Contemporary Global Ummatic Challenges and Future Vision: Human (Under-) Development and Clash of Civilisation

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Abstract

The underdeveloped, internally weak, frustrated and conflict-ridden contemporary Muslim World is in a state of crisis. The Muslim World, which has suffered at the hands of the West in the past and remains, even today, weak materially, economically, technologically and militarily, is now being projected as a threat to the West. The Ummatic efforts to rediscover its identity and set its own house in order are looked upon as a challenge to the West. For Muslims, it is habitual to accuse major global powers for all their ills. Possibly, this excuse may give them some relief; it does not provide the solution to their deep rooted internal problems. These internal ills not only cause corrosion to the Ummah but also open the doors for external powers to meddle in their internal affairs. How did the Muslim World get into this situation and what are the possible solutions to come out of these crises? And also, how can the Muslim World regain the dignity of its glorious past to lead in global affairs. Therefore, in the light of these questions, the proposed paper will focus on: i) the analysis of the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah, ii) possible solutions for these challenges, and, iii) the presentation of a three phased plan stretching over the next 50 years. In the light of the analysis, the plan will present major steps to be taken during respective phases as well as the ways and means to finance various proposed programme.

Background

Around four and half decades ago, it is believed that 'man now lives in a global-sized village, and is returning to the values and perceptions of a preliterate culture.'[1] At the dawn of the third millennium we are actually experiencing a situation where peoples and their cultures are exhibiting increasingly hybrid characteristics. Although, it can be argued that much of

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this is not new, as human beings have always been engaged in a process of interaction throughout history, today's 'globalisation' is different, primarily because of the speed with which it is taking place. It is driven by new forms of connectivity, such as the internet and the global media, and is governed by different rules, or, in many cases, by no rules at all. In the context of the under-developed Muslim World, one factor has emerged that holds significant repercussions for us all and that is the fact that the rapid changes which occurred in the last decade of the twentieth century have all arisen as a result of the modernisation process and its consequent destabilisation effects. This paper can be considered as a self-reflective narrative and a personal dialogue in the context of the contemporary Muslim World and globalisation paradigm. As the title indicates, the main focus of this paper is to analyse the major challenges faces by the Muslim Ummah. Although, there are several major challenges faced by the contemporary Muslim World, due to the limited scope of this short piece of research, it focuses on the issues of Ummatic human under-development, clash of civilisations and a series of measures needed to bring this Ummah out of the crises.

Before we start our discussion, it is appropriate to briefly look at the concept of globalisation. There are various definitions of globalisation. But being an active agent of the globalisation process, the World Bank's definition can probably be considered to be the most authentic. The Bank (21st January, 2006) says that globalisation 'is the growing integration of economies and societies around the world. Globalization is an inevitable phenomenon in human history that has been bringing the world closer together through the exchange of goods and products, information, knowledge and culture.' In the view of CAFOD, a famous international charity that 'Globalisation describes the process whereby individuals, groups, companies and countries become increasingly interconnected. This interconnectedness takes place in several arenas.'[2] In fact, in every sphere of life, the twentieth century has brought rapid changes to the world, especially the present globalization process involved in the geographical extension of economic activities in general and the functional integration of internationally dispersed activities in particular. Consequently, the degree of interdependence and interconnection within the world economy has increased dramatically. In this situation, it is important to understand the overall impact of globalization upon the lives of the millions of poor across the world. Joseph Stiglitz, winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2001, worked as Chairman of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors and later as Senior Vice President of the World Bank. He (2002, ix) said: 'While I was at the World Bank, I saw firsthand the devastating effect that globalisation can have on developing countries, and especially the poor within those counties.' Furthermore, 'globalisation today is not working for many of the world's poor. It is not working for much of the environment. It is not working for the stability of the global economy.'[3] This argument is further strengthen by Amory Staff who says that 'globalisation

works only for the rich. … The economic and political system promoted by globalisation is not only morally bankrupt, it is no longer credible.'[4]

In the context of the present process of globalisation, the current state of the Muslim World[a] can best be described in the words of AbūSulaymān, over one and half decades ago, he said: 'Internally weak, relatively backward, frustrated, conflict-ridden, suffering from internal tensions, and often controlled and abused by foreign powers, the Muslim World is in a state of crisis. … In Muslim countries it is customary to blame external powers and imperialism for all manners of ills. Although this habit may point up many of the grievances and obstacles Muslims face, it cannot explain the internal cause of the ills. These ills put in motion, a process of decay that dissipated the internal powers of the Muslim World. The resultant weakness brought external powers into the picture, complicating the difficulties.'[5] Another Muslim thinker Ahmad, revealed that 'The Muslim World which has suffered at the hands of the West in the past and which remains even today weak materially, economically, technologically and militarily, is now being projected as a threat to the West. Their efforts to rediscover their identity and set their own house in order are looked upon as a challenge to the West[6]. The Frankenstein of "Islamic fundamentalism" is being seen in the innocuous efforts of the Muslims to activate the democratic process and seek self-reliance. From former presidents Richard Nixon (*Seize the Moment*) and Ronald Reagan (*An American Life*) to intellectuals like Francis Fukuyama (*The End of History and the Last Man*) and columnists such as Richard Pfaff and others are playing on the theme of Islam's threat to the West. They all are drum-beating as if a spectre is haunting Europe and America, the spectre of Islamic fundamentalism.'[7] These statements are truer now than at the time they were issued.

