

RELATIONS BETWEEN OIC AND BANGLADESH

BY

MD. SYFULLAH

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in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis titled “Relations Between OIC and Bangladesh” submitted to the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, has been composed by myself and completed under the supervision of Professor Dr. Mohammad Tawfiqul Haider, Department of Islamic History and Culture, University of Dhaka. I further affirm that no part or whole of the dissertation has been submitted in any form to any other university or institute for degree or diploma.

My Ph.D. Registration No. is 10/2010-2011, Session: 2010-2011

(Md. Syfullah)
Assistant Professor
Department of Islamic History and Culture
University of Dhaka

Dated:

CERTIFICATE

This to certify that the results of the systematic research presented in this thesis titled “Relations Between OIC and Bangladesh” have been the outcome of the work carried out under my guidance. This is further certified that the work presented here is entirely original and suitable for evaluation for awarding of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

(Professor Dr. Mohammad Tawfiqul Haider)
Department of Islamic History and Culture
University of Dhaka

Dated:

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RELATIONS BETWEEN OIC AND BANGLADESH ABSTRACT

This research work aims at giving critical, comprehensive and objective analyses of the Bangladesh-OIC relations which forms a significant aspect in the gamut of international studies. Bangladesh is the second biggest Muslim country in the world. The overwhelming majority of the population of 160 million are Muslims. Historically, the peoples of Bangladesh and the Islamic world have ancient links dating back to the seventh century. Bangladesh showed considerable devotion to Islam and Muslim *Ummah* through ages as part of South Asia in general and Bengal in particular. During the British period Bengalee Muslims upheld the sentiment of keeping up ties with the Muslim *Ummah* and assimilated themselves with the international Islam despite the limitations imposed on them. During Pakistan period, the people of East Pakistan had all the concern about Islam and the Muslim *Ummah* from the depth of their heart. Since the War of Independence of Bangladesh its global Islamic connection had been temporarily detached due to the Pakistani propaganda against Bangladesh in the Islamic world. The leftist elements in politics, secular and socialist ideology and Indo-Soviet inclination became the primary factors of Pakistani campaign and misconceptions of the Arab and other Muslim states. In the first few years after its liberation in 1971, it was essential for Bangladesh to remove misconceptions in the Arab world in order to integrate it with the *Ummah* and the OIC, the highest body of the Islamic *Ummah*. Bangladesh successfully removed the gross misunderstanding in the Islamic world by its constant and ceaseless efforts which paved the way for integration of Bangladesh with the *Ummah* and at the same time it paved the path for Bangladesh's admission to the OIC. A dramatic breakthrough took place at the Second Summit of the OIC in 1974 by which Bangladesh was formally admitted to the OIC which marked a turning point in its integration more profoundly than before to the global Islamic network.

Since joining OIC Bangladesh has been actively participating in its summits and conferences and multifarious activities. Bangladesh by virtue of being a member of the OIC is a member of other institutions and organs as well. It also played very vital role in some standing committees, affiliated, specialized and subsidiary institutions and organs. With the passage of time Bangladesh had been becoming more and more involved in the OIC activities and making fruitful contribution to the OIC that promoted Bangladesh to secure important posts and offices of the OIC and specially to announce her candidacy of the OIC Secretary General four times so far. During the last forty years Bangladesh has made remarkable contribution in some specific issues; i.e. Islamic Common Market, Islamic University of Technology, Islamic Solidarity Games, Islamic Solidarity Fund, Insurance and Re-insurance, Food Security and Agricultural Development and so on. Furthermore, Bangladesh has unique role in some crises in the Muslim World, i.e. Iraq-Iran war, Palestine crisis, Afghan crisis, Bosnian issue etc, under the umbrella of the OIC. Bangladesh has the strong advocacy in OIC in favour of least developed Islamic countries, empowerment of women, plight of Muslim minorities in the world. Bangladesh has achieved much economic gain through participation in the economic activities of the OIC particularly those of the IDB. Bangladesh placed the concrete proposals before the OIC at different times to confront the challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* and called upon the Islamic nations to forge greater unity and solidarity to protect their interests in the backdrop of

the contemporary global situation. All these activities within the OIC have created a lasting image of Bangladesh in the Muslim *Ummah* and have positive reflections on the bilateral and multilateral relations with the Islamic countries. The OIC, thus, became an important via medium in enhancing relations with the Islamic states that facilitated Bangladesh specially in the economic arena. At the same time, OIC has some limitations and in some respects particularly in dealing with the political affairs it has failed to prove its potentiality. Bangladesh, being the second biggest Muslim country, is equally liable with other member states of the OIC for this drawback.

This study is intended to encompass a broad canvas for an overall treatment of the problem brought under review in this thesis. Descriptive and analytical techniques have been used in order to make an overall evaluation of the activities of OIC related to Bangladesh and Bangladesh related to OIC. In actuality, OIC-Bangladesh relations forms a greater part in the entire arena of foreign relations of Bangladesh as 57 Islamic states are directly involved with the organization and its members have inter-organizational and inter-state relations that facilitates Bangladesh indirectly in enhancing connection with the other organizations and states of the world as well.

Notes on Research Methodology, Sources, Transliteration References, Calendar and Translations

Methodology:

As to the methodology, descriptive and analytical methods based on primary and secondary sources have been used. Conventional research methodology has been followed in the course of this study. This implies the application of dialectic reasoning. Scanning of original and secondary sources and analysis of data and information through historical description have been adopted. So in this study there is analysis of a particular theme as well as in-depth analysis carried out through the collection, collation and sifting of primary and secondary sources and scanning of the different materials dug up and culled from these sources.

Sources:

The official website of the OIC contains a mine of original information about the study. Almost all the declarations, communiqués, reports, resolutions, speeches of various important persons and so on regarding OIC and its subsidiary organs and other affiliated bodies posted in the respective websites constituted a vital part of the source material of this study. These have also been published in printed forms, but are hardly available. The OIC charters, *News Letter* and brochures published on different matters have also constituted a decisive part of the source materials for this study. Some official records of Bangladesh government preserved in the library of Foreign Ministry have been consulted and used for the study as original sources. Some prominent contemporary daily newspapers, memoirs, official speeches, statements, books, article, periodicals etc. have also given valuable information. As the study comprises contemporary affairs, several other websites have also been used for the relevant information.

Transliteration:

Few non-English words (mainly Arabic) have been transliterated. These terms have been typed in *Italic* form.

References:

The method developed in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* by Joseph Gibaldi and Walter S. Achtert, New York, Modern Language Association, Fourth Edition, 1996, has been used for citing in notes and reference and bibliography as well. While referring to an article in a given journal along with the date, its volume, number and page have been specified. For example, Ali Asghar, 'Bangladesh and the Muslim World', *United Asia*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 1971, p. 193. All the web addresses have been italicized.

Calendar:

In the entire research, English Calendar (based on the birth of Jesus Christ), commonly used worldwide, has been used. Therefore, it has not been indicated by the abbreviation A.D. (Anno Domini) or A.C. (After Christ) or C.E. (Christian Era/Common Era) as it is a common calendar.

Translation:

As most of the source materials consulted and used for the study are in English language, no major translations have been necessary. Some translations used in the study have been done by the accepted authorities. For example, the term 'Bangabandhu' has been translated as the 'friend of Bengal'.

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RELATIONS BETWEEN OIC AND BANGLADESH

ABSTRACT

This research work aims at giving critical, comprehensive and objective analyses of the Bangladesh-OIC relations which forms a significant aspect in the gamut of international studies. Bangladesh is the second biggest Muslim country in the world. The overwhelming majority of the population of 160 million are Muslims. Historically, the peoples of Bangladesh and the Islamic world have ancient links dating back to the seventh century. Bangladesh showed considerable devotion to Islam and Muslim *Ummah* through ages as part of South Asia in general and Bengal in particular. During the British period Bengalee Muslims upheld the sentiment of keeping up ties with the Muslim *Ummah* and assimilated themselves with the international Islam despite the limitations imposed on them. During Pakistan period, the people of East Pakistan had all the concern about Islam and the Muslim *Ummah* from the depth of their heart. Since the War of Independence of Bangladesh its global Islamic connection had been temporarily detached due to the Pakistani propaganda against Bangladesh in the Islamic world. The leftist elements in politics, secular and socialist ideology and Indo-Soviet inclination became the primary factors of Pakistani campaign and misconceptions of the Arab and other Muslim states. In the first few years after its liberation in 1971, it was essential for Bangladesh to remove misconceptions in the Arab world in order to integrate it with the *Ummah* and the OIC, the highest body of the Islamic *Ummah*. Bangladesh successfully removed the gross misunderstanding in the Islamic world by its constant and ceaseless efforts which paved the way for integration of Bangladesh with the *Ummah* and at the same time it paved the path for Bangladesh's admission to the OIC. A dramatic breakthrough took place at the Second Summit of the OIC in 1974 by which Bangladesh was formally admitted to the OIC which marked a turning point in its integration more profoundly than before to the global Islamic network.

Since joining OIC Bangladesh has been actively participating in its summits and conferences and multifarious activities. Bangladesh by virtue of being a member of the OIC is a member of other institutions and organs as well. It also played very vital role in some standing committees, affiliated, specialized and subsidiary institutions and organs. With the passage of time Bangladesh had been becoming more and more involved in the OIC activities and making fruitful contribution to the OIC that promoted Bangladesh to secure important posts and offices of the OIC and specially to announce her candidacy of the OIC Secretary General four times so far. During the last forty years Bangladesh has made remarkable contribution in some specific issues; i.e. Islamic Common Market, Islamic University of Technology, Islamic Solidarity Games, Islamic Solidarity Fund, Insurance and Re-insurance, Food Security and Agricultural Development and so on. Furthermore, Bangladesh has unique role in some crises in the Muslim World, i.e. Iraq-Iran war, Palestine crisis, Afghan crisis, Bosnian issue etc, under the umbrella of the OIC. Bangladesh has the strong advocacy in OIC in favour of least developed Islamic countries, empowerment of women, plight of Muslim minorities in the world. Bangladesh

has achieved much economic gain through participation in the economic activities of the OIC particularly those of the IDB. Bangladesh placed the concrete proposals before the OIC at different times to confront the challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* and called upon the Islamic nations to forge greater unity and solidarity to protect their interests in the backdrop of the contemporary global situation. All these activities within the OIC have created a lasting image of Bangladesh in the Muslim *Ummah* and have positive reflections on the bilateral and multilateral relations with the Islamic countries. The OIC, thus, became an important via medium in enhancing relations with the Islamic states that facilitated Bangladesh specially in the economic arena. At the same time, OIC has some limitations and in some respects particularly in dealing with the political affairs it has failed to prove its potentiality. Bangladesh, being the second biggest Muslim country, is equally liable with other member states of the OIC for this drawback.

This study is intended to encompass a broad canvas for an overall treatment of the problem brought under review in this thesis. Descriptive and analytical techniques have been used in order to make an overall evaluation of the activities of OIC related to Bangladesh and Bangladesh related to OIC. In actuality, OIC-Bangladesh relations forms a greater part in the entire arena of foreign relations of Bangladesh as 57 Islamic states are directly involved with the organization and its members have inter-organizational and inter-state relations that facilitates Bangladesh indirectly in enhancing connection with the other organizations and states of the world as well.

Name of Researcher: MD. SYFULLAH

Assistant Professor

Department of Islamic History and Culture

University of Dhaka

Name of Department: Islamic History and Culture, University of Dhaka

The official nomenclature, right from its founding, of OIC was ‘Organization of Islamic Conference’, but keeping in tune with the changing times the name has been changed to ‘Organization of Islamic Cooperation’ with a view to reflecting better the functions and objectives of the OIC.¹ The OIC is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations which has membership of 57 states spread over four continents. It is unique in the sense that it is the largest inter-governmental Islamic organization in the world. The OIC is based on ideological linkage portrayed from the concept of Islamic unity and brotherhood. In that sense the OIC is a product of the original idea of Muslim unity in a modern setting. It is the result of the idea of Islamic unity and brotherhood that was practically expressed in different ways in different places and at different times. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation is the most recent and sturdiest manifestation of the unifying thrust of Islam.

Around the end of the 19th century the idea of Islamic unity was demonstrated by the emergence of Pan Islamism. The spirit of Pan-Islamic doctrine never died and the Muslims of different parts of the world made several attempts in the Twentieth century to give this idea of Muslim unity in a practical shape motivated by the Pan-Islamic doctrine as a direct response to the aggressive penetration of western imperialists into the social, political, cultural and economic life of Muslims and Islamic countries and the threat it posed to their political independence. After the World War I (1914-18) the idea was revived and expressed in the form of calls for international Islamic conferences. It gained momentum after World War II (1939-45) through the initiatives taken by several Muslim states including the newly independent Muslim states. The idea got concretized in 1960s with the initiative of King Faisal by his new Pan-Islamic drive. The Rabat Summit Conference convened in September 1969, as the reaction against criminal arson in the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem on August 21, 1969, became instrumental in the creation of the OIC.

Since its inception in 1969, the OIC had been getting institutionalized establishing a permanent secretariat, formulating its charter, evolving a number of subsidiary, affiliated and specialized organs and institutions, creating several standing committees and so on, confined not only in its headquarters but widened over the world. As the OIC was founded with the objective of promoting Islamic solidarity and consolidating

cooperation among Muslim countries in social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, legal, sports, technological, educational, media, vocational, humanitarian and other areas, its activities have been extended significantly in response to the necessity and challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah*. In the 21st century the *Ummah* witnessed several political, religious and economic challenges that needed specific reforms to confront the challenges. The OIC has been reinforced through a large scale of reforms and activities to face the challenges in the 21st century.

Relations between OIC and Bangladesh occupies an important aspect in the entire range of foreign relation of Bangladesh. The people of the region had shown considerable devotion to Islam and Muslims along with other people of the Subcontinent prior to the emergence of OIC and Bangladesh. The history of Muslims in Indian subcontinent is conterminous with the history of Islam in the world. During the British rule the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent played a vital role in maintaining a proper link to the Muslim *Ummah* and participating in various Islamic conferences. The Muslims of the subcontinent had shown considerable interest in forging links with the Islamic entities. Indian Muslims not only supported the Pan Islamic Movement but also worked together with other Muslims to carry the Movement forward. They conducted Khilafat Movement (1919-21) motivated by the Pan Islamic idea. The Muslims of the subcontinent were very much concerned with the happenings in the Muslim world as in Palestine. Before emergence of Pakistan and India as separate states, the Muslim League and the Khilafat Movement espoused whole-heartedly the cause of the Palestine and rendered political, moral, and material support to the Palestinians.

After the independence of Pakistan and India, Muslims of both states increased Islamic link to the *Ummah* and attended conferences either officially or by private capacities. Development of close and fraternal links with the Muslim countries has been an abiding objective of the foreign policy of the newly independent Pakistan. Particularly the Palestine issue was given at the top most priority in her international affairs. The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state marked a new phase in its foreign policy specially with the Muslim world.

The linkage between Bangladesh and the Muslim world dates back to hundreds of years from the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state. The Bengalee Muslims had shown considerable devotion to Islam and Muslim *Ummah* through ages as part of South Asia in general and Bengal in particular. From Pan Islamic Movement to 1971, the Muslims of East Bengal (officially came to be known as East Pakistan since 1956) as part of South Asia and Pakistan respectively, had the similar concern to Islam and the Muslim *Ummah* as those of the independent Bangladesh. The Bengalees upheld the sentiment of keeping up ties with the Muslim *Ummah* even during the British period and assimilated themselves with the international Islam under the umbrella of the Khilafat Movement and Muslim League despite limitations imposed on them.

The Bengalee Muslims vigorously supported the demand for Pakistan and worked wholeheartedly for the goal. During the Pakistan period the people of East Pakistan showed similar sentiments to the cause of Islamic *Ummah*. The East Pakistani legislators were vocal to the Muslim causes and demonstrated chauvinistic tendencies more pronounced than those of the West Pakistanis in this regard.

