disputed area liberated by Pakistan in 1948) was invited to the Lahore Summit, who explained the genesis of the problem in his meeting with several Muslim leaders.³⁰

In January 1989, a mass uprising broke-out in the Indian-held Kashmir. India claimed that Kashmir is an integral part of India and that it would not allow any third party mediation. It called the insurgency as Pakistan-inspired terrorism. As the Indian forces' brutalities to suppress the movement was pumped up and the Muslim countries became more concerned, Pakistan felt that it was the right time to bring in the OIC. Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto met with sixteen Muslim heads of the State to support Pakistan on Kashmir at the OIC. The August of 1990 was one of the finest hours in Pakistan's diplomatic history when the 19th ICFM held at Cairo, Egypt adopted a resolution calling upon Pakistan and India to resolve Kashmir problem in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions. It also expressed deep concern over human rights violations of the Kashmiri Muslims and offered a good offices mission to South Asia.³¹ The Prime Minister of the Azad Kashmir, Mumtaz Rathore, welcomed the OIC's interest

in the Kashmir dispute whereas India rejected the OIC mediation offer by saying that Kashmir was a settled issue. On May 22, 1991 Pakistan wrote to the OIC Secretary General drawing his attention to the brutalities of the Indian forces.³² Consequently, the 20th ICFM held at Istanbul, Turkey in August 1991 reiterated the previous resolutions while calling upon the Secretary General to send a fact finding mission to Kashmir and report the findings to the next ICFM.³³ India refused visas to the members of the OIC fact finding mission on the ground that OIC had no legal stand on Kashmir.³⁴ The mission however visited the pro-Pakistan state Azad Kashmir in February 1993. It interviewed a large number of displaced persons and victims of Indian atrocities, now living in temporary refugee camps in Pakistani-controlled territories. The mission's thirteen pages report was presented at the 21st ICFM held at Karachi in April 1993 which cited strong evidence to the effect that state terror, including custodial killing, unprovoked firing on unarmed protestors, mistreating with Muslim girls, and inhumane torture and body mutilation, was rampant in the Indian-held Kashmir and was being used as a consistent policy instrument.³⁵ The Secretary General's report at the ICFM recommended that Muslim states should review their trade ties with India, impose ban on the Indian labour force working in the Gulf Muslim states, support the Kashmiri's' right on all international fronts, and use their influence over India to stop her from committing genocide.³⁶ The Indian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Ishrat Aziz, a Muslim met the OIC Secretary General on 11 February, to convince him of his country's justification for not allowing the OIC Mission to occupied Kashmir, and reiterated that the India had great respect for the OIC and that India cherished her relations with the Muslim states. The OIC then started thinking about sending a mission to India, comprising 'friendly Muslim states' to prevail

upon her to change her mind. After a few months, the OIC Secretary General while welcoming the scheduled India-Pakistan talks reiterated that the OIC would continue to explore all possible avenues to support the Kashmiris.³⁷ In October 1993, a UN Human Rights Conference was held at Geneva. There the then Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto accused India of murdering 60,000 innocent Kashmiri civilians in the previous four years and of destroying the economy of the state. She proposed a UN fact-finding mission to go to Kashmir to ascertain these allegations and sought OIC support in tabling a resolution. India requested the OIC not to press for UN Mission to occupied Kashmir, it suggested that the OIC ambassadors in India were welcome to visit Indian-held Kashmir (which she had refused earlier) to ascertain the facts about the Kashmir situation. The compromise was accepted. An Indian delegation visited the OIC Secretariat at Jeddah to work out details.³⁸ Pakistan announced that the OIC, and not India, was to decide the composition of the mission. India started having second thoughts, and in April 1994, assistant Secretary General Ibrahim Bakr publicly asked India not to break her promise.³⁹ As argument had not turned down, the OIC for the first time invited Kashmiri leaders from both sides of the cease-fire line to the 22nd ICFM. Before the ICFM could be held, Pakistan convened an extraordinary session of the ICFM at Islamabad in September 1994 to consider the worsening situation in occupied Kashmir. The Conference unanimously demanded from India to stop state repression and continued an OIC Contact Group on Kashmir.⁴⁰ The Secretary General, several Muslim countries and the leaders of Pakistani held Kashmir and those from the Indian-held Kashmir criticized India in their addresses to the meeting. The 7th ICFM decided to constitute an OIC contact group on Jammu and Kashmir in order to stay informed on the crises. A month later, Pakistan tried to table,