This situation reflects that the Muslim World is volatile, internally weak, unstable, and dependent on the major global players. It can be judged from the fact that the total GDP of all Muslim countries put together is even less than six percent of the world's total.[8,9&10] This is in spite of the fact that Muslim countries produce most of the world's oil and minerals. In addition to accusing others, Muslim leaders and scholars have been misleading themselves by constant reference to a magnificent past and a utopian future which fails to confront the realities of the modern world where rational and national considerations leave little room for sentimental responses. The present Muslim states have also failed in their efforts to create credible and inspiring role models. The ruling authorities of the Muslim World often misinterpret the realities of the situation by ignoring the vital issues of poverty, hunger, inadequacy and widespread illiteracy that limit social justice and economic progress. Therefore, in many Muslim countries social

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[a] In this paper, the terms Ummah and Muslim World are interchangeably used.

problems are so deeply rooted as to leave the state in a position of complete vulnerability. The ultimate impact of such social weaknesses is not only internal, but also adversely affects the overall global position of these countries' standing in the world.

According to recent estimates, out of a total global population of 6.83 billion, over 22 percent were Muslims.[b] Similarly, out of the 149 million km^2 of geographic area that covers the world, Muslims occupy some 24 percent.[11&12] There are 57 countries of the world which are members of the OIC[c] and the total population of these countries is around 1.5 billion.[13] The global map indicates that the Muslim World stretches from North West Africa (Morocco) to South East Asia (Indonesia). It ranges from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean, and Muslims control the main gateways to the world's trade and commerce arteries, such as the straits of Gibraltar, Bosphorus, Hormuz, Malaka and the Suez Canal. Geographically, these countries occupy the most strategically important areas in the world with almost 60 percent of the Mediterranean Sea surrounded by Muslim countries, and with the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf exclusively located within the Muslim region. It was further estimated that Muslim countries produce more than two thirds of the world's oil, 70 percent of its rubber, 75 percent of its jute, 67 percent of its spices, two-thirds of all palm oil, and half of all tin and phosphate. In addition to having a vast number of gas reserves, they also produce a large quantity of the world's cotton, tea, coffee, wool uranium, manganese, cobalt and many other commodities and minerals.[14] Unfortunately, in spite of these advantages, the role that Muslim countries play in global affairs almost insignificant.[d]

Human (Under-)Development in the Muslim World
The first *Human Development Report 1990* of the United Nations Development Programme was the brainchild of the late Mahbub ul Haq.[e],[15]

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[b] This population includes only the Muslim people, irrespective of their place of residence (i.e., Muslim or Non-Muslim countries).
[c] OIC member countries are: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brunei-Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Yemen.
[d] It may be mentioned that for the simplicity of analysis, irrespective of the proportion of population, here the term 'Muslim World' is mainly used for those countries which are members of the OIC.
[e] Mahbub ul Haq (1934-98) first introduced this concept in 1980 when he was working for the World Bank (1970-82). Later, during his work for the UNDP (1989-

Today, this conceptual framework has gained a special place at global level, exerting enormous influence on decision-makers, researchers, academicians and ordinary citizens. Amartya Sen (Nobel Laureate in Economics in 1998) also contributed to the development of this framework.[16] The UNDP argued that: 'Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. The most critical of these wide-ranging choices are to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living'.[17] The *Human Development Report 1995* supports this concept by arguing that it 'brings together the production and distribution of commodities and the expansion and use of human capabilities.[18] The *Human Development Report 2005* says: 'the most basic capabilities for human development are leading a long and healthy life, being educated and having adequate resources for a decent standard of living.'[19] It is noteworthy that since 1990, when the first human development report was published by the UNDP, human development has been measured in terms of 'human development index' (HDI). 'The HDI is a composite of three ingredients: longevity, knowledge and standard of living. Longevity is measured by life expectancy at birth. Knowledge is measured by a combination of adult literacy (two-third weight) and mean years of schooling (one-third weight). Standard of living is measured by purchasing power, based on real GDP per capita adjusted for the local cost of living (purchasing power parity).'[20]

With respect to the quantitative value of HDI, the *Human Development Report 2009* ranks all countries of the world and categorise them into: i) very high human development, ii) high human development, iii) medium human development, and, iv) low human development countries.