During the War of Independence of Bangladesh (March-December 1971) its global Islamic connection became temporarily detached due to the Pakistani propaganda against Bangladesh in the Islamic world. The leftist elements in politics, secular and socialist ideology and Indo-Soviet inclination of Bangladesh became the primary factors of Pakistani campaign and misconceptions of the Islamic countries even after its independence. The misconceptions created dilemma in the Arab and some Muslim states in recognizing Bangladesh that impeded normalization of relations with Arab and some other Islamic states and its entrance into the highest body of the *Ummah*, that is, the OIC. It took several years to remove the misconceptions. Bangladesh successfully removed the gross misunderstanding in the Islamic world by its constant and ceaseless efforts which paved the way for integration of Bangladesh with the *Ummah* and at the same time it made the task of Bangladesh's admission to the OIC easy. A dramatic breakthrough took place at the Second Summit of the OIC in 1974 by which Bangladesh formally admitted to the OIC which marked a turning point in its integration more profoundly than before to the global Islamic network. Bangladesh's participation in the Lahore Summit and its admission to the OIC in the

session had long lasting impact on Muslim leaders. This was a major diplomatic gain for Bangladesh which facilitated Bangladesh in consolidating firmly her position in OIC and the Muslim world and paying much dividend in economic aid and assistance in every passing day since 1974.

In the early years of its emergence it seemed that Bangladesh's survival as an independent state both politically and economically largely rested on its Islamic character. In fact, relations between OIC and Bangladesh mostly rests on the relations between Bangladesh and Muslim *Ummah*. Bangladesh has expanded its ties with the worldwide Islamic community through the Organization the Islamic Conference. The internal politics and reforms regarding Islam had a significant reflection on the nature of foreign Islamic linkage of Bangladesh. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Raman (1920-75), the first President of Bangladesh, and his government was though able to incorporate Bangladesh with the *Ummah* by improving relations with Islamic countries on political consideration, his internal policies and reforms were not entertained by some of conservative Islamic states specially Saudi Arabia. The post-Mujib military rulers rightly realized that Bangladesh foreign policy is significantly known for its close linkage with the Muslim countries. The state-sponsored Islam during the military regime (1975-90), thus, fetched the military rulers much dividends in fostering better relations with conservative Muslim countries. The nature of relations with the *Ummah* varied during rule of the post-military democratic and semi-democratic governments (1991 onward) on the same view. Due to cordial relations with the Islamic countries financial assistance from these states particularly from the oil rich Arab states increased tremendously during the military rule. The donation and loans of Arab states, especially of Saudi Arabia, poured into the country since 1975, with much of the aid channeled into Islamic education and culture. The exporting of labour was also increasing day by day because of the normalization of relations between Bangladesh and other Islamic countries.

Since the admission, Bangladesh has been actively participating in its summits and conferences of the OIC. Bangladesh since the last forty years of its entrance into the OIC has been involving itself more and more in the activities of the OIC and issues facing the Muslim *Ummah*. In actuality, the Lahore Summit marked a turning point for Bangladesh in normalizing relations with the Muslim states as well as

consolidating ties with the OIC. The representatives of Bangladesh not only participated in the conferences but also addressed variety of issues and activities particularly concerned to OIC and Bangladesh. Bangladesh delegations played leading roles in several conferences. Bangladesh despite the limitations in some respects has made positive contributions in some activities and issues under the umbrella of OIC. In some cases, Bangladesh proved its unique role in dealing with the contemporary burning issues of the *Ummah*. It has played vital role in confronting challenges of the Muslim *Ummah* of the Twenty-First Century. The OIC-Bangladesh ties and in other word ties between Bangladesh and the Muslim world has strengthened in course of time with the dealing of all these issues and activities by Bangladesh and OIC simultaneously. The OIC acted as a via medium in enhancing bilateral and multilateral relations between Bangladesh and the Muslim states. Bangladesh formulated the everlasting ties with the Islamic world not only through the activities of Bangladesh and OIC during sessions of different conferences but also the bilateral and multilateral sideline talks, meetings and discussion during these sessions with the Muslim leaders. At the same time, OIC has become an important via medium in boosting Bangladesh's connectivity with the regional and international organizations.

It a great honour for Bangladesh to host the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), which was at first started as an Islamic Centre for Vocational and Technical Training and Research (ICTVTR) to impart medium level technical and vocational training and to meet the rapidly rising demand within the Islamic world for trained manpower of various types and levels; then renamed it as Islamic Institute of Technology (IIT) and ultimately emerged as the full-fledged Islamic University of Technology (IUT). The educational activities of the University are increasing and flourishing day by day. It has been playing the major role providing education to the students of OIC countries in technical and technological fields. Bangladesh had the remarkable contribution in holding periodical international games amongst the member states of the OIC. The Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) was established according to the proposal from Bangladesh. The Islamic Solidarity Games in fact, facilitates to develop closer understanding and goodwill among the Muslim countries.

Bangladesh sincerely worked for food security and agricultural development in Islamic countries to attain self-sufficiency in basic food item. It played an active part

in the process of studies and research on the matter. The establishment of Islamic Common Market (ICM) is an original idea of Bangladesh in the 1980s that can be considered a monumental achievement. Bangladesh has been frequently calling for an Islamic Common Market as part of economic development of the OIC countries particularly in order to increase intra-OIC trade. The OIC though took into account that the formation of ICM was a long-run process and required comprehensive studies, undertook a number of progressive measures over the years to enhance economic cooperation among Muslim countries to achieve an ICM. The establishment of an ICM like EU, could be the comprehensive economic solution of the OIC countries.

Bangladesh had the strong advocacy in OIC in favour of the Least Developed Islamic Countries (LDIC) for safeguarding their special interests and needs. It always stresses on a self-reliant Islamic community and the need for narrowing gap in the economic field between the developed and developing nations. It stressed on poverty alleviation, human development, the need for micro-credits and preferential market access facilities to LDIC. Bangladesh receives currency support, short term trade financing, disaster relief, grants and loans from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). Bangladesh's share in trade with Islamic countries had shown a higher growth rate in every passing year since 1980s. Bangladesh always stresses on the safeguarding of the economic security of the OIC countries for the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world. Bangladesh received various projects under the Capacity Building Programme of OIC specially in the fisheries sector. It was also granted financial and material assistance in different times to prevent and alleviate the effects of natural disasters. Bangladesh also placed concrete suggestions on the climate change issue which was adopted by OIC.

Bangladesh remained a landmark contribution in social sector specially in the empowerment of women in the Islamic countries in the socio-economic development. Bangladesh's strong advocacy for the women in OIC as in the other international organizations like UN achieved much appreciation. The OIC also adopted Bangladesh's proposal for an action plan on the children for their security. Bangladesh had the strong support to the establishment of a Human Rights Commission in Jeddah under OIC.

Bangladesh since the entry in the OIC had been becoming more and more involved in the OIC activities and making fruitful contribution to the OIC that promoted Bangladesh to secure important posts and offices of the OIC. It was a great honour for Bangladesh to be elected Vice-Chairman of OIC on behalf of the Asian Group for several times. Bangladesh announced her candidacy of the OIC Secretary General four times. Bangladesh had to withdraw candidature every time on political consideration. The first-ever secret balloting in electing the Secretary General in the history of OIC was seen in 2004. Bangladesh lost the OIC top post race at that time (being the fourth one) due to some internal and external factors.

Bangladesh took a firm stand on the core issue of Palestine and Jerusalem and extended its full moral support to the Arab people in their just struggle against foreign aggression and colonial domination in all the summits, conferences, meetings, different organs, agencies, institutions and standing committees within the OIC. As a member of the Al-Quds Committee (Jerusalem Committee), Bangladesh played an active role both at home and abroad for the implementation of the decisions of the OIC on the Palestine issue. It was given unique honour to be included it as a member of 3-member Committee (Tripartite Committee) of heads of states to evolve a new strategy to liberate Al Quds Al Sharif. In fact, President Ziaur Rahman's (19 January 1936 – 30 May 1981) untiring efforts as a member of both Al-Quds Committee and Tripartite Committee for the establishment of a Palestinian state and the liberation of Jerusalem were highly appreciated by the OIC. A number of proposals from Bangladesh regarding Jerusalem had been subsequently adopted by the OIC and its Al-Quds Committee.

The OIC had the concern over some issues of South Asia. Bangladesh also rightly placed the burning issues of the subcontinent to the OIC including the Farakka and Kashmir issues. The OIC also expressed deep concern at the impediment to this process posed by the problem of sharing equitably the waters of the international river Ganges resulting in the aggravation of economic hardships and the retardation of the process of national reconstruction in Bangladesh. Bangladesh always reiterates its position in OIC on Jammu and Kashmir and calls for peaceful resolution of the issue through dialogue between the two parties.

Bangladesh was very concerned with the Afghanistan crisis and adopted clear and unequivocal stand on the issue in the conferences and forums of the OIC. A special session of the Islamic Foreign Ministers was convened at Istanbul, 1980 on the proposal of Bangladesh. Bangladesh played a very important, active and constructive role to end the Iran-Iraq War. Bangladesh was one of the members of Islamic Peace Committee (IPC). It was a great honour for President Ziaur Rahman that the OIC entrusted him to conduct a one-man mission to Baghdad and Tehran which brought most encouraging outcome. But unfortunately, the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman on 30 May 1981 by some misguided army officers at Chittagong set a debacle in reaching an ultimate solution of the conflict. Bangladesh later stressed the need for collective efforts to end the fratricidal conflict between Iran and Iraq. Bangladesh reiterated its firm and unequivocal position on the Bosnia issue in the OIC. It was one of the first countries to recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina. It expressed its readiness to receive Bosnian refugees, carried out role there as part of the UN Peace Keeping Force. It also committed her full support to war-ravaged Bosnian-Herzegovina in the process of law, justice and peace.

Bangladesh in the OIC and its forums clarified its stand on terrorism and called for addressing the challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* unitedly, urgently and effectively. The Islamophobia become one of the burning issues in the 21st century and Bangladesh called for united efforts combating the Islamophobia of the West.

Bangladesh always expresses its concern about the Muslim minorities and plights in different parts of the world. It expressed its support to the legitimate rights of the Turkish Cypriot Muslims. It expressed concern about the crisis faced by Muslims in Southern Philippines. It also urged the OIC to resolve the turmoil situation in Chad and the problems of the Western Sahara. It reiterated its support to each and every move in OIC in the struggle against apartheid. Bangladesh has been extremely sensitive and supportive to the humanitarian plight of Myanmar Muslim Rohingyas in Rakhine State. In recent times, the OIC has taken the issue seriously and trying to solve it by establishing a Contact Group.

It may thus be contended that the idea and sentiment of Islamic unity and brotherhood evolved profoundly by the creation of OIC. During the last 44 years of OIC history

the idea has been developed in practical expression in form of cooperation in social, political, financial, cultural and other fields. Critics, observers and analysts hold critical views regarding the performance of OIC. Some tried to refer it as a ‘Paper Organization’ and whilst others indicate it as ‘Oh, I see!’. All these allegations and comments would be proved unfounded if the comprehensive and overall performances of OIC are taken into consideration. At the same time, Bangladesh-OIC relations stands on a solid foundation as both act as goading forces towards Islamic unity. By performing multi-dimensional activities within the OIC, Bangladesh has been able to prove its potentiality as an important and integral part of the *Ummah* that has indeed facilitated it to foster further responsive bonds with the OIC as well its member states.

Note:

1. In the nomenclature of OIC the word CONFERENCE has been changed officially to COOPERATION according to the decision taken in the 38th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held on 28-30 June, 2011 in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan. See, Resolution No. 4/38-ORG. Therefore, presently the elaboration of OIC is ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION. The resolution also recognized the importance of preserving the acronym (OIC) by which the Organization has been known throughout its long history.

The *Quran* and the *Hadith* inspire the Muslims to establish universal Islamic unity and brotherhood. Even according to the *Quran* it is obligatory for the Muslims to enshrine Islamic unity and brotherhood. The idea of Islamic unity and brotherhood can have different practical expression in different places and at different times. This idea is an integral part of the socio-political philosophy of Islam and its historical ethos. It has differently influenced the political situation in the Muslim world in different historical phases. The Muslims undertook different initiatives from time to time for the unity of the Muslim *Ummah* and to bring the Muslims under a common platform for their interests. The Organization of Islamic Conference is the most recent manifestation of the unifying thrust of Islam. The OIC is a product of the original idea of Muslim unity in a modern setting. The idea started with the Pan-Islamic doctrine, continued and developed with the interplay of some internal and external political forces operating across the Muslim *Ummah* and found profound expression with the desecration of the al-Aqsa Mosque.

Around the end of the 19th century a number of Muslim leaders felt the emergence of unity of Muslims in response to a specific historical situation. The Khilafat which was regarded as the institution of the unity of Muslim *Ummah* and the Khalifah, the head of the institution, was received as the symbol of unity of the Muslim *Ummah* through ages, was losing its glory with the passage of time lasting about 400 years.¹ The Ottoman Turkish Khilafat, the last of the Khilafats failed to defend its dismemberment as well as to protect interest of the Muslim *Ummah*. In this situation, the Pan-Islamic doctrine was developed and carried forward by some of the leading political thinkers and statesmen of the Muslim world, such as Jamaluddin Afghani (1838/1839–1897) and Mohammad Iqbal (1877–1938). The Pan-Islamic idea actually laid down the foundation of OIC. In keeping with the prevailing situation in the Muslim world several attempts were made to give this idea a practical shape by bringing the Muslim world together on a common platform. This marked the convening of a series of international Islamic conferences culminating in the creation of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1969. However, the idea had to contend with various socio-political notions, philosophies and realities.

Early in the 20th century the idea of Pan-Islamism found expression in the form of calls for Islamic conferences. The objective was to evolve an effective forum for

cooperation and coordination in the Muslim world and to develop uniform approach towards common problems. It was immediately after World War I (1914-18) that the first few conferences were held. However, it was only in the post-World War II (1939-45) period that holding of Islamic conferences became a regular phenomenon. The process of holding conferences became institutionalized at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s.

The abolition of Khilafat on 3 March 1924 by Mustafa Kamal Ataturk (1881-1938) was a great set back for the Muslims which sent shock waves throughout the Muslim world, specially among the people who still cherished the Pan-Islamic ideal.² As a consequence of the Turkish decision to abolish the symbolic institution of the Caliphate the first two conferences were held at Cairo (May 1926) and Saudi Arabia (June 1926) respectively. The conferences were made almost simultaneously from two different sources, i.e. *Ulema* of al-Azhar in Cairo and King Abdul Aziz in Saudi Arabia.

The Cairo Conference was convened by a group of prominent *Ulema* of Egypt including the most prominent of al-Azhar *Ulema*. This group of *Ulema* held a meeting in March 1924 under the chairmanship of the Rector of al-Azhar and issued a declaration which stated that:

The Caliphate of the Prince Abdul Aziz was not a legal Caliphate, since Islamic religion does not recognize a Caliphate on the terms which were laid down for him (by Turkish government) and which he accepted. Hence the allegiance (*bayah*) paid to him by Muslims was not valid in Islamic law.³

The *Ulema* considered it indispensable to hold an Islamic religious congress to which representatives of Islamic people should be invited in order to consider upon whose shoulders the Islamic Caliphate ought to be placed. It was proposed that such a congress be held in Cairo, as it occupied a kind of privileged position in the Muslim world.⁴ The proposition of appointing a new Caliph was not taken favourably by the Egyptian Government and Prime Minister Sa'd Zaghlul Pasha declared his government's neutrality in this matter. The Rector of al-Azhar immediately appointed a permanent Secretariat of Great Islamic Congress for the Caliphate.⁵

The call for the Caliphate Congress (*Mutamarul Khilafat*) did not generate any enthusiastic response in the Muslim world. As for example, the Indian Muslims who once upon a time initiated a movement for the protection and maintaining of Khilafat did not accept the idea. The All-Indian Khilafat Conference and *Jamiat-e- Ulema* declined the invitation on the ground that the Congress was inopportune. However, despite poor response, the Congress was inaugurated on 13 May 1926 by the Rector of al-Azhar. Delegates from 13 countries attended the Congress. Indian Muslims were represented by a single delegate in his private capacity.⁶ Turkey, Iran Afghanistan and Russian Muslims had no representation. Consequently, the Congress did not achieve anything significant. As the outcome of the Congress, it simply made an appeal to all the Muslims of the world for not neglecting the question of Khilafat. The Congress realized the unfavourable circumstances. Therefore, the Congress urged the Muslims to work together for the establishment of the Khilafat under the conditions indicated by them. The Congress ended on 19 May 1926 without even fixing the date for second meet which was never held.

