

Chapter 4

The Role of OIC in the Social Policies of Its Members

Sema Bölükbaş
Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

The fragmented structure of Muslim countries and the lack of political will to solve their problems with a real collaboration prevent Muslim societies to form an active union. Although most of the documents of OIC are in line with the universal human right principles and there is some organs within the organization to carry out the decisions, the deep clash of interests between the Muslim countries and the fact that the implementation of the provisions in these documents are up to the member countries' initiatives and there is no sanction about the implementation of these provisions are the main reasons of the failure and ineffectiveness of the organization. As the organization is unable to protect even the basic human rights of the Muslims in the member states, inefficacy about social policies, except for some humanitarian aids, is not surprising. As all of the intellectuals agree, the political will should be consolidated among member states, lack of which seems to be the main reason behind the organization's failure.

INTRODUCTION

The Organization of Islamic Corporation (OIC, formerly The Organization of the Islamic Conference) is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations which has membership of 57 states spread over four continents. The organization is the collective voice of the Muslim World which covers almost one fifth of humanity, and ensuring to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim World in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.

Muslim countries have experienced a diverse scale of politics. At the one of the spectrum, some Islamist regimes have embraced the strictest possible interpretations and practices of Islam. At the other hand of the spectrum, secularist regimes have denied Islam any role in governance. A third way has been adopted by other Muslim countries with variations; among them are countries whose constitution contains a clause declaring Islam as a major source of legislation. On the other hand there are radical political movements using Islam to justify their violent and illegitimate practices. One of the main ac-

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cusations against Islam on the international scene is based on the unjustified and unfounded linking of practices of these illegal radical political movements with Islam (İhsanoğlu, 2010).

It is important to know that The OIC's success depends on how much Muslim societies behave with Islamic solidarity. But today both in the internal and international relations the role of Islam is debated. İhsanoğlu explains this point as follows:

Today at the end of the first decade of the twenty first century, a consensus is far from being reached and controversy still persists over the position and weight of religion as a frame of reference in the external and internal affairs of Muslim countries. The place and effect of Islam in Muslim societies, and the way faith is reflected in their relations with the wider international community, depend on how each country draws the line between religion and politics. Muslims are not alone in debating this point, particularly as the role of faith in contemporary society becomes one of the pressing issues of our time. However it is worth noting that Islam as a religion has a different place in the working of society compared to other religions. (İhsanoğlu, 2010:2)

Economic Conditions of the Islamic Countries

Economic power is the reality of the day. Barring a handful of Muslim countries, majority of Muslims are living below the poverty line. As long as Muslim countries remain poor, they will not only fail to provide their citizens a good life but they will remain weak in the international arena (Qidwai, 2003).

Almost all of the Muslim countries have subjected to imperialism for the last two centuries and almost all of them suffer due to their Muslim identity from an environment where Christian culture is dominant and again almost all of them aim to achieve urgent development with the new technology and they have avoid colonialism from developed countries. According to categorization by World Bank, 22 of the OIC members are characterized as highly indebted and poor country, and 18 of them as least developed country (Akgül, 2013:11).

Member state's economies are predominantly based upon agriculture and manufacturing of mine. Majority of them are supplier of raw materials and importer of final goods (Akgül, 2013:9). Generally the level of industrialization is low (Bolat, 2011). Although Islamic countries have %70 of the global energy resources and 22.8 of world population (Akgül, 2013:9), they have only %7.5 of the world income and %11 of the global trade. According to Akgül as to 2010 they receive %10, 8 of the global income (Akgül, 2013). Even though there are countries which became wealthy due to their rich national resources, most of the members are poor (Bolat, 2011). Muslim countries have also enormous human resources, and five of the most important Bosphoruses of the world within their borders.

Çobanoğlu indicates that Muslim countries are in fact wealthier than western countries regarding economic resources but they are in true impasse as they have no economic, political and cultural unity (Çobanoğlu, 1992).

Qidwai asks why most Muslim countries fail to free themselves from the shackles of poverty and he gives the answer: 'The classical answer given by the 'blame others' school is that Muslims have received a raw deal from western powers. No, it is the leaders that have to take blame of this, especially the spiritual leaders' (Qidwai, 2003).

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