Today, the Muslim World, as a whole, faces a number of challenges as evidenced by the serious problems that beset individual Muslim countries. According to the *Human Development Report 2009*, as many as 39 Muslim countries have a lower value of HDI than the world average.[21] Further to this, out of the top 25 HDI countries, none are Muslim. Even tiny, oil rich Brunei Darussalam, which was the top-HDI Muslim country, was placed at 30th position in world ranking. With respect to the overall situation, Brunei cannot be considered a true example of the Muslim World. In the list of 38 very high HDI countries, there are only four countries from the Muslim World, Brunei, Kuwait, Qatar and United Arab Emeritus. This was in contrast to the groups of medium and low HDI countries, where vast majority of Muslim countries belonged. Even within the category of medium HDI countries, several Muslim countries fell in its lower range. This situation reflects that with regard to the basic indicators, Muslim countries lag far behind Non-Muslim countries.

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95), he took the initiative to publish the first *Human Development Report 1990*. In 1995, he established the Human Development Centre in Islamabad (Pakistan).

Around a decade ago, the above fact was also confirmed by Mahbub ul Haq. In 1999, he pointed out that 'The development ranks of Islamic countries are generally lower than per capita ranks, showing that their income has not been fully translated into the lives of their people. The overall HDI for 49 Islamic countries is only 0.393, placing the Islamic World in the low human development category'.[22] After several years of the issuance of his statement, unfortunately, human development in the Muslim World has declined yet further. According to recent statistics, within the group of very high HDI countries, Qatar holds 33rd position as against Canada which enjoys 4th position. This is in spite of the fact that the GDP per capita in Canada is only half of Qatar. However, in contrast to this, the life expectancy and literacy rates in Qatar are considerably lower than its counterpart. A similarly situation can also be seen in low HDI countries, where Mali occupies 178th position in comparison to Myanmar which ranked 138th. Here, in this group, although Mali's per capita income is slightly higher than Myanmar, its literacy rate is less than one third of Myanmar.

Comparison of the Muslim and the Non-Muslim Countries with
Similar Income but Different Levels of Human Development

Country	HDI ranking	GDP per capita (US$)	Life expectancy (years)	Literacy rate (%)
High-income				
• Canada	4	35,812	80.6	99.0
• Qatar	33	74,882	75.5	93.1
Low-income				
• Myanmar	138	904	61.2	89.9
• Mali	178	1,083	48.1	26.2

Source: UNDP, 2009, 171-174.

Islamophobia: Clash of Civilisations

A careful overview of history as well as the prevailing international affairs, reflect that human under-development leads to the establishment of the hegemony of a few major global players, or in other words 'the West'. The contemporary process of globalisation acts as a catalyst in this whole occurrence. One important tool of this phenomenon is the promotion of a clash of civilisations. How is this clash promoted and who provides an ideological base for this phenomenon? Also, which tools and techniques are used to popularise it among the global masses? In the following paragraphs, we will briefly explore this situation. Here, it is noteworthy that *The World Guide 2005/2006* argues: 'Globalisation is not just economic but also cultural