The other Islamic Congress, second in the series of Islamic conferences, was held in Mecca on 7 June, 1926, on the invitation of King Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, who had proclaimed himself King of Saudi Arabia, on 14 January 1926.⁷ The objective of calling the Congress was mainly to legitimize his position as ruler of Saudi Arabia and guardian of the holy places, and infuse confidence among Muslims about the safety of the pilgrimage under his rule. At the very outset, he made it clear that the objective of the Congress was simply to promote the well being of the people of Saudi Arabia and the security of the pilgrims. Moreover, he wanted to legitimize his position in the eyes of the Islamic world. In the Congress he carefully avoided the controversial issues including that of the Khilafat as it had been taken up by the Cairo Congress. 60 delegates from various parts of the Muslim world attended the Congress.⁸ The Conference was in many ways different from the Cairo Congress of May 1926, which was non-official and mainly of a clerical nature. Various objects of controversy came up and the Congress ultimately ended with some measure of success. The Congress decided to constitute itself into a permanent organization named 'World Muslim Congress' (*Mutamarul Al- Alam Al-Islami*) which was to assemble annually at Mecca. Unfortunately it never came into existence mainly because of the reluctance of the concerned Muslim governments including that of

Saudi Arabia.⁹ The Congress stated that each country should pay an annual subscription of £13000 per delegate for the privilege of such representation which was one of the main causes of the reluctance.¹⁰

Since King Ibn Saud took no initiative in organizing any annual conference as was decided upon the Mecca Conference, the field was left open for a fresh initiative. This opportunity was seized by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and President of the Muslim Council of Palestine, Al-Hajj Mohammad Amin al-Hussaini. It was at that time when Muslims were deeply moved by the happenings in Palestine and they gave widespread support to the Arab claims in Palestine. A meeting of the Supreme Muslim Council of Palestine held on 26 July 1931 authorized the Mufti to send invitations for the proposed conference. Maulana Showkat Ali (1873-1941), the leader of the Indian Khilafat Committee, was associated with the Preparatory Committee of the Congress. He declared that the purpose of the Congress was to investigate the actual situation of Islam and measures to be taken in defense of its interest.¹¹

The Conference was preceded by rumours that its objective was to nominate the ex-Ottoman Caliph to the Khilafat. The suggestions presented to the Conference aroused vigorous opposition. There were also reports that the Congress was motivated by the desire of the Grand Mufti and Showkat Ali to strengthen their positions in their respective countries. They tried to refute such charges brought against them but the suspicions could not be washed off fully. The Congress was opposed in Egypt. The modernists of Egypt opposed it as they embraced secular tendency. The *Ulema* of al-Azhar also opposed the Congress because they feared that its proposal to establish an Islamic University at Jerusalem might reduce their importance.¹² The Muslim states as well as different Islamic associations and prominent Muslim individuals were invited in the Congress. Various governments showed some hesitation in responding to the call to attend the Conference. Among the prominent Muslim countries, Turkey and Egypt did not attend the Congress. One of the striking innovations of the Congress was that all Shiite groups except that of India sent either message of support or representatives in response to invitations.

Two significant decisions were taken by the Congress. The first was for the establishment of a university at Jerusalem and the second was for the convening of a

World Muslim Congress every two years, for which a Committee was formed. This Conference was important because it was the first one which attempted to institutionalize the Congress. It was the first time that working rules and regulations for the World Muslim Congress were drawn up and the elections to the various offices and those of its councillors were also held. The Grand Mufti of Palestine, Al-Hajj Mohammad Amin al-Hussaini, was elected President. Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Iqbal, who led the delegation from India, was elected first Vice-President and Syed Alouba Pasha, leader of the Egyptian delegation, was elected as second Vice-President. Jerusalem was chosen as the Congress headquarters. None of its decisions made any real impact and the proposed Islamic Congress was not held after two years according to its working rules and regulations and even no such Congress could be held until the end of World War II in 1945. Thus none of the three Islamic Congresses left long-term impact in the Muslim world. So, no such permanent organization survived at the start of World War II and nothing could be done for the Muslims in the direction of world Muslim body. It was after the World War II that the new initiatives were taken with greater vigor and determination in a more congenial atmosphere.

After the World War II nationalism extended in the colonial regions throughout the world specially in the Muslim *Ummah* which resulted with the spirit of decolonization and rise of several independent Muslim states. The process of decolonization in the post-World War II period helped the Muslim to generate efforts for organizing an Islamic conference. Islam provided a vital role in almost all liberation movements of Muslims in the struggle for their independence.¹³ The newly independent states realized among themselves the necessity of Islamic solidarity and greater cooperation in social, political and economic fields in a world which did not seem to be favourable to them immediately after their independence. Several attempts were made in this direction and several Islamic conferences and congresses were held after World War II. Many attempts were made to bring the Muslim world closer on the basis of a broad Islamic framework.

Several Islamic conferences were held in the fifties and sixties on the invitation of various Islamic countries. The phenomenon of organizing Islamic conferences was then described as Neo-Pan-Islamism, as something distinct from Pan-Islamism itself. This Neo-Pan-Islamism was not aimed at restoring Islamic unity and re-establishing

the Islamic traditional system as was the Pan-Islamic Movement of the nineteenth century. It had rather a desire to cooperate as an Islamic bloc within the community of nations. This view was confirmed by the nature and working of the Organization of Islamic Conference.¹⁴

The role of Pakistan in the formation of OIC will be discussed in details in the next chapter. At this stage it is suffice to mention that Pakistan made serious efforts to bring the entire Muslim world closer by hosting several Islamic conferences. Pakistan made attempts to revive the practically non-operational organization 'World Muslim Congress' which was previously constituted at Mecca. It started functioning again at Karachi from February 1949. A non-official session of the Congress was held in Karachi. It was the third in a series after the Mecca Congress of 1926 and the Jerusalem Congress of 1931. In 1951, Pakistan government officially tried in vain to host a congress but there was no success as several Muslim countries showed no interest in such a gathering. The fourth session of the World Islamic Congress was held also in Karachi in 1951 with the blessing of the government of Pakistan. It was also not inter-governmental.

The response from the Muslim countries was not satisfactory from such political meetings in the two sessions of the World Islamic Congress held at Karachi. Because of the poor response of the *Ummah* to the Karachi based organization 'World Muslim Congress', Pakistan simultaneously concentrated in the cooperation of Muslim States in more tangible areas of economy. Consequently, at the end of 1949, a new semi-official organization, namely International Islamic Economic Conference was founded at the initiative of Ghulam Muhammad, Finance Minister of Pakistan. The organization held its first session in November 1949 at Karachi. A permanent Secretariat was established in Karachi, the then capital of Pakistan. The conference was to meet annually and Tehran was chosen as the venue of the next conference to be held in 1950.¹⁵ But soon after, Pakistan began to lose interest in the organizations mainly because of the poor response from other Muslim countries. Although the headquarters of the World Muslim Congress continued to be located in Karachi, it lost direct patronage of the government of Pakistan which it had enjoyed for the first four years of its revival in 1949.

The immense potential of cooperation on an Islamic basis became so widespread in the aftermath of the World War II that even an otherwise secular nationalist leader like President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt (1954-70) could not deny it. It was possibly with this realization that President Nasser, together with President Ghulam Mohammad of Pakistan and King Saud of Saudi Arabia, in their meeting at Mecca, decided to found the World Islamic Congress with its headquarters in Cairo. Anwar al-Sadat was appointed its Secretary General and King Saud was chosen its Chairman. The main objectives of the Congress were:

- a. to strengthen the ties of confidence and Islamic brotherhood
- b. to raise the standard of Muslims in their economy and education
- c. to establish new relationships or strengthen older one
- d. to organize their efforts towards cooperation and unity
- e. to give attention in a general way to the affairs and interests of Muslims and
- f. to do all it can bring about the good and welfare of all Muslims in various countries.¹⁶

But due to the internal differences and dissensions among the sponsoring countries, the organization became practically defunct immediately after its creation.

The Islamic Congress was never a governmental organization and its conferences mostly held under the patronage of one or other Muslim government. Though the Congress was revived in 1949 by Pakistan, she lost interest on the pan-Islamic front and enter the Western alliance for her security interests. The Congress continued to function as a non-official international organization from its headquarters in Karachi and to hold its conference sessions every now and then at one or the other places. The fifth session of the Congress was held in 1962 at Baghdad under the patronage and chairmanship of Premier Abdul Karim Qasim (1958-63). One of the important contributions of the conference was to define the organizational structure of the Congress and to identify its institutional shape. The conference decided to have a Secretary General and elected Inamulla Khan, a member of the Pakistan delegation, to the post. It also decided to have four Assistant Secretaries to assist the Secretary General in carrying out the functions of the Congress. An executive Council was entrusted with powers to formulate its general policies and confirm the appointments of the Secretary General and his assistants.¹⁷

The sixth session of the Congress was held in Mogadishu from 26 December 1964 to 2 January 1965. It was inaugurated by the President of Somalia, Adam Abdullah Osman. Delegates from 33 countries of Asia, Africa and Europe participated in it. The conference appealed to Muslim governments to set the ideal of building up a commonwealth of countries before them and to convene an Islamic Summit Conference. The idea was promptly taken up by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. Despite such initiatives the Congress remained loose organization with no significant impact. It did not attain the status of an inter-governmental organization. Apart from its headquarters in Karachi, its branches and regional offices were in Beirut for the Middle East, at Kuala Lumpur for South East Asia, at Manila for the Far East and at Dakar for the West Africa. Therefore, it did not provide a viable mechanism for cooperation among the Muslim states.

The Islamic Congress receded into the background of Organization of Islamic Conference as a governmental organization of the Muslim countries. However, it held its status of a non-official international organization and granted observer status by the OIC. It also attained the consultative status of 'A' Grade within the United Nations as an international organization.

As a big and an important Muslim country in South East Asia, Malaysia played an important role to initiate conferences of Muslim states. Around mid-sixties, the Malaysian government took an initiative to hold a conference of Muslim nations at Kuala Lumpur. Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, who later became the first Secretary General of the OIC, took a keen interest in the Congress. He wrote personal letters to various heads of the Muslim states. The agenda of the conference included regional cooperation in determining the fasting month and sighting of the moon, the new Muslim Calendar for unifying observance of Islamic religious practices, setting up the observatories in Mecca and other Islamic centers, establishment of interest-free banks, ensuring the transplantation of heart and other human organs between Muslims and non-Muslims and closer economic and commercial cooperation among Muslim countries.¹⁸ The Arab Muslim countries did not give impetus to the idea fearing that it might have political overtones. The idea gained momentum in 1968 after the Malaysian Lands and Mines Minister, Abdul Rehman Quacub, toured several Asian

and Middle Eastern nations in pursuance of the proposal and explaining its aims and objectives¹⁹

The conference ultimately took place at Kuala Lumpur in April 1969 and was attended by 100 delegates and observers from 23 nations. The prospect of trade and economic cooperation among Muslim countries was the most important subject of the conference. A proposal was made to establish an Islamic Development Bank. It may be noted here that the idea of Islamic Development Bank was later taken up by the OIC (with a short form of IDB) and it became one of its important organs. The conference condemned the Israeli aggression against Arabs and unanimously called upon all Muslim countries to pool their spiritual and material resources to liberate the Holy city of Jerusalem from Israel. It also passed a resolution for the promotion of culture and economic cooperation among Muslim states. The success of the Congress probably facilitated the initiative for convening of the Rabat Summit by which the OIC was founded. In fact, with the Rabat Summit Conference and the creation of the OIC, the Malaysian initiative had been bypassed.

It can be said that the Kuala Lumpur conference paved the way for the Rabat Summit conference. But, it was the Saudi government's initiative that Islamic solidarity proved to be most successful. In the sixties of the twentieth century King Faisal with all his material resources gave a new impetus for a new Pan-Islamic drive. Actually his initiative resulted in the creation of the Organization of Islamic Conference as the most viable of all Islamic organizations. The Arab-Israel War of 1967 greatly contributed to the success of the Saudi initiative. The change in the diplomatic balance in the Arab world after 1969 and simultaneously the increasing of wealth of Saudi Arabia since the mid-sixties helped its initiative to a success. Besides, Saudi Arabia has a common acceptance to almost all the Muslim *Ummah* at least for the religious cause. It occupies a place of distinction in the entire Muslim world, as Islam originated in this land and the two holiest places of the Muslims are located. The religious significance of Mecca and Medina has given Saudi Arabia the distinction of being a kind of spiritual heartland of Muslims all over the world. Every year millions of Muslims from all parts of the globe perform the Hajj at Mecca and visit Medina and other religious places of Saudi Arabia.

The Mecca Congress of 1926, as noted earlier, had only limited objectives. It was not aimed at any kind of broader cooperation and unity among various Muslim states. The objectives of the Congress placed Saudi Arabia in the conservative position. Due to this conservatism Saudi Arabia along with some other Arab states felt threatened in the 1950s and 1960s by the radical and secular aspects of Nasser's Arab Nationalism. Saudi Arabia eventually took drive for Islamic solidarity for its security and stability.²⁰ But unfortunately, in this situation, King Abdul Aziz, the founder of modern Saudi State, died on 9 November 1953 and was succeeded by his much less talented son, Saud bin Abdul Aziz. Therefore, for some time after the death of King Abdul Aziz, Saudi Arabia did not play any prominent role in the Arab politics. Consequently, Nasser emerged as an indispensable leader of Pan-Arabism, an embodiment of socialism, secularism, republicanism, and nationalism with a definite anti-West edge.²¹ Nasser's Pan-Arabism, combined with his growing influence over the Arab masses, posed a real threat to the security of all autocratic or conservative monarchical regimes in the region including the most prominent Saudi Arabia.

It was after the accession to power of Faisal bin Abdul Aziz (1964-75), the main architect of the OIC, began to increasingly gain a position of greater importance of Saudi Arabia in internal power politics.²² He had shown remarkable diplomatic competence in dealing with the challenge of Nasser and his Pan-Arabism. He invoked Pan-Islamic policy as a counter ideology to confront Nasser's radicalism and revolutionary socialism. As a part of his Pan-Islamic policy he as the Prime Minister sponsored a non-official Islamic conference in Mecca in May 1962 to which delegates from various Islamic states were invited. The main objective of the conference was to fight secular and socialist forces under the guise of nationalism, particularly in the Arab world.²³ The conference founded an Islamic organization called *Rabitat al-Alam al-Islami* (Muslim World League) with permanent headquarters in Mecca. It is a non-political and non-governmental organization set up to coordinate the functioning of Islamic organizations all over the world.

In 1964 a marked change occurred in Saudi Arabia as Faisal was installed as a full-fledged King of Saudi Arabia with both *de facto* and *de jure* authority. With this new authority King Faisal instituted a more dynamic foreign policy than before.²⁴ By his initiative two Arab Summit meetings were held in 1964 and 1965 to confront Nasser's

challenge. The outcome of the meetings was a clear and significant diplomatic gain for the countries of conservative camp.²⁵ But the agreement did not work for long and within a few months it became a dead letter because of the deep rooted suspicions on both sides. Faisal then adopted a counter strategy in the form of launching an appeal for Islamic solidarity. He used Islam in the regional and world politics as an instrument to serve the interests of his own regime and country. As a result, Saudi drive for Pan-Islamism and its call for Islamic solidarity at governmental level was enhancing considerably in this period. The enhanced financial solvency largely helped King Faisal to pursue his cause to its logical end.²⁶ He considered Arab unity as a part of a large Muslim unity and his initiatives for Arab unity was a preliminary to a bigger Muslim unity. Thus, he made it clear to all that there is no contradiction between the call for Islamic solidarity and the call for Arab unity. In this perspective, King Faisal promptly endorsed the call for the convening of an Islamic Summit Conference made by the Somali President, Adam Abdullah Osman, in his speech at the 6th World Islamic Congress (*Motamar Al Alami Al Islami*) held in Mogadishu as noted before. Faisal then took up the call with a missionary zeal and visited various Islamic states like Iran, Jordan, Sudan, Pakistan, Turkey, Morocco, Guinea, Mali and Tunisia, explaining the objective of his call and mobilizing support for it. However, his initiative could not make much progress because of the opposition from the radical camp, particularly Nasser. During 1966-67, radicalism ruled supreme in the region and the conservatives were all along on the defensive. So, the atmosphere at that time was not conducive for the immediate success of Faisal's initiative. The situation radically changed after 1967.