from the OIC platform, a resolution on Kashmir in the first committee of the UN General Assembly. India took a 'calculated risk' by summoning twenty-six OIC ambassadors at the Foreign Ministry in New Delhi to warn them against supporting the Pakistani move.⁴¹ Pakistan wanted twenty co-sponsors but soon they dropped the idea because they were not sure of getting the required support.⁴² Meanwhile in India there were apprehension that the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, commonly known as the APHC, might form a government-in-exile on receiving signal from Pakistan, may apply for the full membership in the OIC.⁴³ To pre-empt it, India has banned the participation of the APHC delegations in the OIC moots since early 1995. In retaliation, the 23rd ICFM held at Conakry, Guinea in December 1995 termed occupied Kashmir as a land under 'colonial occupation'.⁴⁴

Since 1990, all the four Islamic Summits and the ICFM / EICFM have reiterated full support for Kashmiris' rights of self-determination, asked India to desist from human rights violations and to withdraw its troops from Kashmir, and called for a solution in accordance with the resolutions. The OIC and even its subsidiary cultural institutions especially the Islamic commission for Economics, Cultural and Social Affairs (ICECS) have made it a point not to miss an opportunity to criticize India for particular incidents in Kashmir; like the burning of a Muslim shrine at Charar Sharif in may 1995, murder of human rights activist Jalil Adrabi in April 1996, reported incident of gang rape in June 1997, and so on. The OIC Contact Group has so far held over a dozen meetings, which have helped in internationalizing the issue. The typical response of India on each of the plethora of OIC resolutions is that the OIC views are 'highly objectionable' aimed at prolonging Pakistani-sponsored terrorism, interference in the domestic affairs, and

touching an already settled issue. India has always been regretting the ‘vulnerability of the OIC to be misled by the vicious Pakistani propaganda and falsehood’.⁴⁵ The 8th Islamic Summit held at Tehran, Iran in December 1997 reiterated all the previous resolutions on the Kashmir question. The Conference asked India to accept the OIC good offices for the resolution of the problem, and urged the member states to influence India in allowing an OIC fact-finding mission to held Kashmir. The 25th ICFM held at Doha, Qatar in November 1998 also condemned India for the human rights violations of the Kashmiri Muslims and asked her to stop the ‘state terrorism’.

In April, 1999 the *Mujahideen*, as Pakistan calls the pro-independence fighters of the occupied Kashmir, belonging to the various guerrilla outfits including the much-dreaded *Lashkar-e-Tayyabah* captured several strategic heights in North of held Kashmir, in the neighborhood of a town *Kargil*. Since the guerrillas were well-entrenched and well positioned, all the Indian attempts to recapture the peaks were resulting in heavy casualties for them. The Indian-government decided to employ the full might of their military and the Air Force to redeem the national honour in the wake of the heavy reverses suffered by the regular army brigades at the hands of a few hundred irregulars. However, India mentioned that the occupiers of the Kargil heights were regular Pakistani troopers, rather than Pakistani-backed Muslim fighters, a charge that Pakistan strongly denied. As the pressure for the *Mujahideen* increased on the Kargil front, Pakistan felt obliged to give artillery support to the fighters from well within its side of the cease-fire line. Thus both the countries unintentionally found themselves involved in the fourth war of the past fifty-two years. The war remained essentially a limited war as both the sides made attempts at de-escalation at every stage. The fruitless eleven-week conflict (form 6th

May to 18 July, 1999) ended when Pakistan agreed to use its influence over the *Mujahideen* to vacate the Kargil heights in order to avoid a full-fledge war between the two nuclear powers, which could have been disastrous. The war ended in a status quo with both sides claiming victory.

The 26th ICFM held at Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in June, 1999 took place while the war was going with full fury. The host President, Blaise Compaore, expressed sympathy with Pakistan, as its Foreign Minister told him that Pakistan was a victim of Indian aggression. Most of the delegates who took the floor supported Pakistan's initiative in seeking a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute. The ICFM was the only international forum which supported Pakistani position, expressed concern over the escalation caused by the heavy Indian shelling and air strikes, lauded Pakistan's initiatives for defusing tension, urged India to respect the UN resolutions on Kashmir since Kargil hostilities had to be seen in the broader context of the Kashmir conflict, and finally affirmed complete solidarity with Pakistan in its efforts to safeguard its integrity, political independence, territorial integrity in the war. The OIC also asked the Secretary General to appoint a Special OIC Representative on Kashmir plus OIC also call for the Nuclear Weapon Free Zones excluded reference to South Asia as Pakistan warned that it may consider using all options including its Nuclear Weapon, for its security, were the war against India to escalate. While concluding this section, it may be noted that OIC does not recognize India's 1963 annexation of Kashmir and wants both the countries to withdraw their troops from the state and agree to an UN-sponsored plebiscite so that the People of Kashmir can decide the fate of Kashmir. The OIC also terms the inhuman treatment of Kashmiri Muslims by the Indian army as simply unacceptable. Here one