and ideological. … Globalisation as a cultural phenomenon occurs, like the economy, as a result of the expansion of capitalism. … Globalisation is, essentially, a model created by Northern cultures'.[23] Needless to say, cultural and ideological aspects are closely associated with religion as the *World Guide* also says that: 'The US government of George W Bush seems to be increasingly dominated by a fundamentalist Christian agenda that believes America to be doing God's will.' It also quotes Florence Toussaint (professor at a Mexican university), who says that: 'People are caught in a whirlwind, not knowing when they will get out – or even if they want to. In many instances, they are not aware of where they are headed'.[24] Toussaint's argument is strong especially in the context of the role of the media in the post-9/11 era. Sadly, the role of this media is not helpful in promoting global peace when on several occasions Islam is branded as a violent religion while Muslims are labelled as terrorists.
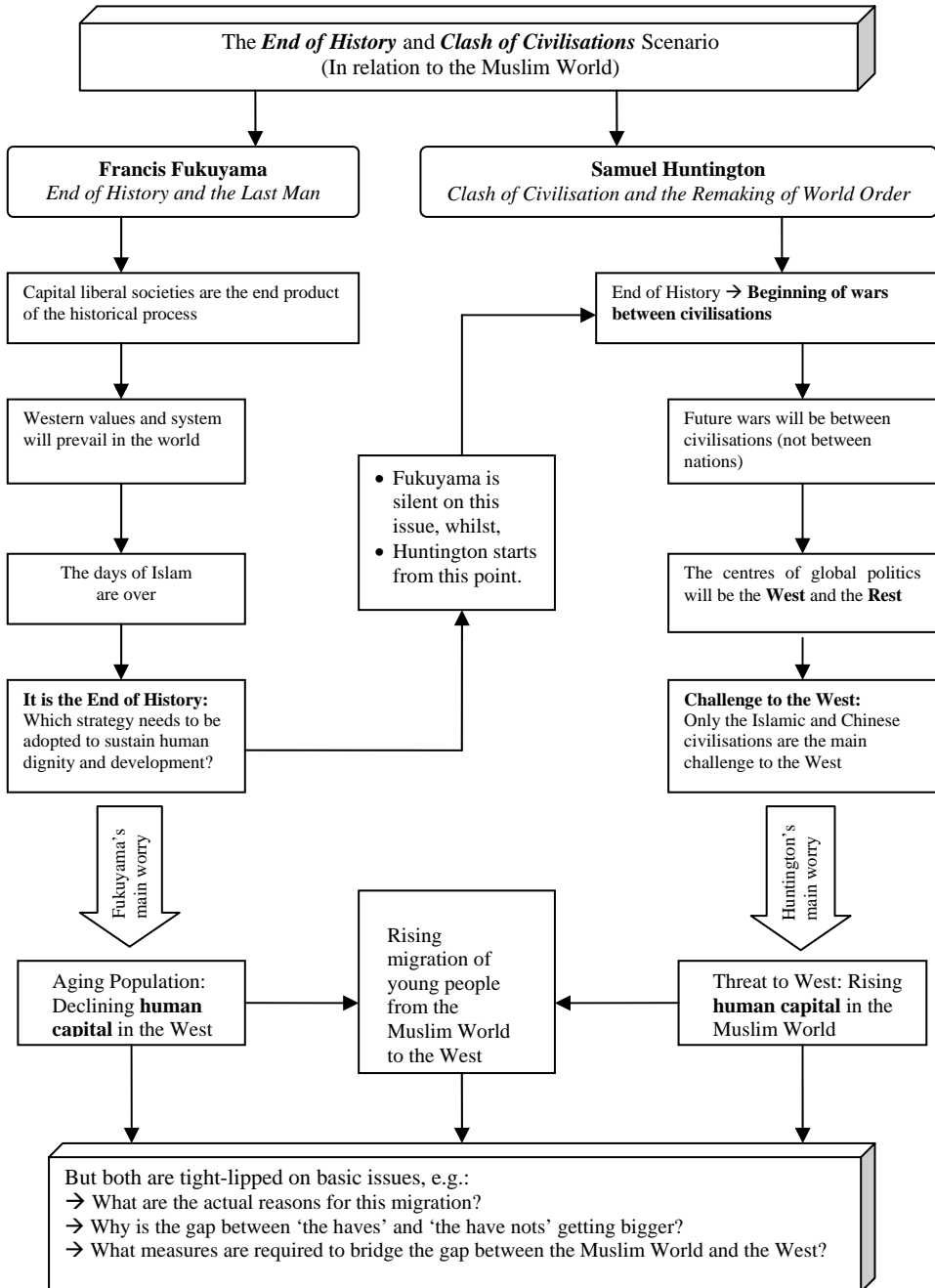
Here, it is important to discuss briefly the works of two famous American intellectuals, Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington. Both have been given enormous coverage by the global media due to which their books received extensive publicity all over the world. In 1992, after the demise of the Soviet Union, Fukuyama (a former US State Department official) presented the concept of the end of history. His book entitled *End of History and the Last Man* (1993) is mainly a supremacist declaration of triumph. His argument is that after the fall of communism, capitalist liberal societies are the end-product of the historical process of humankind. In other words, it is now only Western socio-cultural and politico-economic liberty that will prevail in the world. He also believes that the days of Islam are over. It must be mentioned here that in spite of extensive discussions in his book, Fukuyama did not elaborate on the strategy which should be adopted to attain and maintain a stable global society through the political and economic liberty of the 'last man'. And also, how this 'last man' will enjoy this newly discovered paradise.[25] This issue is 'skilfully' tackled by Samuel Huntington. His book *Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order* (1997) warns that the point of the 'end of history' is the beginning of the civilizational war to dominate the world. He predicts that future wars will not be fought between nation states, but between civilisations. He has written extensively and lectured to promote his ideas. His emphasis is: i) civilizational consciousness is on the rise, ii) conflicts between civilisations will replace ideological and state conflict, iii) conflicts between groups from different civilisations will be more violent than those between groups within civilisations, iv) political, economic and security relations will develop within civilisations rather than cross civilisations, and v) the paramount axis of world politics will be the "West" and the "rest".[26]