The catastrophic defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 war with Israel brought a drastic change in the politics of the Arab world.²⁷ This defeat badly shattered the image of Nasser and Egypt lost its paramount position in the Arab world. Its armed forces were completely shattered in the war. The war further paved the way for Saudi Arabia to assert its leadership in the Arab world.²⁸ Faisal promptly seized the authority to extort the maximum possible concession from Nasser. He gained an increasingly dominant position in the aftermath of the 1967 war. Faisal stressed the importance of the Palestine issue to the Muslims and the need for joint action by all the Islamic countries to liberate it from Zionist occupation.²⁹ In such a conducive politico-diplomatic environment arson in the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem on August 21,

1969 provided an opportunity to Faisal to call for an Islamic Summit Conference.³⁰ It was widely believed that the fire was an intentional and planned one so that the Al-Aqsa mosque could be destroyed. The incident sent shock waves throughout the Muslim world. The Saudi King immediately seized the opportunity and called for an Islamic Summit Conference. On August 26, 1969, the Foreign Ministers of Arab League met in Cairo and endorsed King Faisal's call for an Islamic Summit Conference and entrusted Saudi Arabia and Morocco with the job of making necessary arrangements for it. A Seven-Nation Preparatory Committee consisted of delegates from Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Somalia, Niger, Malaysia and Pakistan was formed. Finally, the Summit Conference was held in the Moroccan capital, Rabat, on September 22-25 and thus the first inter-governmental Islamic Organization came into being.

Rabat Summit Conference:

The Preparatory Committee issued invitations in the name of both King Faisal and King Hasan to 35 countries. The Summit Conference was opened as scheduled on September 22, 1969 in Rabat. First, out of 35 countries invited only 25 attended it. Out of these 25, only 10 were represented at the level of Head of State.³¹ 10 countries declined the invitation or did not respond to it.³² After its opening, the first problem that confronted the Conference was membership of the PLO as it had not been invited to the Conference. After a long conversation the PLO was granted to attend the Conference as an observer. The second and most serious problem was the issue of India's admission to it. India, from the beginning, had pleaded that since it contains the third largest community of Muslims in the world, it should not be excluded from the Summit. But, its request was not conceded by the Preparatory Committee as it did not come under any of the four categories of the countries invited to the Conference.³³ Finally, India was able to participate in the Summit due to the persistent diplomatic support of friendly states like Egypt and Malaysia. But, later India withdrew its participation as President Yahya Khan of Pakistan opposed against India's participation.³⁴ The third major problem was the adoption of formal agenda. The Conference with compromise and concession adopted the following agenda:-

- 1) Calamity of the al-Aqsa Mosque;
- 2) Situation in Jerusalem;
- 3) Withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied territories;

- 4) Restoration of the rights of Palestinian people and full support for them in their national liberation struggle;
- 5) Implementation of the resolutions of the Islamic Summit Conference and fixing the date of Foreign Ministers' Conference meetings;
- 6) Cooperation among Muslim countries; and
- 7) Adoption of a common attitude on these issues.

The Conference adopted a resolution with regard to the establishment of a permanent secretariat which stipulated that a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Muslim Member countries should be held in March 1970 to take a formal decision on the issue.

From this stage onwards it is important to give a chronological account of the step by step development of the OIC.

First Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

In fact, the First Summit paved the way for further meetings at Foreign Minister Level which set the machinery of Islamic co-operation in motion.³⁵ In accordance with the decision of the Rabat summit Conference, King Faisal convened the first meeting of Islamic Foreign Ministers in Jeddah on March 23-25, 1970. It was attended by 22 Muslim Countries.³⁶ The main agendum was the establishment of a permanent Islamic Secretariat to coordinate the activities of Muslim countries. The conference, after a tedious debate, agreed on a formula for the creation of a permanent Secretariat. The Secretariat was to act as liaison between the participating states, prepare and organize Conference sessions to be held annually and to follow up the implementation of decisions taken by the Conference. Jeddah was selected for the location of the headquarters of the Secretariat. The Conference was to appoint a Secretary General to head the Secretariat for a period of two years and he was to be eligible for re-election for one or more term. Malaysia was given the privilege of choosing the first candidate for the post. In pursuance of the decision, the Malaysian Government had nominated its Former Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, as the first Secretary General of the Secretariat.

Second Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The second Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Karachi, Pakistan on December 26-28, 1970.³⁷ The Conference was inaugurated by the Pakistani President, General Yahya Khan. The Conference endorsed the candidature of Tunku Abdul Rahman as the first Secretary General of the OIC. The Conference initiated discussion on proposals for establishing an International Islamic Bank for Trade and Development or an Islamic Federation Banks; the proposals submitted by Pakistan and Egypt respectively. The idea of establishing this institution recommended to undertake an in-depth study of this project. Accordingly, Egypt convened the Conference on the Islamic Bank in February 1972. A Declaration was thereby issued by the First Conference of Finance Ministers of Islamic countries, held in Jeddah, in December 1973 to endorse this idea. The Bank was formally inaugurated on 20 October, 1975 under the name of Islamic Development Bank (IDB).³⁸ The bulk of the economic activities of the OIC are executed through the IDB. The establishment of IDB was an outstanding measure of the OIC and still the success of the OIC much more depends on the performances of the Bank. It agreed to the creation of an Islamic International News Agency (IINA). The Conference also studied and discussed for the creation of Islamic cultural centers around the world. Most important of all, the Conference attempted to create a formal organizational base and adopt a Charter for it. In accordance with the decision at the Karachi Conference, Iran hosted the conference of Islamic News Agency in April, 1971; Morocco held the conference on Islamic Cultural Centers in early June 1971 and Saudi Arabia sponsored the Conference on the draft Charter of the organization at the end of June 1971. By the end of the Karachi Conference, the OIC had made significant headway in the process of its own consolidation. It proved of vital significance in the history of the OIC.

Third Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Third Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Jeddah from February 29 to March 4, 1972.³⁹ Thirty countries participated in it.⁴⁰ The Conference reflected certain positive developments in the attitudes of many Muslim countries towards the OIC like Egypt and Syria. The Conference adopted the following agenda:-

- a) Latest development in the Middle East, the Palestinian question and the material and moral support of the participating states to the people of Palestine in their struggle for liberation;

- b) Judaisation of Jerusalem;
- c) The Charter of the OIC;
- d) 1972 Budget;
- e) International Islamic News Agency;
- f) Islamic Cultural Organizations and Centers;
- g) The International Islamic Bank;
- h) The situation in the Indo-Pak subcontinent;
- i) Solidarity of Islamic states with the African peoples' struggle against imperialism and racism;
- j) The conditions of Muslims in the Philippines; and
- k) Date and venue of the Fourth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

Although, the Conference was unable to agree on the establishment of the proposed Bank, the studies made and the discussion held made its realization possible in future. The main achievement of the Conference was the adoption and approval of the Charter of the OIC after a long conversation among the participating states. This was a historic accomplishment as it laid the formal foundation of the OIC defining its objectives, structure of its various organs and mode of their operation.⁴¹ Another major achievement of the Jeddah Conference was its approval of a project for the establishment of an International Islamic News Agency with its headquarters located in Jeddah. This was unanimously approved.⁴² It was also decided to create and establish institutions for the propagation and protection of Islamic ideology and culture in all countries. In this regard, the resolution provided for opening of Islamic Cultural Centers and an International Islamic University.

Fourth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Fourth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held on March 24, 1973 and it was attended by 23 countries.⁴³ The Conference adopted the following agenda:-

- a) Tense situation in the Middle East;
- b) Plight of Muslims in the Philippines;
- c) Pattern of cooperation;
- d) Islamic Cultural Centers in Europe;
- e) Progress Report for 1972;
- f) Budget for 1973;

- g) Request from Secretary-General to retire and the appointment of Assistant Secretaries-General;
- h) Date and venue of the next Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers;
- i) The Fourth Non-Aligned Countries Summit Conference (Declaration of the Algerian Delegation);
- j) Solidarity with Liberation Movements in Africa and solidarity with the Africans struggling against racial discrimination;
- k) Zionist danger in the Red Sea;
- l) Release of Pakistan prisoners-of-war in India;
- m) Jihad Fund;
- n) Situation of the Muslims in the world; and
- o) Islamic Year Book.

The Conference decided among other things to establish a Jihad Fund to assist the Islamic Liberation Movements, finance Islamic Countries and societies and provide aid for needy Muslims around the world. It decided to establish a fund to help the Southern Philippine Muslims. The Conference also decided to convene in London a Conference of the Islamic Cultural Centers in Europe, to be followed by similar conferences in other parts of the world. It also decided to establish new Islamic Cultural Centers in Africa. The Conference resolved to establish a permanent Economic Committee at the General Secretariat, composed of expert economists to advice and assist the Economic Division in achieving its objectives. The Conference elected Hasan Mohammad Tohamy as its new Secretary-General.⁴⁴ Thus, the Conference exhibited a greater degree of understanding, spirit of cooperation and capacity of consensus among the member states than the earlier conferences. It was against this background that the second Islamic Summit Conference was held at Lahore.

Second Islamic Summit Conference at Lahore:

With the passage of time the OIC gained greater strength. Before holding the Summit Conference at Lahore it was able to lay a viable foundation for its organizational structure.⁴⁵ In this favourable atmosphere Pakistan was offered the opportunity to host an Islamic Summit Conference. The Conference was held at Lahore in 1974 and was attended not only by the 31 invited member states but also by 7 new members.⁴⁶ The admission of Bangladesh, the then second largest Muslim majority state in the world,

in the OIC was a great achievement of the Conference. The Conference passed seven resolutions in all. It decided to establish a special fund named “Islamic Solidarity Fund” to finance projects for the social, educational and cultural developments of Muslims.⁴⁷ The OIC seemed to be gaining in strength, reputation and influence through the Conference.

Fifth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Fifth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held at Kuala Lumpur in June 21-25, 1974 and was attended by 38 member states. The Conference was inaugurated by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razzaq. Among the other political issues discussed in the conference were the Indian nuclear issue, the Spanish domination of the Sahara, territories under the Portuguese domination, French Somaliland, the plight of Muslims in the Philippines, cooperation between the OIC and OAU (Organization of African Unity). The Conference adopted six resolutions including the creation of Islamic Science Foundation for the promotion of research and studies in the field of science and technology. It considered the establishment of an “Islamic Fund for Economic Settlements” to assist the poor countries in financing their imports through bilateral or multilateral agreements. The Conference also approved the basic statute of the International Islamic News Agency.

Sixth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Sixth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from July 12 to 15, 1975. It was attended by 40 member countries.⁴⁸ The Conference was inaugurated by King Khalid. The issues discussed mainly in the Conference were Israeli occupation, independence of the people of Somali Coast from France, agreement between Moro Liberation Front and the Philippines Government, Eritrean problem, cooperation between OIC and the Arab League, the OAU, the NAM and the UNO. It adopted a resolution approving statute of a new body the Islamic States Broadcasting Organization (ISBO) with its headquarters at Jeddah. The Islamic States Broadcasting Organization (ISBO) later changed its name to Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU).⁴⁹ The Conference called on the member states who had not yet ratified the agreement for the establishment of the Islamic Development Bank to do so promptly. The session adopted another resolution by which the important Al Quds

Committee was the established with its headquarters located in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco.⁵⁰

Seventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Seventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Istanbul on May 12-15, 1976 and was attended by delegates from 42 Islamic states. Comoro Islands was granted full membership. The Conference was inaugurated by the Turkish Prime Minister, Suleyman Demirel. The Cyprus issue, West Asian problem, future of Palestine and the status of Jerusalem, racial discrimination in Rhodesia and South Africa, the liberation movements in Namibia, Rhodesia and the plight of Muslims in Philippines etc. were its major agenda. The Conference decided to establish a “Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture” (IRCICA) in Istanbul and “Statistical, Economic and Social Research Center” in Ankara.⁵¹ It approved World Federation of Arabo-Islamic International Schools (WFAIIS).⁵² In the Conference Turkey put forward the idea to establish the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) which came into effect next year with its Headquarters in Karachi.⁵³

Eighth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Eighth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Tripoli, Libya, on May 16-21, 1977. It was attended by 38 members.⁵⁴ The Conference welcomed a proposal from Bangladesh for the creation of an Islamic Center for Technical and Vocational Training in Dacca. It re-elected Dr. Amadou Karim Gaya of Senegal for the second time as Secretary General of the OIC. Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for the Islamic Countries (SESRIC) was established in pursuance of Resolution No.2/8-EC adopted by this Conference as a subsidiary organ of the OIC. The Center is located in Ankara, Republic of Turkey. The principal objective of the Centre is to support the process of socio-economic co-operation and development among the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) by undertaking activities in the areas of statistics, research, training and technical co-operation.⁵⁵ The Conference approved the principle of creation of the Islamic Committee for the International Crescent (ICIC). It is a specialized institution of the OIC. It helps to alleviate the sufferings caused by natural disaster and war. The Headquarters of the Committee is in Benghazi, Libya.⁵⁶

Ninth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Ninth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held at Dakar in Senegal on 24 April 1978. It was attended by 42 states. The Conference recognized the independence of Djibouti and granted its membership of the OIC.⁵⁷ The Conference approved the setting up of a new department called the Department of Muslim Communities in Non Muslim States within the Islamic Secretariat for the interest of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim states. The Conference approved the establishment of a “Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture” (IRCICA) in Istanbul in Turkey. Islamic Solidarity Fund contributed to the Government of Turkey to enable it to start work on the Center. Another achievement of the Conference was the establishment of the Organization of Islamic Capitals (OIC) which later changed its name to Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities (OICC). Its headquarters is located in the holy capital Mecca and the offices of its General Secretariat are located in the city of Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.⁵⁸ The Islamic University of Technology (IUT) was established by the Conference.⁵⁹ Elaborate discussion about IUT will follow in the next chapter.

Tenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Tenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held at Fez in Morocco from 8 to 12 May 1979 and was attended by 40 member states. It was held in the context of the US-sponsored Egypt- Israel Camp David Agreement. Egypt did not attend the Conference. The Conference condemned Camp David Peace Accord for its inadequacy to resolve the West Asian Problem and voted for the suspension of Egypt from the OIC. It approved the establishment of an Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange. It adopted decision to establish Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) in order to promote cooperation among member states in the fields of education, science and culture.⁶⁰

First Extraordinary Session of the Foreign Ministers Conference of Islamic States:

In between the 10th and 11th conferences of Islamic Foreign Ministers an extraordinary session of the Foreign Ministers Conference of Islamic states was held at Islamabad on January 27-29, 1980. It was attended by 36 states. Syria, South Yemen and Afghanistan did not attend the Conference.⁶¹ The Conference was

convened at the suggestion of Bangladesh on the issue of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan at the end of December 1979. The issue had divided the Muslim world because while the majority of the Islamic states expressed their disapproval of the Soviet armed entry into Afghanistan, some Islamic states, because of their close relations with the Soviet Union, intended to ignore the issue and wanted to brush it aside. It also passed resolution on tension between USA and Iran, West Asian problem and so on.

Eleventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Eleventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Islamabad on May 17-22, 1980 and was attended by 40 members. Egypt and Afghanistan were absent from the Conference as their membership had been suspended. Among other things the Conference decided to call for a substantial increase in the capital of the IDB in order to enable it to develop its activities. It agreed to effective funding of some cultural organizations of the OIC. It also decided to establish an International Law Commission in order to facilitate the practical application of the *Shariat*.

Second and Third Extraordinary Conferences of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

In between the 11th Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers and the 3rd Islamic Summit Conference, two extraordinary conferences of Islamic Foreign Ministers were held at Amman on July 11-12, 1980 and at Fez on September 18-20, 1980. Both dealt exclusively with the West Asian problem in its various dimensions.