cannot refute the role and contribution made by Pakistan in settling the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, as she always presented this case in every international forum referring to the inhuman treatment of the Kashmiri Muslims and the illegal occupation of their territory by India. OIC also appreciates Pakistan's willingness to accept any kind of mediation, good offices, arbitration, adjudication or fact finding, by the UN, OIC or the ICJ, and to abide by the decision. The OIC is critical of that fact that India is bent upon holding on the region whose predominantly Muslim population and is hostile to Indian rule, as well as India is defying the UN resolutions since a plebiscite may, give the whole of the Kashmir to Pakistan.

4.4 Pakistan & Technical Cooperation

The Third Summit Conference of 1981 established three ministerial committees; each one of them is headed permanently by certain member state at the presidential level. These are: the Standing Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation (COMSTECH) which is headed by the President of Pakistan, the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) headed by the President of Turkey, and the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) which is headed by the President of Senegal. Each committee is entrusted with following up the implementation of the resolutions of the summit conferences in its respective area and devising new strategies to promote cooperation in that area. The OIC has also initiated a network of cultural and educational activities. For example, ISESCO supervises the Islamic universities of Niger, Uganda, and Malaysia and many Islamic cultural centers in Mali, the Comoros Islands, and Guinea-Bissau.

In the field of Technical Cooperation the role of Pakistan can be best highlighted as by unfolding the performance of the Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation (COMSTECH) which is headed by the President of Pakistan, and its office is situated in its federal capital Islamabad, presently headed by President General Pervaiz Musharraf while Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman is its chairman.

In January 1981, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) established a Ministerial Standing Committee for Scientific Cooperation (COMSTECH) at its third annual meeting held in Makkah-tul-Mukarrama, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Committee was created to promote the scientific and technological capabilities of Muslim countries through closer “cooperation and mutual assistance.” OIC’s 57 member states, ranging from Afghanistan to Lebanon to Uganda, are home to more than one billion people — a fifth of the world’s population. Through the years, COMSTECH has concentrated on several broad objectives:

- To pursue collaborative research on issues of common concern within the OIC region—for example, desertification and agriculture-al productivity.
- To create effective institutional networks for planning, researching and developing basic science and high technology, including state-of-the-art information technologies.
- To establish benchmarks for assessing the scientific and techno-logical capabilities and progress of OIC member states.

The ultimate goal of COMSTECH has remained simple to articulate yet difficult to achieve: to build the “indigenous capability of member states in the fields of science and technology through cooperation and mutual assistance.” Since its inception, COMSTECH has concentrated on a wide range of topical areas, which the Committee believes are either central to the future well being of OIC member states or at the critical edge of scientific inquiry

worldwide. These areas include biotechnology, agricultural productivity and microelectronics. For example, it has organized seminars and workshops in biological conservation in Brunei Darussalam, laser applications in Kuwait, agro-climatology in Pakistan, and waste management in Jordan. Despite its limited resources, COMSTECH has done much to advance the cause of science and technology throughout the Muslim world, however, its impact could be much greater if it could secure additional funding.” For this reason, COMSTECH’s executive committee has launched a “collaborative and cooperative projects” Programme designed to encourage the Committee and OIC member states to seek funding from international donors for future projects. Over the long term, COMSTECH is trying to secure external funds for the creation of new inter-Islamic research networks as well as an Islamic university on science and technology. For now, the Islamic Development Bank has agreed to support a COMSTECH training initiative with a grant totaling more than US\$3 million. Other funding agencies include the International Foundation for Science (IFS), which has joined COMSTECH in sponsoring a project to aid young Muslim researchers, and the government of Pakistan, which has provided COMSTECH with US\$1 million for the promotion of scientific and technological cooperation in the Muslim world.