Specifically, with regard to Islamic civilisation, Huntington suggests that the under-developed, over-stretched and unstable Muslim World spreading from

Indonesia to Morocco fails to pose a collective threat to the West. However, in his view, the real threat from the Muslim World is its rising human capital, i.e., the growing proportion of young people in the Islamic civilisation. Directly or indirectly, he attempts to warn the West that the troubles in the former Yugoslavia, Kashmir, Palestine or in various other regions are caused by this segment of Islamic civilisation. Huntington is unable to answer the question why these young people pose a threat to the West. Interestingly, a careful consideration of these notions reflects that while Huntington warns of the 'rising' human capital of Islamic civilisation, Fukuyama warns of the 'declining' human capital of the West, or in other words, the proportionate increase of the aging population in Western civilisation. Indirectly, both warn of the rising migration of Muslim youth to western countries which is rapidly changing the demographic balance. This fact was also highlighted by the BBC in a report that: 'Islam is widely considered Europe's fastest growing religion, with immigration and above average birth rates leading to a rapid increase in the Muslim population.'[27] Unfortunately, instead of exploring the nature and root causes of major global problems, both Huntington and Fukuyama spend their energies on synthesising a conceptual and ideological network to provide a base to promote misunderstandings and troubles between faiths and ideologies, particularly with regard to the Muslim World. This situation reflects that the promotion of clash of a civilisation is an artificial process not a natural phenomenon. This discussion can better be illustrated by the following diagram.

The **End of History** and **Clash of Civilisations** Scenario
(In relation to the Muslim World)

Francis Fukuyama
End of History and the Last Man

Samuel Huntington
Clash of Civilisation and the Remaking of World Order

Capital liberal societies are the end product of the historical process

End of History → **Beginning of wars between civilisations**

Western values and system will prevail in the world

- Fukuyama is silent on this issue, whilst,
- Huntington starts from this point.

Future wars will be between civilisations (not between nations)

The days of Islam are over

The centres of global politics will be the **West** and the **Rest**

It is the End of History: Which strategy needs to be adopted to sustain human dignity and development?

Challenge to the West: Only the Islamic and Chinese civilisations are the main challenge to the West

Fukuyama's main worry

Huntington's main worry

Aging Population: Declining **human capital** in the West

Rising migration of young people from the Muslim World to the West

Threat to West: Rising **human capital** in the Muslim World

But both are tight-lipped on basic issues, e.g.:
→ What are the actual reasons for this migration?
→ Why is the gap between 'the haves' and 'the have nots' getting bigger?
→ What measures are required to bridge the gap between the Muslim World and the West?

It is noteworthy that in their books, Fukuyama and Huntington do not discuss the reasons for migration; rather, they spend their energies on synthesising a hypothetical theory of a clash based on civilisational confrontation. One may ask, do people move from one country to another with the express intention