Third Islamic Summit Conference at Taif:

The Third Islamic Summit Conference was held at Taif in Saudi Arabia from January 25 to 28, 1981 with its opening session in Mecca. Out of 42 members, 38 attended. Iran and Libya did not attend the Conference.⁶² After the inauguration and the adoption of the Mecca Declaration, the Summit members went to Taif for the regular proceedings of the Conference. Taif city had been specially decorated and it was described as the most expensive conference in history. The Conference did not confine to any one specific issue. It covered 20-point agenda including the West Asian problem, the Iran-Iraq War, Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, economic issues, liberation of Jerusalem, etc. Regarding Iran-Iraq War, the Summit Conference decided to continue its efforts and engaged the good offices of the 'Peace Committee'

previously formed in a meeting of Muslim Foreign Ministers in New York with its enlarged form.⁶³ The Summit adopted a Plan of Action to strengthen economic cooperation among the member-states. In order to promote trade exchange among the OIC member states the Summit approved the Statute of the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT). It is a Subsidiary Organ of the OIC with Headquarters in Casablanca, Morocco.⁶⁴ It adopted resolution calling for the establishment of an International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA). The Summit decided to set up the Organization of the Islamic Shipowners Association (OISA) and approved its statute.⁶⁵ The Summit adopted a resolution by which the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) was established.⁶⁶ It adopted another resolution by which the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) was established.⁶⁷ The Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) was formed in pursuant to another resolution adopted by the Conference.⁶⁸ It adopted a supplementary resolution with that of the 11th ICFM which resulted in the establishment of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) in 1985.⁶⁹ Therefore, the Summit was significant for creating a number of organs, institutions and committees and the OIC appeared as a multi-purposeful organization than before.

Twelfth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Twelfth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held at Baghdad on June 1-5, 1981. All the members except Iran, Syria, Egypt and Afghanistan attended it.⁷⁰ The Conference was practically an extension of the Taif Summit and it continued discussion on the issues that were previously discussed in the Taif Summit with some economic issues.

Thirteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Thirteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Niamey, Niger from 22-26 August, 1982. All the member states with the exception of Egypt and Afghanistan (whose membership stood suspended) attended it. The Conference dealt with major current political issues including Palestine problem, Iran-Iraq War, Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Afghan Crisis etc. The Conference decided to establish an International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA) and approved the final draft of its statute.⁷¹ It also endorsed a proposal for the establishment of Islamic Universities at

Niger and Uganda. The Conference decided to establish the International Islamic University in Malaysia (IIUM).⁷²

Fourteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Fourteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh between 6 and 12 December 1983. It was attended by 40 out of the 42 member states. Benin was granted membership during the course of the session and the number of the countries present in the Conference raised to 41.⁷³ The then President of Bangladesh, Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammad Ershad had played a very vital and important role in this Conference. Particularly on the question of Iran-Iraq War, he tried his best to solve the problem in the Conference describing the conflict as a “gaping wound” in the body politics of Islam. The Conference endorsed a proposal for the creation of an Islamic Court of Justice for peaceful settlement of disputes between the member states. The Conference also approved a document on Human Rights in Islam.

Fourth Islamic Summit Conference at Casablanca:

The Fourth Islamic Summit Conference was held at Casablanca in Morocco between 16 and 19 January 1984. The Conference was attended by 42 of the 45 member states including Brunei which secured membership during the course of the summit.⁷⁴ The Summit endorsed the eight-point Arab Peace Plan approved by the 12th Arab Summit Conference held in Fez, Morocco. The most important decision of the Summit was the restoration of Egypt’s membership of the OIC.

Fifteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Fifteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Sana, Yemen, between 18 and 22 December 1984. It was attended by 44 of its 45 member-states. The only absentee was Afghanistan as its membership stood suspended. The Conference unanimously elected Sharifuddin Pirzada of Pakistan as the new Secretary General for the period of five years from 1 January 1985. It endorsed the drafts by laws of the Islamic Cement Union (the name changed later to Islamic Cement Association) with its Headquarters in Istanbul, Turkey. It also endorsed the Islamic International Telecommunication Union.

Sixteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Sixteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Fez on January 6-10, 1986. It was attended by 45 members-states including Nigeria which was admitted as the 46th member of the OIC during the course of the session. Only Afghanistan was absent as its membership suspended till then. The Conference dealt mainly with the issues regarding the Israeli air raids on the PLO headquarters in Tunisia, Afghan crisis, the Gulf War etc.

Fifth Islamic Summit Conference at Kuwait:

The Fifth Islamic Summit Conference was held in Kuwait from 26 to 29 January 1987. The Conference was attended by 44 out of its 46 members.⁷⁵ The Conference according to its routine practice adopted agenda concerning the Arab-Israeli dispute, Iran-Iraq War and Afghanistan problem along with the Libya-Chad conflict. It agreed on the basic draft charter of the International Islamic Court of Justice.

Seventeenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Seventeenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held at Amman, Jordan, from 19 to 26 March 1988. With the exception of Afghanistan, the Conference was represented by all the member countries of the OIC. It unanimously elected Niger's Prime Minister, Hamid al Gabid, as the next Secretary General of the OIC, replacing Sharifuddin Peerzada on the expiry of his term in January 1989. It adopted resolutions with regard to some of the routine concerns of the OIC like Afghanistan, Palestine and the Gulf War.

Eighteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Eighteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 13 to 16 March 1989. It was attended by all of its 46 members. Afghanistan, whose membership stood suspended since 1980, was this time allowed to be represented by the Mujahideen Interim Government. Iran also enthusiastically participated in the Conference.⁷⁶ The Conference issued a declaration of "joint Islamic action" on the issue of the ban of the book *Satanic Verses* and death sentence of its author Salman Rushdie issued by Ayatollah Khomeini upon the Iranian intention. The Conference strongly condemned the book *Satanic Verses* and also its author Salman Rushdie as an apostate. It appealed to all members of the International society to

impose a ban on the book and to pass legislation to ensure protection of the religious belief of others. Besides, it dealt with routine issues concerning the Palestinian problem, Afghanistan issue and the Gulf War. It expressed deep satisfaction over the ending of the fighting between Iran and Iraq and called for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (Resolution No. 598). It welcomed the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and also the setting up of a Provisional Government in February 1989.

Nineteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Nineteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Cairo, Egypt, from 1 to 5 August 1990 and was attended by all its 45 members.⁷⁷ The Conference for the first time in its history adopted Kashmir issue as an agenda and passed a resolution on it. The resolution called for a peaceful settlement of the dispute in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and as agreed upon in the Simla Agreement. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq on 2 August, 1990, in the midst of the ongoing Islamic Conference, was given the top priorities than all the issues in the original agenda. It condemned the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait and rejected the declaration of Saddam Hossain to claim Kuwait as Iraq's 19th province and all other consequences that attended it. It called for the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait territory and their return to the position they occupied before August 1, 1990. It also called on the two countries to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each state and to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of either of them.⁷⁸

Twentieth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Twentieth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Istanbul from 4 to 8 August 1991. It was attended by all 45 members. The Conference adopted resolutions on the Gulf War II, Arab-Israeli dispute, Afghanistan issue, US-Libya hostility, Kashmir issue, Turkish Cypriot issue, autonomy of South Philippines and a number of administrative and financial issues. It decided to send a good offices mission and asked the Secretary General to constitute a three-member fact finding mission to visit Jammu and Kashmir.

Sixth Islamic Summit Conference at Dakar:

The Sixth Islamic Summit Conference was held in Dakar, capital of Senegal, from 9 to 11 December 1991. All the 46 member-states were represented in the Conference. The newly liberated Central Asian Republic of Azerbaijan secured membership during the course of the conference session. The Palestine problem and related issues constituted the major concern of the summit and thus the summit was designated as the Al-Quds (Jerusalem) Summit. Besides, the liberation of Kuwait, the Kashmir issue, emergence of six new Muslim sovereign states in Central Asia and the Serbian aggression on Bosnia-Herzegovina after the breakdown of the former Yugoslavia, were given priority. The Conference extended its support for establishing peace in West Asia on the basis of UN Security Council's resolutions (Nos. 242 and 338) and the formula "land for peace".⁷⁹

Fifth and Sixth Extraordinary Conferences of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Bosnia-Herzegovina issue was discussed so widely that it was followed by two emergency extraordinary Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers (Fifth and Sixth) at Istanbul on 17-18 June 1992 and at Jeddah towards the end of December 1992 respectively. The discussion on the issue was concluded with a strong plea for lifting the arms embargo against the Bosnian Muslims so that they could confront the Serbian aggression.

Twenty-First Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Twenty-First Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was held in Karachi on April 25-29, 1993. The Conference dealt with the issues including Bosnia, Palestine, Kashmir, Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan etc. On the Bosnian issue the Conference asked for the imposition of a complete and comprehensive economic blockade against Serbia and Montenegro. It also decided that the member-states should jointly seek formal expulsion of Serbia and Montenegro from the UNO and all its agencies, organs, bodies and programmes. It condemned Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan and demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Armenian forces from all Azeri territory. It also urged Armenia to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan on the basis of internationally recognized borders. A more comprehensive resolution on Kashmir was adopted indicating its self determination. By another resolution it strongly condemned the demolition of the

historic Babri Masjid at Ayodhya and called upon the Government of India to fulfill its promise of reconstructing it at its original site and removing the makeshift temple built there. It also called for the protection of the cultural heritage of Islam.

Seventh Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

On the request of Pakistan, the Seventh Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was held in Islamabad, Pakistan, from 7 to 9 September 1994. It was held under a high patronage of Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan. Happenings of Palestine and Al Quds Al Sharif, Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Jammu and Kashmir Syrian Golan; and conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Armenia and crisis between Libya and USA dominated the Conference's agenda.

Twenty-Second Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Kingdom of Morocco, the Twenty-Second Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was held in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco from 10 - 12 December 1994. 51 Member states attended the Conference. The Conference was opened by Dr. Abdellatif Filali, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco. He reminded that Morocco was a land which witnessed the birth of the OIC following the burning of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. He then reviewed the different agenda items and urged the OIC to examine its working methods in order to increase its efficiency and strengthen its credibility in the light of the realities imposed by international changes in the political, economic and social fields. The Conference endorsed different resolutions including the functioning of the OIC, its subsidiary organs and the specialized and affiliated institutions; the regulation governing the observer status at the OIC, rules of observer status at the OIC; the cooperation between the OIC and the United Nations, OIC and ECO, OIC and World Muslim Scout Union; establishment of an Eminent Persons Group to take stock of the achievement of the OIC over the past 25 years, the Islamic University in Bangladesh and so on. The Conference unanimously admitted the Republic of Mozambique as full member of the OIC.

Seventh Summit Conference in Casablanca:

The Seventh Summit Conference was held in Casablanca from December 13 to 15, 1994 and was attended by 49 member states. The Session coincided with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Organization of the Islamic Conference at the First Islamic Summit, held in 1969 in the Kingdom of Morocco. The Summit concentrated on the Bosnian issue. It asked for an armed intervention against the Serbs in Bosnia and established an aid fund for the Bosnian Muslims. It also condemned terrorism as a political instrument. In an attempt to control Muslim extremist groups, the participants adopted a “Code of Conduct for Combating International Terrorism” which notably commits states to refrain from direct support or participation in acts of terrorism. Finally, the OIC supported the decision by Iraq to recognize Kuwait, but called for its compliance with all the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Twenty-third Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Guinea, the Twenty-third Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Session of Peace, Solidarity and Tolerance) was held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea, from 9 to 12 December 1995 under the high patronage of General Lansana Conte, President of the Republic of Guinea and he opened the Conference. The Conference was attended by 46 member states. In his speech, the Secretary General, Dr. Hamid Algabid, while noting with satisfaction the progress made in settling some major issues of concern to the Islamic *Ummah*, expressed regret at the continuation of a number of disputes and conflicts and the procrastination of the international community in finding solutions for other world crises. He evoked the efforts exerted by the OIC within the framework of the Middle East situation, the questions of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, the Syrian Golan and South Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Somalia, Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the questions of Cyprus, of Muslims in Southern Philippines, and Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan. In the economic field, he stressed the need to promote greater economic cooperation between member states. The Conference later adopted resolutions on the issues after discussion. One of the important decisions taken by the conference was the creation of BAYT MAL AL QUDS AGENCY.⁸⁰

Twenty-Fourth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of Indonesia, the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Session of Fraternity and Cooperation) was held in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia, from 9 to 13 December 1996 under the high patronage of M. Soeharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia. The Conference was attended by 49 member states. The Conference was opened by M. Soeharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia. In his opening speech, President Soeharto underlined the new challenges and opportunities emerging in the world which constituted new challenges for the OIC. He called for the application of more efficient procedures and working methods in managing the work of the OIC with a view to maintaining its relevance in this world of rapid change. He also expressed concern over the armed conflicts in many parts of the world, including the OIC Member States. The OIC Secretary General, Dr. Hamid Algabid expressed his deep gratitude to the leaders of the *Ummah* for the confidence placed upon him during the eight years of his tenure and which enabled him to undertake a wide range of institutional, structural, administrative and financial reforms of the General Secretariat and its Subsidiary Organs as well as the Specialized and Affiliated Institutions. Taking up the international situation, the Secretary General, while noting with satisfaction the progress made in settling some major issues of concern to the Islamic *Ummah*, expressed regret at the continuation of a number of disputes and conflicts. In this context, he evoked the efforts exerted by the OIC within the framework of the Middle East situation, the questions of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, the Syrian Golan and South Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Somalia, Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the questions of Cyprus, of Muslims in Southern Philippines, and Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan. Resolutions were subsequently taken on the issues through discussion.

First Extraordinary Summit:

On March 23rd, 1997, the Organization of the Islamic Conference convened the first Special Summit Conference in Pakistan's capital Islamabad. Pakistani President Farooq Leghari in his inaugural address proposed to create a permanent summit committee to mediate disputes and difference that exist or may arise among Muslim countries. The Muslim leaders called for more cooperation among OIC states.⁸¹ The conference held discussions on the various problems and challenges confronting the

OIC and the Muslim world in the 21st century. It issued a statement on the prevailing Jerusalem issue and disputes between India and Pakistan. It also focused on the crises in Sudan, Albania and Bosnia.

Eighth Summit Conference in Tehran:

The Eighth Summit Conference was held in Tehran from December 9th to 15th, 1997. All the OIC members attended. Among 53 member states heads of states and governments of nearly 30 countries were present. The Conference adopted “Tehran Declaration”, “Summit Conference Statement”, and “Final Communiqué”, all three with the theme of dignity, dialogue and participation, and also 140 resolutions regarding political, economic, social and cultural affairs. The participants adopted a firm position towards Israel and regretted the military cooperation between Turkey and Israel. They also asked for a bigger role for women in the Muslim societies and stressed the necessity to strengthen the civil society itself. This Summit was a mediatic and diplomatic success for Iran which renewed ties with the Arab countries (in particular Egypt and Saudi Arabia).

The Twenty-Fifth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

The 25th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was held in Qatar’s capital Doha on March 15-17, 1998, in response to the invitation of Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar. Foreign Ministers or representatives of 53 countries out of 55 member states attended the conference. Secretary-General of the Arab League and the Council for Gulf Cooperation, Secretary-General of the UN, representatives of Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of African Unity were present. The theme of the conference was “for a better tomorrow of the Islamic nation”. The conference held discussions on the Middle East peace process, Iraq’s arms inspection crisis, the Afghanistan issue and the OIC structure and its financial reform, and also adopted the ‘Doha Declaration’.

Twenty-Sixth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

The 26th Foreign Ministers’ Meeting was held in Burkina Faso from 28 June to 01 July 1999 in response to the invitation by President of Faso. It was convened in the city of Ouagadougou, capital of Burkina Faso. Foreign Ministers from 52 member states and 4 countries with observer status took part in the Meeting. Under the

general theme “peace and development partners”, the meeting divided itself into 4 committees which reviewed and adopted over 100 items and resolutions with a final joint communiqué.