COMSTECH has also signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with TWAS (Third World Academy for Science) that will enable both organizations to jointly pursue activities of mutual concern in the years to come. These activities will include:

- These include visiting Scientists Programme, Visiting Profession ship Programme,
- COMSTECH Travel Grants Programme, Technicians Training Programme,
- COMSTECH Spare Parts Programme, Bilateral Cooperation Programme, Conference Cooperation Programme, Conference to sponsorship Programme, Science Projects

- Funding Programme, Support for Workshops and Seminars,
- COMSTECH Digital Library (Free Literature Search Service), Inter-Library Network Service and analytical Service Network,

It is the largest digital library in the Muslim world established by the COMSTECH. This library, covers literature in Agricultural Science, Biological Sciences Environmental Sciences, Life Sciences, Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences, and Engineering and Computer Sciences: From March 1999 to October 2003, COMSTECH Literature Search Service returned 9.86 GB of data (equivalent to about 5.3 million pages of A-4 size text 4,000 pages daily) to researchers from countries across the Muslim world.

Some of these programs are being conducted in collaboration with international agencies, like COMSTECH-IFS in collaboration with the International Foundation for Sciences (IFS) is providing support in the form of research grants to young scientists of merit in OIC member countries. An amount of more than Rs 36 million would be spent over a period of five years on the project. The grants are awarded in six different research areas within the general framework of "Management, use and conservation of Biological Resources", viz Aquatic resources, animal production (including veterinary medicine), crop science, forestry/agro-forestry, food science and natural products. Other main projects of COMSTECH include publication of four profiles of the Muslim world. Other projects include establishment of Islamic networks for Water Resources (Jordan), Biotechnology (Egypt), Renewable Energy (Pakistan), Oceanography (Turkey), Space Science (Pakistan) and Tropical Medicine (Malaysia). In the field of information Technology, COMSTECH has established centers in Syria, Pakistan, Sudan, Maldives and Sierra Leone.⁴⁶

The Committee's strategy is based on the belief that advances in science and technology

hold the key to overcoming the difficult challenges the Muslim world faces today—problems arising from economic exploitation, cultural subversion and the slow rate of growth. Islamic solidarity in scientific research and technological development is essential for the common good and progress of the Muslim world.⁴⁷

Undoubtedly science and technology is the key to modern development, and despite elaboration of the different initiative and activities of the Committee on Science and Technology (COMSTECH) one must not satisfy with that. Today the Muslims as a global community and Pakistanis as an independent nation find themselves as a people with un-set priorities and confused goals. The pace of development in the Muslim world not only in technology but also in every field of life is essential to be competitive with the rest of the world. Before discussing further as to what and how should Muslim Ummah proceed in general, and Pakistanis in particular it is important to highlight where the Muslim world stands at the moment. For example:

- The Central Asian Muslim states, which got independence as a result of the collapse of former Soviet Union, were advanced under the communist Russia. Although these states are equipped with modern technology but they are passing through painful economic and social crises.
- The Arabs are the world's richest oil producing nations. Wealth is not a problem for them. They are economically better off but morally confused, divided, unable to liberate their fellow Arabs from the clutches of Israel, and serving western interests simply to safeguard their kingdoms, sheikhdoms and quasi-democracies.
- Pakistan has highly qualified scholars, Ulema, intellectuals, scientists, professionals, diverse talent, all sorts of natural resources, nuclear capabilities, yet more than 40

million of the population lives under grinding poverty. Literacy rate is under 30%, and the foreign debt is rising every hour.

- Indonesia and Bangladesh, the largest Muslim nations are also victims of poverty, corruption, conflicts, divisions and lack of cohesion.
- Malaysia is probably the only Muslim country, which though possessing little natural resources can be considered as economically stable, technologically advanced, highly literate, and socially secured. It is moving ahead within well-defined priorities. Looking into the reasons of its success one can see that the Malaysians brought reforms in a planned manner. The pattern they followed moved from social reform to economic, industrial and then technological development. Today, Malaysia is largely a corruption-free country with hard-working people engaged in development with self-esteem. Together they form a peaceful, patriotic and prosperous society.