of creating trouble, or are there other reasons? The best possible answer to this question can be found in the recent report of UNDP, which says that: 'The world distribution of opportunities is extremely unequal. This inequality is a key driver of human movement and thus implies that movement has a huge potential for improving human development. Yet movement is not a pure expression of choice – people often move under constraints that can be severe, while the gains they reap from moving are very unequally distributed'.[29] Thus, are these migrants a burden to, or a benefit to host communities? The report reveals that: 'When migrants' skills complement those of local people, both groups benefit. Societies as a whole may also benefit in many ways – ranging from rising levels of technical innovation to increasingly diverse cuisine to which migrants contribute'.[30] It further states that: 'Mobility has the potential to enhance human development - among movers, stayers and the majority of those in destination societies'.[31] Therefore, major 'gains to human development can be achieved by lowering the barriers to movement and improving the treatment of movers.[32] This situation clearly negates the notions of Fukuyama and Huntington.
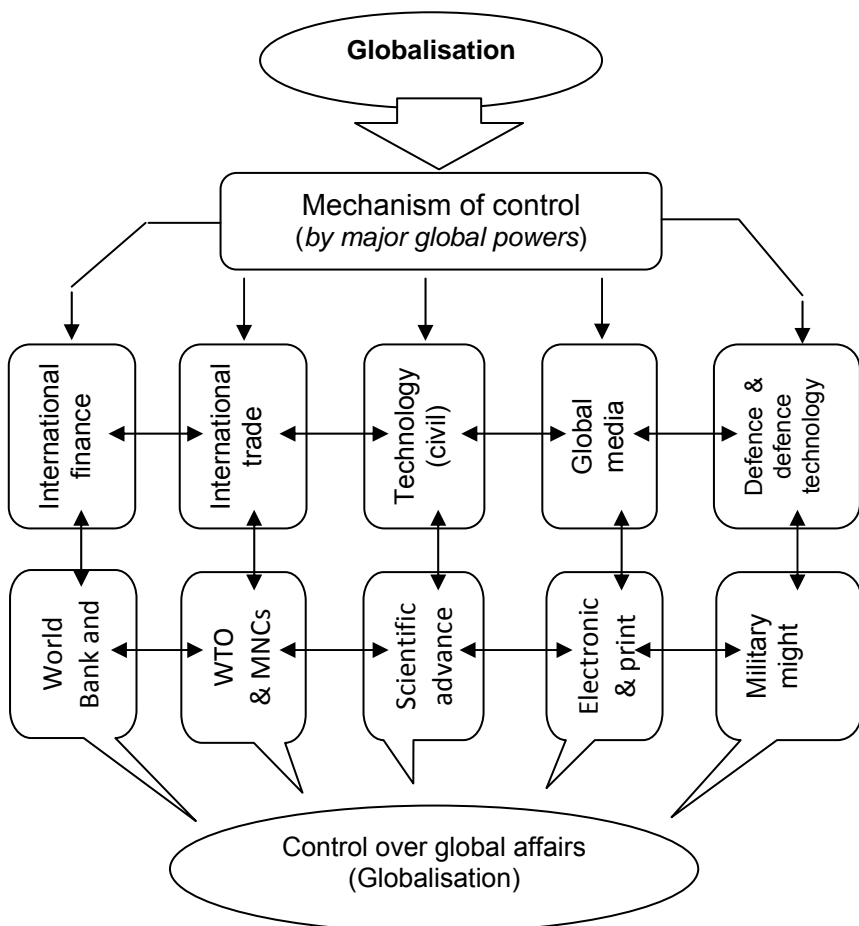
In fact, a creation of the above type of environment promotes global instability and global injustice. The global injustice itself is based on three factors: i) *economic*: injustices of the global capitalist system which have caused a huge gulf between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', ii) *political*: application of double standard in foreign policies by the major global players, and, iii) *biased media*: which portrays a negative image of the developing countries in general and the Muslim World and Islam in particular. In the present day world where 'global injustice' is common, global instability leads to global violence. A careful consideration of the post-9/11 situation with regard to the Muslim World reflects that global injustice, global instability and global violence make a vicious circle which keeps the cycle in rotation. In the context of the Muslim World, the intensity of the problem can be realised in the words of the Journalist, John Pilger, 17th September 2004 argues: 'the world is divided into two camps: Islam and "us". That is the unerring message from Western governments, press, radio and television. For Islam, read terrorists.'[33]

Globalisation and the Muslim World

In the light of prevailing global affairs, a careful consideration of the above discussion reflects that the world-wide phenomenon, globalisation, is a composition of a series of processes of domination through global political economy, including international finance and trade, informational technologies, media, international defence and strategic issues. Within the network of developed countries, globalisation is the integration of economies, which promotes interdependence and economies of scale. However, in the context of developing countries, it promotes dependence of

the latter on the former. With regard to the Muslim World, it is characterised by 'dependence' as well as the imposition of alien ideologies. In current global affairs, this whole exercise of globalisation has accelerated the process of dominance by the developed countries, which in reality is a process of recolonisation. In other words, this is the real objective of whole process of globalisation in which the Muslim Ummah is considered as a challenge rather than a partner. An in-depth exploration of this situation also reflects that there are at least five major elements which are responsible for keeping the Muslim World under-developed and oppressed, i.e., i) the international financial system, ii) the pattern of global trade, iii) technological under-development, iv) an extremely weak Muslim media, and, v) weak defence systems and a total dependence on the West for defence equipment and technology. The last point is particularly true in the post-9/11 era.

Globalisation and its Mechanism of Control

Globalisation

Mechanism of control
(*by major global powers*)

International finance

International trade

Technology (civil)

Global media

Defence & defence technology

World Bank and

WTO & MNCs

Scientific advance

Electronic & print

Military might

Control over global affairs
(Globalisation)

The Islamic approach to globalisation stresses the need to promote cooperation among Muslim countries leading to their politico-economic integration. Such intra-Ummatic integration is extremely important in the context that unfortunately, the status and position of the Muslim World is rapidly vanishing day by day. If the present trends of decline and recolonisation continue at their present rate, the Muslim World will face an extremely critical situation over the next few decades. What it in fact amounts to is a question of survival, and Muslim countries must realise that they have to take measures to protect themselves if they are not to become totally excluded from global affairs. This struggle for existence has to be conducted in several areas, including the development and strengthening of the Islamic financial system, the promotion of mutual trade, cooperation in the fields of science and technology, media and information, and most important of all, the creation of a system of common security.