Twenty-Seventh Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

In response to the invitation by the Government of Malaysia, the Twenty-seventh Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was convened in the city of Kuala Lumpur, capital of Malaysia, from 27 to 30 June 2000. Over 1000 representatives from 56 member states of the OIC, 4 observer states and international organizations took part in the meeting, the theme of which was “Islam and Globalization”. Malaysia’s Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad made a key-note speech at the opening ceremony. In his statement, he highlighted issues of paramount importance for the future of Muslim countries. He enumerated the eras of Islamic history and civilization embodied by the precepts of the Quran, the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet and sound conventional principles. He also highlighted the errors of Muslims in past decades which led to their current under-development and regression compared to their achievements in terms of cultural, scientific and philosophical advancement of yore. He expressed the hope that the ICFM will recognise the dangers and the challenges posed by globalization, and recognising them, take the necessary first step towards reducing the divisions between Muslim countries and focusing their attention on the acquisition of knowledge to combat the use of Information Technology to destroy the values, faith and the legacy of their civilization. The meeting elected Morocco’s Abdelouaded Belkeziz as the new Secretary-General. It adopted a draft final declaration and a number of draft resolutions which included such hot spot issues as Palestine, Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chechnya and international questions of general concern such as the reform of UN and proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Ninth Summit Conference in Doha:

The Ninth Summit Conference was held in Doha from November 12 to 14, 2000. 55 member states, the UN Secretary-General, the Secretary General of the Islamic Conference, the Secretary-Generals of the Arab League and OAU, 4 observers and representatives of the Islamic Organizations attended the Conference. A special session of the Summit was devoted to the Intifada Al-Aqsa. Kings and heads of state

re-affirmed their solidarity with Palestinian people and demanded for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on Israel's implementation of the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy. The Conference emphasized the impossibility of resolving the Afghan problem by military means and called on the Afghan parties to the conflict to stop hostilities and cooperate with the aim of setting up a representative, broad-based, multiethnic government. Participants stressed the need to respect the security and territorial integrity of both Kuwait and Iraq. As far as economic affairs were concerned, the Conference stressed the need for regional and sub-regional cooperation as well as the necessity to establish an Islamic Common Market, including a Free Trade Zone.

8th Extraordinary Session of the Conference of the Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar and Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Extraordinary Session of the Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the OIC Member States was held on May 2001 in Doha, State of Qatar. The Conference was convened to consider the grave situation prevailing in Palestine as a consequence of the continuous and spiraling Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people. The Conference listened to the important speeches of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa and President Yasser Arafat. It took note of the report of the Secretary General on the dangerous developments taking place in Palestine. The Conference holds Israel fully responsible for its aggression and condemned the Israeli occupying forces and called on the USA to promptly intervene to stop the Israeli aggression. The Conference strongly condemned the gross and wide-scale violations of human rights, the Israeli expansionist policy, the confiscation of Palestinian lands, and all other settlement activities. The Conference drew the attention of UN Security Council to assume its responsibilities to put an immediate end to the Israeli aggression and secure the necessary international protection for the Palestinian people. It called on all international parties concerned with the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It also called for a commitment to the implementation of the provisions of the Islamic boycott of Israel.

Twenty-Eighth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

The 28th Meeting of Foreign Ministers (Session of Peace and Development – Intifada Al-Aqsa), was held in the Malian capital of Bamako on June 25-27, 2001 on invitation by the Government of the Republic of Mali with the attendance of the foreign ministers or their representatives of the 56 OIC member states. Alpha Oumar Konare, President of the Republic of Mali, commended the unity of the Islamic *Ummah* which was an excellent tool for influencing world events. President noted with concern the situation of the Palestinian people and called for greater support to the “Al-Aqsa Intifada” in order to achieve the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people with the objectives of establishing their own state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. He further deplored the conflicts and economic crises that continue to hinder the participation of the *Ummah* in the current process of globalization. To this effect, he called for the setting up of a crisis resolution mechanism within the OIC. He also appealed for greater economic solidarity within the *Ummah* and urged for a political settlement of the external debt. The meeting carried on discussions on Palestine and the Middle East situation, economic sanctions, African economic development and debts, the status of the ethnic Moslem minorities in non-OIC member countries, and the institutional reforms of the United Nations. The meeting admitted Cote d'Ivoire as the 57th member state of OIC, and decided that the United Arab Emirates would be the host country for the next Meeting of Foreign Ministers.

Ninth Extraordinary Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar and Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference, the Foreign Ministers of the member states of the OIC held the Ninth Extraordinary Session in Doha, Qatar, on 10 October 2001, to discuss the repercussions of the events 9/11 which took place in the USA and its effects world-wide and in particular on the member states. The Conference was opened by Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani by delivering an address in which he referred to the situation that resulted from the terrorist attacks on the Twin Tower in New York, USA and its consequences on the world in general and the member states in particular. After debate and discussion, the Conference strongly condemned the brutal terror acts that befell and stressed on the international initiative towards achieving security and stability in a world free from terrorism and injustice.

Tenth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar and Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference, the Tenth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was held on 10 December 2001 in Doha, Qatar, to consider the grave situation prevailing in Palestine as a result of persistent and escalating Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people. The Conference listened to the important speech delivered by Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, as well as the speech delivered on behalf of President Yasser Arafat. It took cognizance of the Secretary General's report on the serious developments prevailing in Palestine. After exhaustive discussions it reached the decisions that the Conference reiterated its commitment to all the previous resolutions adopted by the Islamic conferences and meetings relevant to the issue of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Conference commended and took pride in the Palestinian people's steadfastness and heroic Intifada against the aggression of the Israeli occupation forces in order to achieve its legitimate rights. It affirmed its continued political, material and moral support and assistance to counter the occupation. The Conference requested the UN Security Council, to shoulder its responsibilities in ensuring an immediate end to the Israeli aggression. The Conference beckoned upon the international community, the United Nations and particularly the USA, the Russian Federation and the European Union, to intervene immediately to put an end to the Israeli aggression.

Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

Another Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on "International Terrorism" was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 1-3 April 2002. Dr. Mahathir Mohammad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia opened the Conference and delivered a comprehensive speech in which he referred to the gravity of terrorism, the importance of defining it and the necessity of cooperation to combat it. He rejected linking terrorism with Islam or Muslims. He underlined resistance to foreign occupation as a legitimate act. A number of heads of delegation took the floor. Their statements focused on terrorism, the importance of defining it, and specifying its concept; they also stressed that support should be given to the Palestinian people in its just struggle. The Conference unanimously adopted the

‘Kuala Lumpur Declaration on International Terrorism’ as well as the ‘Statement on the Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories’.

Twenty-Ninth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

In response to the invitation by the Government of Sudan, the Twenty-ninth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Session of Solidarity and Dialogue) was convened in Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan, on 25-27 June 2002. President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan, asserted, “Today's world is different, that the new challenges are multifarious, and that the countries of the world, including the major industrial countries, have now realized that they can no longer face those challenges.” He stressed, “Enormous responsibility that the Conference had assumed in working to restore the balance in the shaken international relations and declared that the Islamic world with its glorious civilization, positive values, abundant resources, strategic location, and capacity for giving and contributions to all aspects of human advancement cannot be ignored or disregarded, let alone wiped out in what is referred to as the clash of civilizations.” In the light of the valuable statements and constructive discussions between the ministers and heads of delegations at both Plenary and Committee levels, the Conference adopted a number of resolutions aimed at strengthening Islamic solidarity, preparing the Islamic *Ummah* to meet contemporary challenges, achieving the aspirations of Muslim communities, and preserving the fundamental religious and cultural values of Islam.

Second Extraordinary Summit:

The Second Extraordinary Summit of the OIC was held at a five-star hotel in Doha, Qatar, on 4-5 March 2003. The emergency summit was convened to discuss the Iraqi crisis and the threat of a US-led military campaign against Baghdad. The summit underscored the need for hectic diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis. The gathering of the 57-members was called by the organization’s Chairman, the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, in the hope of raising a unified voice from the Islamic world against war with Iraq.

Thirtieth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the 30th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Session of Unity and Dignity) was held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran on from 28 to 30 May 2003. Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, delivered a speech and said that “our world today, notwithstanding its great achievements, is a world of fright and conflicts; it lives in fear of violence, discrimination, terrorism, poverty, insecurity and war; we therefore need the might of Islam as a religion of knowledge and a path of morality to deliver the world from the current frightful situation”. He stressed the importance of alliance for world peace based on justice, instead of conflicts and wars. He pointed out that a significant part of human and economic resources is to be found in Islamic countries. Similarly, the Islamic world controls important and strategic waterways, which could enable the Muslims to constitute an effective force in our contemporary world. On this basis, the OIC provides an appropriate framework for coordination and enhancement of cooperation among all Islamic countries. The Organization can play an effective role, commensurate with the new responsibilities facing it. The Conference adopted a number of resolutions regarding Islamic solidarity, contemporary challenges, the aspirations of Muslim communities, the fundamental religious and cultural values of Islam etc.

10th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference:

The Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference was held in Putrajaya, Malaysia from 16 to 17 October 2003 amid substantial international attention. The official theme for the 10th Islamic Summit was “Knowledge and Morality for the Progress of the *Ummah*”. The theme was chosen to show the importance of knowledge in the development of the *Ummah*. The Summit was held at the new Putrajaya Convention Centre. The Conference was attended by delegations representing all member states, observer states, international and regional organizations, as well as OIC affiliated and specialized organs. The Conference was also attended by a number of Islamic associations, institutions and groups, and numerous guests and personalities interested in the activities of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, delivered a comprehensive opening speech. He observed, “Muslim leaders should not enjoy power for themselves but should

make use of it judiciously, prudently and concertedly for our people, the *Ummah* and Islam.” On the last day of the summit, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami expressed similar views, calling for the OIC members to practice democratic principles.

The Summit Conference adopted a number of resolutions in the fields of political, information, legal and Muslim minority affairs, economic affairs, cultural and social affairs, organisational matters, and financial and administrative affairs. The leaders of the 57-member organization agreed that there was a need to increase intra-OIC trade and investment, exchange expertise and share experience in various fields. The Putrajaya Declaration also calls for special attention to be given to science and technology, information and communication technologies in the Islamic world. It calls for greater trade and economic cooperation within the OIC along with movement towards adopting the Malaysian initiative on a gold-based trade payment system. The declaration fully adheres to the summit’s theme of “Knowledge and Morality for the Unity, Dignity and Progress of the *Ummah*.” The OIC attached utmost importance to the cause of Palestine and Al Quds Sharif. The OIC resolutions condemned Israeli military occupation of Palestinian lands and threats against Syria and Lebanon. The Summit also took resolutions on Iraq’s sovereignty, political independence, national unity and territorial integrity. It stressed the right of the Iraqi people. The Conference commended the efforts made by the Transitional Government of Afghanistan to restore state power and rehabilitate state institutions. Aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, Lockerbie crisis, Road Map Peace Plan, Somalia Crisis, Jammu and Kashmir issue, issue of Muslim Turkish Community in Cyprus, Republic of the Philippines, Sudan’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, the civil war in Sierra Leone were also given priority.

Thirty-First Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Turkey, the 31st Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers entitled “Session of Progress and Global Harmony” was held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, from 14 to 16 June 2004. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey inaugurated the Conference. The Session adopted numerous resolutions emphasizing the issues regarding Palestinian,

Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkish Cypriot people etc. Prof Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu was elected as the 9th Secretary General of the OIC by the Conference.

Thirty-Second Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Yemen, the Thirty-Second Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Integration and Development) was held in Sana, Republic of Yemen, on 28-30 June 2005. The inaugural session was addressed by Hamid Alber, Foreign Minister of Malaysia. He stressed the need for the Islamic World to constitute a prominent economic power in the international arena. Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary-General of the OIC addressed the most important issues of the Islamic *Ummah* and focused on the necessity of reforming the OIC to enable it to tackle such issues. He proposed finding a new name for the organization that would reflect its reality. The meeting called for a Muslim permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The Conference adopted the Palestinian cause high in its agenda. It adopted some other resolutions on economical affairs as well as on its other regular routine-wise agenda. The Conference granted the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC) as an affiliated institution of the OIC.⁸²

Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference:

In response to the invitation addressed from the King Abdullah Ibn Abdulaziz, the Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference was held in Makkah on 7-8 December 2005. The Conference decided to adopt the Makkah Declaration, the Eminent Persons' Report and the Ten-Year Programme of Action to meet the challenges facing the *Ummah* in the 21st Century. The Ten-Year Program of Action envisaged joint action of member states, promotion of tolerance and moderation, modernization, extensive reforms in all spheres of activities including science and technology, education, trade enhancement, and emphasizes good governance and promotion of human rights in the Muslim world, especially with regard to rights of children, women and elderly and the family values enshrined by Islam.⁸³ The Conference stressed the importance of the question of Palestine as the central cause of the Muslim *Ummah*. It stressed on dialogue among civilizations. The Summit welcomed the Arab Initiative for National Accord among the Iraqi parties, and hoped that the forthcoming legislative elections would lead to a constitutional Iraqi

government so as to safeguard the country's unity and territorial integrity. It extended its support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their inalienable right to self-determination in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. It expressed its firm determination to act in solidarity with the Muslim Turkish Cypriot people and their rightful cause, through supporting the efforts within the UN framework.

The Summit Conference welcomed the comprehensive peace agreement in Sudan. It reiterated its support for the Somali Government in its efforts to restore security and achieve reconstruction. It also reiterated its condemnation of the continued Armenian aggression against the sovereignty of Azerbaijan and its territorial integrity and called for complete and unconditional withdrawal from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The Conference emphasized the importance of promoting cooperation and dialogue with non-OIC member states. It stressed the need for the media in the Muslim world to project the true and bright image of Islam and to effectively deal with international media to attain this objective. The Conference stressed the need to achieve a considerable increase in intra-OIC trade. The Conference underlined the importance of cooperation in the fields of poverty alleviation, capacity building, elimination of illiteracy, and eradication of diseases and epidemics such as AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis and the need to mobilize the necessary resources to this end by establishing a special fund within the IDB.

Thirty-Third Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Thirty-Third Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers was held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, on 19-21 June 2006. This was the first time that an annual session of the Council of Foreign Ministers took place in a country which until 1990 was integrated with the former Soviet Union. The theme of the session titled "Harmonization of Rights, Freedoms and Justice". It reiterated its adherence to the noble ideas of peace, humanism, and tolerance to aptly respond to the challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. After considering the reports of the Secretary-General and in light of the brilliant statements made and the constructive discussions that took place among the Ministers and Heads of Delegation, the Conference adopted a number of resolutions. The Conference reiterated that the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif is the central cause of

the Islamic World and stressed the necessity of countering the perils of judaization. It condemned the Israeli measures imposed at the crossings in Gaza Strip. The Conference strongly affirmed its respect for Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national unity. It expressed its firm support for the just cause of the Muslim Turkish Cypriots. It reiterated its determination to restore and preserve Somalia's unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. The Conference reaffirmed its support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their legitimate right to self-determination. The Conference welcomed the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and expressed its support for the presidential elections which were held in October 2004 and September 2005. The Conference emphasized its full solidarity with Sudan in firmly establishing the foundations of peace and stability all over the country, to achieve national reconciliation, and to defend its sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity. The Conference reaffirmed that the security of any Muslim country concerns all Muslim countries. It reiterated its condemnation of the continuing aggression by the Republic of Armenia against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Extraordinary Expanded Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Executive Committee:

Between Thirty-Third and Thirty-Fourth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers two Extraordinary Expanded Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Executive Committee were held, both dealt with the happenings of Palestine; the first one on Israeli massacre on the Beit Hanoun and the second one on the Israeli aggressions against al Aqsa mosque. The Extraordinary Expanded Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Executive Committee of OIC meeting held on November 2006 at the Headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, condemned Israel for perpetrating the Beit Hanoun Massacre and its persistent crimes against the Palestinian people as war crimes and crimes against humanity. It strongly called for the responsible Israeli officials to be prosecuted as war criminals and urged the member states and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and private financial institutions to reconstruct the destruction caused to Beit Hanun and the northern Gaza Strip by the Israeli aggression. It also called for the convening of an International Peace Conference in the Middle East aimed at finding a just and comprehensive solution to the conflict in the region. The other Expanded Extraordinary Meeting of

the Executive Committee also held in Jeddah, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on 22 February 2007, expressed its grave concern over the escalating Israeli aggression against the holy sites in Al Quds Al Sharif, and particularly in the immediate vicinity of the Holy Aqsa Mosque and affirmed that Al Quds Al Sharif is an integral part of the Palestinian territories.

Thirty-Fourth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Session of Peace, Progress and Harmony), held in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, from 15-17 May 2007. The Conference listened to the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, who delivered an inspiring inaugural address. The President noted that the 34th ICFM was taking place at a defining moment and a period of profound transition in world affairs. The Islamic world faced many challenges, internally and externally. It was imperative to address the vulnerabilities and weaknesses of the *Ummah* and work collectively to change its descendent course with an ascendant course. He stressed on the resources of the OIC member states to be effectively utilized to realize the full potential of the *Ummah*. President Musharraf emphasized that the OIC must have a conflict resolution mechanism. The President also underscored the importance of fighting misperceptions about Islam, both within the Muslim world and outside. He stressed that the OIC must play a central role in the emancipation of Muslim *Ummah*. Addressing the opening session, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary-General of the OIC reviewed the actions, efforts and initiatives undertaken by the General Secretariat in the major political issues, in the field of information and the media and in economic and cultural field. After considering the reports of the Secretary-General and in light of the brilliant statements made and the constructive discussions that took place among the ministers and heads of delegation, the Conference adopted a number of resolutions.