On the whole, at present there are 57 independent Muslim States, members of the OIC, total number of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education and Research in the Muslim Ummah is above 1000. The average literacy rate in the Muslim world is 35 per cent. Taking the economic development index as a parameter for development, one can see the disparity between the Muslim world and the developed world. According to statistics, only six Islamic countries fall in the high human development index (HDI), 22 in the medium and as many as 23 in the low HDI category, according to the UN. The highest-ranking Islamic country is 36th while the lowest 173rd, in the HDI list of 178 countries. The total GNP of the 57 OIC member countries is only \$1.1 trillion, which is less than that of France with \$1.5 trillion and only one fifth that of Japan which has a GNP of \$ 5.1 trillion, with no natural resources but has 1000 universities including 120 of them in Tokyo alone. The total

number of universities in OIC countries is 328 while Tokyo alone has 120. The OIC region, as a whole needs at least 12000 universities. The entire Muslim world constituting one-fifth of humanity, contributes barely 1000 research articles out of 100,000 science books and 2,000,000 research articles published annually. While the West has an average of 3000 science PhDs per million populations, our number is so dismally small that even the statistic was not available. Pakistani nuclear scientist Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan can say "Universities should give emphasis on technology and research in scientific education and only by paying full attention to the scientific education, we can compete with the developed countries of the world."⁴⁸

Scholars agree that the true wealth of a nation lies in the quality of education with which its people are blessed and its ability to use its educated masses for economic development. It is a fact that the contribution of science and technology to economic growth is now widely recognized. After gaining independence, the Muslim countries' emphasis on science and technology is very poor. Because of this, most of the Muslim countries are defined as poor and under-developed.

Muslims have entered 21st Century. It will be commendable if Pakistan takes lead to establish Education Linkage/Contacts programs between the Muslim countries. It is a fact that education is corner stone of development. It has been proved that education make a significant and positive impact on employment, earning, productivity, health and the control over population growth. Developed nations like Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan had all made considerable investment in education with the result that they achieved rapid economic growth. If the Muslim world wishes to join the ranks of the developed countries they will have to coordinate in the fields of Science and Technology, education and research by expanding educational link/contacts programs, as it plays a vital role in development.

In the above perspective and facing the threat of becoming completely irrelevant in the world, it is high time for the OIC to revisit/ revive its whole strategy to face new realities and challenges. Member States are aware that scientific knowledge and creative technological inventions are for the Muslims to seek, discover and share with the rest of humanity. The essential question of the hour is: how this should be done? There can be three broad categories in which member states should cooperate:

Economic Cooperation:

These include Food, Agriculture, Energy, Trade, Basic Industry, Transport, Communication, etc. Economy is the backbone of self-reliance and prosperity of any country, but unfortunately no Muslim country has any economic infrastructure of its own. As Muslim countries are plagued either by affluence or extreme poverty, sharing of wealth, skill and expertise can improve their collective economic predicament.

Science and Technology Exchange:

As Science and Technology are fundamentally important for a nation to keep pace in the race of development, Muslim countries should promote cooperation and interaction in these areas. Muslim countries should make concerted efforts in order to develop their technological know-how in the productive areas of their economy and initiate some basic research at the earliest. This will help reduce the brain drain of the talented scientists from their respective countries.

Information and Cultural Cooperation:

These include cooperation in the promotion of the features and history of Islamic Civilization, Academic and Research link in various areas of mutual interest as well as Information-related and Humanitarian activities. Cooperation in defending Muslim rights

and Islamic values in Muslim-minority countries can lead to a better understanding among the Muslim countries. This will also increase the psychological and spiritual bondage between the Muslim people.

Endnotes:

¹ Pitman Potter, *In Introduction to the study of International Organization*, (New York, D. Appleton-Century, 1935.), p.303-324.

² Ibid.

³ For more detail see *Footnotes*.

⁴ *Resolution 1/EOS/1980*

⁵ Haider Mehdi, *OIC: A review of its political and educational policies*, (Progressive Publishers, Lahore, 1988.) p.59.

⁶ *Resolution 2/EOS/1980*.

⁷ *Pakistan Times*, 9 April 1980.

⁸ *Morning News*, Karachi, 20 May, 1980.

⁹ *Keesing*, 1981, pp. 30881-82. (*Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, which includes partial texts of documents and speeches as well as news summaries.

Facts on File is weekly; *Keesing's* is monthly. *FACTS.com* is the online version of *Facts on File*.)

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ See the statement of the Secretary General Habib Chatti in *Pakistan Times*, 23 August, 1982.

¹² *Fact on File*, 1984, p.53, see the entry under 8 April.

¹³ *Dawn*, 8 February 1987.

¹⁴ *Keesing*, 1991, p. 37668.

¹⁵ *Fact on File*, 1993, p. 214.

¹⁶ *The Muslim*, 10 January 1994.

- ¹⁷ Ibid, 4 April, 1994.
- ¹⁸ *The News*, 30 June 1994.
- ¹⁹ *Dawn*, 6 April, 1993.
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