The key to the success of this whole programme lies with economic motives. It is, therefore, necessary that these countries seek to encourage the promotion of mutual trade through institutions such as the OIC and the Islamic Development Bank. This increase in cooperation will lead to a further promotion of mutual confidence within the entire Muslim World. The step by step nature of this development programme will enable them to solve their problems without external interference. However, in order to achieve such a position, within the framework of the OIC, the Muslim World need to strengthen various institutions, such as the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange (ICCI&CE), Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development (IFSTAD) and in particular, the Islamic media and news agencies, that already exist. In addition, within the same network, they also need to establish new institutions for the protection of their own interests such as the Muslim Monetary Fund (MMF), Human Development Fund (HDF), Muslim News Agency (MNA), Muslim Security Council (MSC), and Muslim Defence Force (MDF).

Ummatic Global Vision[f]

It should be noted that the current globalisation trend and the state of Ummatic human under-development are interrelated issues that demand urgent attention. Furthermore, unless the ruling elite in the Muslim countries realise the severity of the problems, and undertake a genuine political

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[f] In the context of the state of the contemporary Ummah, this section is mainly based on author's personal views and his earlier published thoughts.

commitment to solving them, their current situation will become dramatically worse. The Islamic countries require structured and comprehensive planning for the future of the Ummah. Therefore, in this context the re-organisation of the OIC is vital. An overview of the OIC's setup reflects that there is no need to hugely reshuffle its organisational structure except to focus on the above mentioned points. One of the key issues determining the success of this strategy lies in the performance of the OIC. There exists no other organisation in the world where such a large number of countries have joined together solely on the basis of religion. Despite several weaknesses in this organisation, it still provides the best basis for all future development activities in the Muslim World. Therefore, these steps should be pursued through the OIC as the Muslim World has no other or better alternative. In the context of the contemporary global environment, any future cooperation among Muslim countries needs to be predicated on economic factors; otherwise it is doomed to failure. A number of short, medium and long-term strategies need to be adopted for this purpose. These strategies should then be placed within a specified operational timeframe, i.e., phase one; 2015-2025, phase two; 2026-2040, and phase three; 2041-2050. The period from now until 2015 should be utilised for mutual consultation in order to establish consensus and political commitment. Within the framework of the OIC, the process could be conducted in the following way.

Phase One: 2015-2025 – Short-term Strategy:
Promotion of Intra-Ummatic Cooperation:
- Establishment of a sound central financial system for the Muslim World.
- Creation of a Common Islamic Market for the promotion of mutual trade.
- Focus on advancement in the field of science and technology.
- Strengthening the Muslim media and establishment of the MNA.
- Establishment of the MSC and the MDF.

Phase Two: 2026-2040 – Medium-term Strategy:
Merging Muslim Economies and the Establishment of a Joint Foreign Policy:
- Steps to adopt a joint foreign policy.
- Creation of a single currency (Islamic Dinar) for the OIC member countries.
- Coordinating and strengthening the activities of the Islamic industrial, commercial, savings and agricultural development banks.
- On the lines of NATO, the MDF should be able to take a lead role in dealing with issues of intra-Ummatic security.

- Poverty and debt burden should be reduced to a minimum.
- By strengthening the OIC, the status, role and authority of the head of this institution should become more than a formal Secretary General.
- By establishing a foundation for the overall industrialisation and integration of Muslim economies, the conclusion of Phase Two should lead to the formation of a confederation of all member countries.

Phase Three: 2041-2050 – Long-term Strategy:
Establishment of a Loose Confederation of Muslim Countries:
- A loose confederation of member states controlling four main sectors, i.e., unified currency (Islamic Dinar), Ummatic defence, foreign affairs and communication.
- By the end of this stage (i.e., 2050), the OIC should be converted into a 'federal governing body' of the Muslim World.
- The designation of the present Secretary General should be changed to a formal Caliph which will give further confidence to the OIC. A person recruited for this position should be an established administrator as well as an eminent Islamic scholar.