Extraordinary Expanded Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Executive Committee:

The Expanded Extraordinary Meeting of the OIC Executive Committee at the level of foreign ministers on the latest developments in Palestine in particular the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip was held in the Headquarters of the General Secretariat of

the OIC, Jeddah, Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia on 3 February 2008. The meeting reaffirmed its support to the just struggle of the Palestinians and the establishment of their independent State of Palestine with Al-Quds as its capital. It condemned Israel for its despicable aggression on the Palestinian people and called upon the international community to act swiftly and provide immediate protection for the Palestinian citizens in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Eleventh Session of the Islamic Summit Conference:

In response to the invitation of Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal, the Eleventh Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, was convened in Dakar, capital of the Republic of Senegal, from 13 to 14 March 2008. The theme of the Summit was titled “Islam in the 21st Century”, was significant due to the contemporary events and challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* including the issue of Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Somalia, and Darfur. Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal and the Chairman of the Eleventh Islamic Summit Conference, delivered a speech in which he affirmed that this Summit was not just Senegal’s Summit but also Africa’s Summit. He emphasized that the rekindling of the Muslim *Ummah* in the 21st Century would be achieved through a revitalized Organization, endowed with institutional capacities and human and financial resources commensurate with our ambitions. He stressed that the process of the review of the OIC Charter satisfied this requirement and that it was only through this urgent reform that the Organization would meet the aspirations of the *Ummah*. In his general report on major activities of the Organization, Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary-General of the OIC, highlighted the work achieved during the last few years to implement the reforms based on the concept of a new work ethic, and on new perspectives, goals, and vision. He emphasized that ignorance about Islam and also premeditated and historically entrenched animosity on the part of a minority in the West, as well as the failure to disseminate the true values of Islam are the reasons lying behind the increasing wave of Islamophobia.

The Dakar Declaration pledged to reserve world peace and security, face the challenges of Muslim *Ummah* and ensure development of the member countries. The Summit specially focused on the implementation of its 10-year programme of action and adoption of a revised OIC charter.⁸⁴ The new charter aimed at reforming the body

and speeding up its decision making. The OIC leaders had been debating for a several years a new charter to modernize it and this need was fulfilled by adopting a new charter. The revised charter allowed initiative to encourage solidarity between the organization's wealthy oil powers and African members who were among the world's poorest nations.⁸⁵ The new charter sought to soften the sometimes austere image of the OIC which has launched a campaign against Islamophobia in the West. The issue of Islamophobia had high precedence on the agenda whereupon the first report on Islamophobia by the OIC Islamophobia Observatory was released. Another salient priority is the Special Development Programme for Africa and raising intra-OIC trade among the member states from 13% to 20% by 2015 in accordance with the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action. The Organization of the Islamic Conference has added its voice to the clarion call of women by joining the International Community to observe March 8, 2008, the International Day of Women. It also adopted the agenda regarding the economic cooperation and knowledge sharing among member states. The Summit set up an Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development within the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). The declaration strongly condemned all forms of extremism and dogmatism which are incompatible with Islam. It said terrorism is a global phenomenon that is not related to any religion, race colour and country.

Thirty-Fifth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Uganda, the 35th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Prosperity and Development), attended by 53 Member States, was held in Kampala, Republic of Uganda, from 18-20 June 2008. The Meeting was addressed by the President of the Republic of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. In his statement, the President emphasized the need for unity, dialogue and peaceful coexistence. He referred to the huge resources and potentials available in the OIC member states and stressed the importance to enhance intra-OIC cooperation by facilitating trade and investment. He insisted that what developing countries needed was "trade and not aid". Addressing the opening session, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary-General of the OIC condemned the Israeli illegal practices in the occupied Palestinian territories, and stressed that these practices constitute a flagrant violation to the international law while meeting with total silence by the international community. He also reiterated the OIC support to the Palestinian inalienable national rights. He stated that the reform of the OIC has by then taken

roots by the adoption of the Charter which has heralded a new dawn in the Organization. Therefore, he appealed to member states to urgently sign the Charter. He further spoke of the rising profile of the Organization and pointed out that the Organization has emerged as an indispensable international player. Elaborating on the need to strengthen intra-OIC cooperation, he identified the Ten-Year Program of Action (TYPOA) as a key framework for achieving sustainable economic and social development. He strongly emphasized the commitment of the OIC in addressing poverty alleviation, food security and agricultural development in its member states, and also for combating the issue of defamation of Islam and the scourge of Islamophobia. Guided by the Final Communiqué of the 11th Summit held in March 2008 in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, a wide range of issues of interest to member states were discussed including the situation in Kosovo.

The Council adopted various resolutions, *inter alia*, in the areas of the cause of Palestine, the City of Al-Quds Al Sharif and the Arab –Israeli conflict; the Occupied Syrian Golan, solidarity with Lebanon, implementation of the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action, situation in Iraq, Jammu and Kashmir Dispute, peace process between India and Pakistan, situation in Somalia, solidarity with the Republic of The Sudan, situation in Cyprus, aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, situation in Afghanistan, situation in Cote D'Ivoire, assistance to the union of Comoros, combating international terrorism, combating Islamophobia and raising awareness of its implications on global peace and security, rejection of the unilateral US sanctions imposed on the Syrian Arab Republic, imposition of unilateral economic sanctions on member states, negative impact of economic and financial sanctions on the full enjoyment of human rights by people of the targeted country, right of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to reparation for the losses caused by the 1986 American military aggression, lifting of sanctions against the Great Socialist People's of Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, United Nations reform, disarmament issues, cooperation by the Islamic Republic of Iran with IAEA, security and solidarity among member states, situation at the border between Djibouti and Eritrea et cetera.

Thirty-Sixth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the 36th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Enhancing Islamic Solidarity), was held

in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, from 23 to 25 May 2009. The Meeting was addressed by the President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Bashar al-Assad. Addressing the opening session, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the OIC Secretary-General, highlighted the major issues and activities of the OIC during the last year. A wide range of issues of interest to Member States were discussed and resolutions were adopted by the Council related to the cause of Palestine and the Middle East; Political affairs; Ten-Year Program of Action (TYPOA); statutory, organic and general matters; legal affairs; conditions of Muslim minorities and communities in Non-OIC member states; information affairs; celebration of the 40th anniversary of the OIC; administrative and financial affairs; and humanitarian affairs. The conference figured high on its work agenda the developments in Somalia, the unraveling of developments in Sudan and combating Islamophobia and the fight against the defamation of Islam. The issues of the Muslim communities and minorities in non-OIC countries, such as Muslims in Philippines, Turkish Muslim minority in Western Thrace in Greece and Muslim groups in Myanmar as well as southern Thailand also came under the spotlight in the meeting. The OIC Computer Emergency Response Team (OIC-CERT) was granted the affiliated status institution of OIC by the Conference.⁸⁶

Thirty-seventh session of the Council Of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, the 37th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Shared Vision of a More Secure and Prosperous Islamic World), was held in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan, from 18-20 May 2010. The Meeting was addressed by Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan. Addressing the inaugural session he said the OIC could play a significant role in ensuring peace and stability in the Islamic world. The session was of special importance as it took place for the first time in Central Asia. Addressing the opening session, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, highlighted the major issues and activities of the OIC during the last year. A wide range of issues of interest to member states were discussed and resolutions were adopted by the Council related to the cause of Palestine and the Middle East; political affairs; Ten-Year Programme of Action; statutory, organic and general matters; legal affairs; conditions of Muslim minorities and communities in non-OIC member states; information affairs; administrative and

financial affairs; and humanitarian affairs. The session condemned Israel's persisting occupation of the Syrian Golan and Lebanese territories. It condemned the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. It adopted resolutions in the political field expressing full solidarity with Somalia, Iraq, The Sudan, Yemen, the Comoros, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Djibouti, Jammu and Kashmir, the Turkish Cypriot State and the Kosovo people. The meeting reiterated the fundamental principle of free movement of goods, persons, services, energy resources and capital and preventing technical barriers on the OIC Member States, which may positively contribute in fighting global crises and achieving sustainable development. The session declared the year 2012 as the "International Year of Water Diplomacy", in order to undertake further coordinated efforts on better use of water resources at the national, regional and international levels. It condemned the mounting trend of Islamophobia and systematic discrimination against Muslims. Between the 37th and 38th CFM the OIC established another affiliated institution named the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC).⁸⁷

Thirty-eighth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers:

The Thirty-eighth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Peace, Cooperation and Development) of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (formerly Organization of the Islamic Conference) was held on 28-30 June 2011 in Astana, capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan, at the invitation of Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In his opening remarks, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Chairman of the 38th CFM session H. E Mr. Yerzhan Kazykhanov noted the negative implications of conflicts, extremism and terrorism to the stability of the member states and suggested a more proactive OIC role in the fields of mediation and conflict prevention. He underlined the need for good governance, rule of law, human rights, and democracy. He called for the raising of the OIC visibility through the opening of more liaison offices across the world. The OIC Secretary General referred to the Ten Year Program of Action in the fields of democracy, human rights, good governance, solidarity and joint Islamic Action. He further pointed out the importance of boosting intra-OIC cooperation as well as strengthening the OIC mechanisms for conflict resolution. The Conference highlighted the need for political stability, good governance, youth employment and

economic reform in the member states; poverty alleviation; human rights, rule of law, strengthening the role of the OIC in conflict resolution, conflict prevention and post-conflict peace building; the full implementation of the provisions of the OIC Charter and the Ten Year Program of Action to meet the challenges facing the Muslim world; Joint Islamic Action and intra-OIC trade, economic cooperation, promotion of investment and partnerships by implementing high impact joint projects in the member states as well as regional integration; the need to share knowledge, experiences and best practices in the fields of research and development; the importance for cooperation to combat extremism and terrorism; the need to show more solidarity with the Palestinian cause and so on. The opening session of the Conference witnessed the consensus of member states to change the Logo of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and its nomenclature to become the ORGANIZATION FOR ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC).⁸⁸ The new resolution reflected a qualitative shift in the performance of the Organization and enormous enhancement of its effectiveness as an international Organization active in diverse areas of politics, economy, culture and society. The Conference approved the Association of Tax Authorities of Islamic Countries (ATAIC) as an affiliate status to the OIC.⁸⁹

Fourth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference:

The Fourth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference was held in Makkah from 14 to 15 August 2012 at invitation from the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz. The theme of the session was titled “Promotion of Islamic Solidarity”. The Summit Conference was inaugurated by King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud. The Conference was convened with a view to strengthening Islamic solidarity. The Conference welcomed the results of the implementation of the Ten-Year Programme of Action (TYPOA), adopted by the Extraordinary Summit Conference of Makkah in 2005, which was based on the principles of moderation, modernization and solidarity in action, particularly the adoption of a new Charter and name for the Organization, the establishment of the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission, the Women Development Organization, the Humanitarian Affairs Department (ICHAD) in the General Secretariat, and Science, the Technology and Innovation Organization (STIO). The Conference called on Member States to intensify their participation in the implementation of the TYPOA and to enhance their cooperation within the

framework of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation by signing and ratifying the multilateral agreements and treaties concluded within the OIC framework, with a view to putting them into effect. The Conference underscored OIC's pivotal role in promoting Islamic solidarity, in accordance with the Organization's Charter and Ten-Year Programme of Action.

Thirty-ninth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers:

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Djibouti, the 39th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Solidarity for Sustainable Development), was held in Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti, from 15-17 November 2012. The Meeting was addressed by Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti. Addressing the opening session, H.E. Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the OIC, reviewed the situation in the Muslim world and highlighted the major activities and challenges facing the OIC. He said, "In the midst of the current global upheaval, the Muslim world is going through the most testing moment in its modern history since the end of World War I. It is going through decisive and critical changes, with successive developments in some of its states." A wide range of issues of interest to member states were discussed by the Council leading to the adoption of resolutions on various issues, including the cause of, Palestine and the Middle East; political affairs; Ten-Year Programme of Action; statutory, organic and general matters; legal affairs; conditions of Muslim minorities and communities in non-OIC member states; information affairs; administrative and financial affairs; humanitarian affairs; economic, science and technology, cultural, social, and family affairs. The Council unanimously adopted the "Djibouti Declaration" which addressed major issues affecting the Muslim world.

The Council issued a special Communiqué in which it strongly condemned the dangerous Israeli escalation against Gaza which caused the death and wounding of tens of Palestinian in the Gaza strip. The Council considered this barbaric aggression a continuation of the on-going savage and devastating war waged by the Zionist occupation against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip since 2008. The Council commended the OIC Islamophobia Observatory for its Annual Report on Islamophobia and urged the member states to support the Observatory in its efforts to combat the phenomenon of Islamophobia. The delegates unanimously adopted the

resolution on the basis of the Concept Paper that included inter-alia, the establishment of the Group of eminent scholars and human rights experts to draw up an effective strategy to address malaise of Islamophobia. The Council reiterated its support to the Republic of Guinea for its offer to convene the 40th Session of the CFM. It welcomed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's nomination of Minister Iyad Bin Amin Madani to the post of Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and urged all Member States to extend the needed support to this nomination; particularly in these critical circumstances the Islamic world was going Minister. The Council decided to appoint the candidate of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Iyad Bin Ameen Madani as Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation for 5 years with effect from 1 January 2014, in accordance with the Final Communiqué of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers held in Kampala, Uganda in 2008.

Twelfth session of The Islamic Summit Conference:

At the invitation of Dr. Mohamed Morsy, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the twelfth session of the Islamic Summit Conference was held in Cairo, Egypt, on 6 and 7 February 2013. The Summit was convened with a view to jointly reviewing the international situation in the political, economic and social fields with the aim of analyzing the impact on the Muslim *Ummah* under the overall theme "The Muslim World: New Challenges & Expanding Opportunities". It took place after being postponed twice due to the ongoing turmoil in the West Asian region. The 12th Session of the Islamic Summit carried a special and exceptional character in light of the epoch-making developments in the Muslim world and the very venue where it is held. Egypt, the country that hosted the Islamic Summit for the first time ever, was going through an historical change. The Cairo summit was significant as it came in the wake of growing challenges facing the Muslim world. The OIC summit in Cairo came following Arab Spring revolutions and at the peak of Syrian crisis.

Dr. Morsy in his welcome note reminded Egypt's contribution to OIC and the Muslim *Ummah* and stressed on the common visions and stances, the coordinative and joint efforts to face the crises and variety of fundamental challenges that the Muslim world is facing day by day. He called upon state members to reach consensus, protect minorities and improve Islam's image in the world. Addressing the member states, Morsy said that the challenges ahead would necessitate improving the image of Islam

in the West and dealing with Islamophobia, which threatened Muslim minorities abroad. Morsi also stressed the importance of promoting a moderate version of Islam in light of a rising tide of fanaticism. He pointed to numerous attempts to tarnish the image of Islam around the world, saying it was the responsibility of OIC member-states to rectify wrong impressions. Morsy also noted the economic stagnation currently facing the Muslim world. OIC Secretary General Ehsan Ughlo also gave a speech in which he stressed that the revolutions of the Arab Spring tended to turn the Islamic nations to a new era of enlightenment.