A Suggestive Re-organisational Approach for the OIC
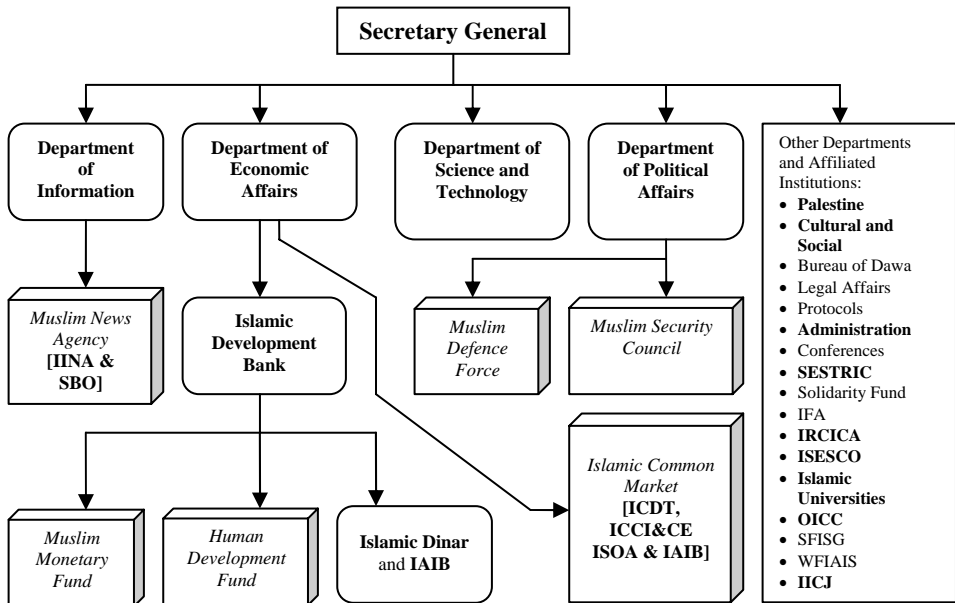
Note:

i) Text in **normal font** indicates that institutions already exist and do not need a major structural change.
ii) Text in **bold font** means that institutions already exist but need to strengthen their activities, qualitatively and quantitatively.
iii) Text in *Italic font* shows that new institutions need to be created.
iv) The Islamic Development Bank uses Islamic Dinar which is a unit of account equivalent to one SDR (i.e., Special Drawing Right of the IMF). However, this it is not used as official currency in any Muslim country.
v) IAIB: International Association of Islamic Banks.
vi) ICCI&CE: Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange
vii) ICDT: The Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade.
viii) IFA: Islamic Fiqh Academy.
ix) IICJ: International Islamic Court of Justice.
x) IINA: International Islamic News Agency.
xi) IRCICA: The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture.
xii) ISBO: The Islamic States Broadcasting Organisation.
xiii) ISESCO: The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
xiv) ISOA: Islamic Ship-owners Association.
xv) OICC: Organisation of Islamic Capital and Cities
xvi) SESTRIC: The Statistical, Economic, Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries.
xvii) SFISG: Sports Federation of Islamic Solidarity Games
xviii) WFIAIS: World Federation of International Arabo-Islamic Schools

It is important that with regard to this whole proposed programme, the above mentioned activities are completed within the time frame set-out in the three phases. However, much exercise and research is needed to make this framework compatible with the requirements and challenges of the modern age. With regard to the need and importance of this framework, it may be added that it is high time the Muslim World realised the intensity and complexity of global problems particularly in the context of their own faith which says that God will not change the condition of a nation, unless it changes itself.[34] Doing nothing is not an option here; full energies are required to strengthen the OIC as this is the only institution which can provide a concrete base for future development and security. Here, the obvious question that emerges is that who will finance this huge package for the creation of new institutions and for strengthening the existing ones. The Muslim leadership and masses need to realise that the major global players are not going to give them charity to carry out these reforms. Whatever

method they use, Muslim countries have to create the resources from within. One possible way is that through agreement, as a first step, all Muslim countries should start contributing 0.01 percent of their GDP to a common pool administered by the Islamic Development Bank. For example, if started in the year 2010 on a yearly basis and the contribution is regularly raised to the level of one percent by the end of 2020, it is estimated that over US$ 100 billion can be accumulated in the common pool.[35,36&37] Thus, on an average basis, the amount of ten billion dollars per year would be more than sufficient to initiate a new chapter in the life of the Ummah.

One may argue that, under the contemporary global environment, and due to the declining state of the Muslim World, the above proposal does not seem more than a dream. Yes, it is a dream of the masses of the Muslim World from East Asia to West Africa, and history suggests that dreams have the potential to become reality. Two centuries ago, who would have thought that fifty North American states would be united into one single country eventually creating a uni-polar world after the demise of the Soviet Union? A century ago, did anyone imagine that the European states, which have completely separate cultures, languages, state systems, and a long history of conflict and war, would succeed in establishing a progressive union? More recently, who would have thought that the Soviet Union, a huge nuclear super-power would be defeated by an extremely poor country like Afghanistan and later, disintegrate into several parts? When considering the process of the formation of a 'union', Muslim countries have an added advantage over their North American and European counterparts in that they share a common culture, a common history, a common faith and above all a widespread desire for this integration at grassroots level. Deriving strength from its rich tradition and past, this proposed union has the potential to set an example to the rest of the world. Therefore, appropriate strategies need to be developed in order for this dream to materialise.

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