The subjects of discussion included the challenges faced by the Muslim world, the Syrian crisis, the Palestinian issue, humanitarian situations in Muslim world, the persecution of the Rohingya community in Myanmar, countering Islamophobia, the ongoing chaos in Mali, and cooperation in economic, scientific, technological, cultural and information affairs. Islamophobia is a contemporary form of racism and discrimination and it figured high on the agenda of the Cairo summit.⁹⁰ The Summit denounced atrocities against Rohingya Muslim community and urged to provide humanitarian assistance and support to Rohingya.⁹¹ Syria conflict was also an important issue of discussion which divided the OIC summit.⁹² Morsy's address to the summit urged Syria's fractious opposition to unite, while warning Assad's regime to "draw lessons from history" and listen to its people's demands. The 57-member Islamic body endeavored to evolve a dialogue format to resolve the crisis. Despite differences among members on sectarian lines, the summit, posed a common front in urging the Syrian government and opposition to engage in serious dialogue for the resolution of the conflict.⁹³ Mali issue dominated the Summit's agenda. The Summit adopted resolutions in this regard reiterating its support for the safe-guarding of the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Mali.⁹⁴

The Palestine issue has become a common agendum of the OIC Summits and the Councils of Foreign Ministers since its creation. In fact, OIC had been created to protect the Palestinian Arabs and holy places of Jerusalem. The whole *Ummah* in general and a large number of Arab and Middle Eastern countries in particular are involved with the crisis. Numerous resolutions have been adopted on the issue in different sessions of the OIC. The 12th Summit took the issue as an important agendum and adopted resolutions as before.⁹⁵ The Summit decided to convene the

13th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference in 2016 in the Republic of Turkey at a date to be determined in coordination with the OIC General Secretariat, and welcomed the offer by the Republic of Gambia to host the 14th Summit. It further welcomed the offer of the Republic of Indonesia to host future session of the Islamic Summit Conference.

To conclude, it may be held that the Organization of Islamic Conference is the product of the idea of Islamic unity and brotherhood that was practically expressed in different ways in different places and at different times. The emergence of the idea was resumed at the end of nineteenth century in the form of Pan-Islamism under some specific internal and external circumstances. The idea started to get concretized in accordance with the requirements of the Muslim world at different times in the 20th century. After the World War I the idea was expressed in the form of calls for an International Islamic Conference. It gained momentum after the World War II with the emergence of new independent Muslim states. During this period several Muslim states undertook different initiatives from time to time for the unity of the Muslim *Ummah* and to bring the Muslims under a common platform for their interests. All these initiatives though had little success due to internal and ideological variances among the Muslim *Ummah* acted as the goading force of OIC. On the eve of Rabat Summit Conference these variances had almost disappeared and a conducive politico-diplomatic environment prevailed in the Muslim World. In such an environment arson in al-Aqsa had proved to be of historic significance to the Muslims which helped them to come closer once again firmly than before. The Rabat Summit Conference and finally the forming of the Organization of Islamic Conference in 1969 thus marked the culmination of the process of unifying the Muslim *Ummah* under a common platform that had actually originated from the idea of Pan-Islamism.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation is the collective voice of the Muslim world 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. The Organization was established upon a decision of the historical summit which took place in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco in 1969 as a result of criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem. The OIC got institutional shape after establishing a permanent secretariat in Jeddah headed by the organization's secretary general in the

first meeting of ICFM held in Jeddah in 1970.⁹⁶ With the passage of time the Organization of Islamic Conference gained greater strength. The years between Lahore and Taif Summits can be rightly called the time of consolidation for the Organization. The OIC confronted difficulties in the initial years of its existence on account of mutual mistrust among the member states, lack of enthusiasm, on their part towards the organization, difficulties of finance and lack of other infrastructural facilities necessary for its day-to-day functioning. It has been able to maintain regularity in organizing foreign ministers' conferences on an annual basis. As against the initial deficiency of finance, now, the conference had enough funds at its disposal, coming mainly from the oil-rich Muslim states, particularly from Saudi Arabia. The political and ideological cleavages among the Muslim countries in its initial years that had marred the effective functioning of the OIC were finally played down.

From the end of the 1970s and the 1980s the Muslim world was confronted with three major challenges namely by the Camp David Peace Accord, Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the outbreak of Iran-Iraq War. The Camp David Accord was condemned, Egypt's membership was suspended and the OIC pledged to wage war for the liberation of Jerusalem and other occupied Arab territories. It decided to continue its peace mission despite of the Iranian refusal to participate in the summit conference. It also condemned the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in spite of the opposition of some of its Arab members and authorized Pakistan and Iran to initiate efforts to find out a peaceful solution of the problem. But it failed to effectively resolve these problems through its own institutional arrangements. Its failure definitely has undermined its reputation as a viable organization. The decade of 1990's witnessed the breakdown of USSR and the emergence of six new Muslim states in Central Asia which later confirmed their membership in the OIC. A number of resolutions were adopted on Palestine, Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Syrian Golan, Lebanon, Albania, Chechnya, the Gulf War, Kashmir, Southern Philippines and some other issues.

In the 21st century the *Ummah* witnessed several political, religious and economic challenges that needed specific reforms to confront the challenges. Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the 9th Secretary General of the OIC who assumed the office in January 2005 after being elected by the 31st ICFM, has played vital role in

reinforcing the OIC through a large scale of reforms and activities to face the challenges of Muslim *Ummah* in the 21st century. The new charter of OIC adopted in 2008 by the Eleventh Islamic Summit held in Dakar was an important decision to bring in tune OIC to the needs of the present times and to tackle the crises facing the Muslim world day by day. The change of the name and emblem of OIC were also realistic decisions in strengthening the solidarity and cooperation among the member states. In safeguarding the true values of Islam and the Muslims, the organization has taken various steps to remove misperceptions and have strongly advocated elimination of discrimination against the Muslims in all forms and manifestations. It has remarkable role in combating Islamophobia. The Ten-Year Program of Action led the OIC to a practical and progressive way in resolving the problems of the *Ummah*.

Over the last 44 years, the membership has grown from its founding members of 25 to 57 states. The Organization has the singular honor to galvanize the *Ummah* into a unified body and have actively represented the Muslims by espousing all causes close to the hearts of over 1.5 billion Muslims of the world. The Organization has consultative and cooperative relations with the UN and other inter-governmental organizations to protect the vital interests of the Muslims and to work for the settlement of conflicts and disputes involving Member States. In order to coordinate and boost its action among member states, the Organization has created different subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated institutions, standing committees, nearly all, at ministerial level, a number of which are chaired by Heads of State.⁹⁷ Such types of secondary organs and institutions have been steadily increasing and cover various areas of cultural, scientific, economic, legal, financial, sports, technological, educational, media, as well as vocational, social and humanitarian and so on. The Organization is composed of the Islamic Summit, the Council of Foreign Ministers and some other conferences on agriculture, information, culture, tourism et cetera at ministerial and heads of state level. The OIC annual conferences have become routine affairs.⁹⁸

Although the OIC is supposed to involve itself with problems concerning the Islamic world, the focus is given to the Arab problems. The question of Palestine and the Middle East figures regularly. On this ground, OIC is sometimes considered an organization to protect the Arab cause. Sometimes it is neglected considering it as a

paper organization. It is somewhat true in its political arena. But, it has steadily grown in size through its activities in the economic, religious, scientific and technological, social and humanitarian and some other broader aspects. In this respect, the OIC has become a multi-purposeful inter-governmental organization of the Islamic Ummah. It is said that generally the OIC agenda is long in subjects but short in substance. Its activities are confined within adopting resolutions. One of the drawbacks of the OIC is that it has no armed force of its own. This can be identified as one of the main hurdles in the implementation of its decisions. On the basis of OIC's entire activities particularly the recent progressive activities, the OIC should not be considered merely a paper organization.

Notes and References:

1. Internally the Ottoman Khilafat failed to fulfill the demands of people. The religion based Khilafat was back-dated and could not meet the demand of time. Under this condition the Turkish Sultans took different initiatives time to time to reform Turkey on Western lines and all of these failed due to some internal and external reasons. On the other hand, externally Turkey in this period was regarded as 'The sick man of Europe' and thus became an orbit of intrigue of European powers. The Eastern Question and subsequent events resulted in the dismemberment of Turkey which led to the emergence of several independent, autonomous and protectorate states. Turkey was finally confined only in the mainland of Turkey e.g., Anatolia and Constantinople.
2. After the defeat of Ottoman Turkey in the First World War the Allied forces conquered Constantinople and some other regions of the mainland of Turkey. Turkish Khalifah became a puppet of the victorious powers. The Turkish people under the leadership of Mustafa Kamal Pasha (1881-1938) strove to liberate the mainland of Turkey. He made a parallel government along with the Khalifah. Under his leadership the Nationalist force won victory over the Greeks and he and his government gained a huge popularity of the people of Turkey. In sequence of time The Turkish Grand National Assembly took away the temporal power of the Khalifah by abolishing the title of Sultan by a law passed on 1 November 1922. The next year Mustafa Kamal Pasha founded the modern state of Turkish Republic on secular and nationalist lines on 29 October 1923. He became its first President. The Assembly passed another law on 3 March 1924 which even abolished the symbolic Khilafat itself. This was in fact a logical step in the sequence of historical events. It occasioned surprisingly little protest or reaction. For details see, Stanford J. Shaw and Ezil Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Vol. II, London, pp. 265-269
3. For full text of the declaration, see Appendix III in Arnold T. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1927, pp. 576-78
4. *Ibid.* p. 81
5. *Ibid.* p. 83
6. There is little knowledge about this person. It is known that for some years he had worked as Vice Principal and Professor of Mathematics and Science at the Islamic College, Peshawar.
7. *Ibid.* pp. 308-19
8. They included delegates from many Islamic countries as well as an official delegate representing Muslims of the USSR and delegates from various other authoritative Muslim bodies and associations in other countries.

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9. See Appendix-I
 10. H.A. R. Gibb, 'The Islamic Congress at Jerusalem 1931', *Survey of International Affairs*, Oxford, 1934, p. 99
 11. *Ibid.* p. 101
 12. *Ibid.* p. 102
 13. Islam played the role as a vital driving force in the freedom movements within the Muslim countries, as in Indonesia, Afghanistan, Sudan, Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Central West Africa. Even the freedom struggles would have been quite difficult without the involvement of "militant" Islamic movements along with the peaceful Islamic movements. See, G. H. Jansen, *Militant Islam*, London, 1980, pp. 95-96
 14. Majid Khadduri, 'Islamic Theory of International Relations', Harris Proctor (Ed.), *Islam and International Relations*, London, 1965, p. 36
 15. After that also some conferences were held, e.g., one in Syria, in 1951, and another in Iran in 1954. Even though it was recognized as an associate by the UN, its initial enthusiasm died very soon.
 16. See the Charter of the Islamic Congress, Annexure No.1 in Nihad Chadri, *The Great Challenge*, Beirut, pp. 194-200
 17. For a detailed account of the Conference, see A. B. M. Haleem, 'The Baghdad World Muslim Conference', *Pakistan Horizon*, Karachi, vol. 15, no. 3, 1963
 18. *Dawn*, 26 April, 1969
 19. *Op. cit.* 8 January, 1969
 20. In the post-World War II period, certain events in the region seriously challenged the security and stability of the Saudi regime, e.g. the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, the military coup in Syria in December 1949, internal unrest in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Iraq and the revolution of Egypt. Simultaneously the Cold War (1945-91) had great influence on the Middle Eastern politics and had clearly made two blocs there as in other parts of the world. The Baghdad Pact, the formation of United Arab Republic (UAR) between Egypt and Syria and in response to it the formation of United Arab Federation between Iraq and Jordan and other subsequent events were also a matter of thinking for Saudi Arabia. See Noor Ahmad Baba, *op.cit.* p. 39
 21. P. J. Vatikiotis, *Arab and Regional Politics in the Middle East*, New York, 1984, p. 198
 22. Faisal bin Abdul Aziz had a very long experience in diplomacy and foreign affairs. He had been making official visits since 1919 (when he was only 13) in various Western, European and Arab countries as his father's representative. In 1932, he was made as Foreign Minister and later in 1962 as Prime Minister. In 1964, the Saudi Council of Ulema in concurrence with and on the recommendation of the members of the *Ala-i-Saud*

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- (the house of Saud) decided to depose King Saud bin Abdul Aziz and instal Faisal bin Abdul Aziz as the King of Saudi Arabia. See Malcolm H. Karr, 'Regional Arab Politics and the Conflict with Israel', Paul Y. Hammond and Sydney S. Alexander (ed.), *Political Dynamics in the Middle East*, New York, 1972, p. 49
23. Refuting the call for Pan-Arabism he asserted that "those who disavow Islam and distort its call under the guise of nationalism are actually the most bitter enemies of the Arabs, whose glories are entwined with the glories of Islam". See 'Islam against nationalism', *The Economist*, 2 June 1962, p. 903
 24. Peter Mansfield, *The Arabs*, London, 1976, p. 402
 25. The Alexandria Summit in September 1964 attempted to end war in Yemen and bringing about reconciliation between President Nasser and King Faisal. The Casablanca Arab meeting of September 1965 agreed to sign an Arab Solidarity Pact.
 26. Saudi Arabia was gaining economic solvency during the period of King Faisal due to its rapidly increasing oil revenues. It began to emerge as a financial giant as a result of the discovery of enormous oil reserves, increasing of oil production and accruing revenues from its export. In 1966, Saudi Arabia also emerged as a country having the largest discovered oil reserves in the world. See *Middle East and North Africa*, 1975-76, p. 89
 27. Hasan Moinuddin, *The Charter of the Islamic Conference and Legal Framework of Economic Cooperation among its Member States*, Oxford, 1987, p. 71
 28. Zafar Imam, *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Continuity & Change and India*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 14
 29. Dr. Haider Mehdi, *Organization of the Islamic Conference: OIC, A Review of its Political and Educational Policies*, Lahore, 1988, p. 40
 30. The defeat in the war greatly shocked Faisal and he committed himself to the liberation of the city and the Al-Aqsa Mosque located there. Even, he wished to offer prayers in the liberated Al-Aqsa mosque before his death. See *The Islamic Review and Arab Affairs*, vol. 157, no. 2, 1969, p. 4
 31. These were: Algeria, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritania, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and North Yemen. The other 15 countries that were represented in the Conference by the delegation of lower order included Afghanistan, Chad, Guinea, Indonesia, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Yemen, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and United Arab Republic/UAR (Egypt).
 32. The countries that declined to attend the Conference were: Cameroon, Gambia, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Maldives, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Syria, Tanzania and Upper Volta.
 33. The four categories of countries were firstly, countries with a Muslim majority and a Muslim head of state; secondly, countries with a Muslim majority and a non-Muslim head

of state; thirdly, countries with a Muslim head of state and a non-Muslim majority; and fourthly, states with an almost equal number of Muslims and non-Muslims, such as Lebanon. India did not come under any of the four categories.

34. President Yahya Khan earlier agreed to King Faisal's request to allow the Indian delegation. Accordingly, Indian delegation was represented headed by Gurbachan Singh, a non-Muslim. Yahya Khan questioned the credentials of such a non-Muslim to represent the Muslim minority. He withdrew from the Conference and did not agree to attend it as long as India was represented. His contention almost paralysed the conference work on September 24 as he stiffened his attitude. India was also adamant with its full membership and it rejected the offer of observer status suggested by a "mediation mission" headed by Malaysian Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman. At last India withdrew from the Conference upon the advice of the Tunku Mission. The Conference was extended by one more day as the issue took a lot of time to be solved.
35. Hasan Moinuddin, *op.cit.* p. 73
36. Out of 25 states that had attended the Rabat Summit, 22 attend the Jeddah Conference. They were: Afghanistan, Algeria, Guinea, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Republic (Egypt), and North Yemen. Mali, Chad and South Yemen did not attend the Conference. Mali and Chad had maintained diplomatic relations with Israel. South Yemen also abstained as it had no diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia. Representatives of Cameroon, the PLO and the League of Arab States attended as observers.
37. They were: Afghanistan, Algeria, Chad, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Tunisia, Turkey and North Yemen. The PLO and the Arab League attended as observers. Sudan boycotted the Conference.
38. The Islamic Development Bank (IDB), a specialized institution of the OIC, is an international financing institution. The purpose of the Bank is to foster the economic development and social progress of Member States and Muslim Communities individually as well as collectively in accordance with the principles of the Shariah. The functions of the Bank are to provide equity participation and grant loans for productive projects and enterprises. It also gives financial assistance to member states in other forms for their economic and social development and to foster foreign trade among member countries. The Bank's Headquarters is in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. For details, see the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Specialized Institutions and Organs)

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39. The Third Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers was supposed to be held in Kabul in the beginning of September 1971 according to the decision taken at the Karachi Conference. It was postponed because of the severe draught resulting near famine condition in Afghanistan. It was belatedly held in Jeddah next year.
 40. They were: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, North Yemen and UAE. The PLO and the Arab League attended as observers.
 41. See Appendix-II
 42. The International Islamic News Agency, an OIC specialized institution was set up in pursuance of resolution No.6/3- adopted by the 3rd Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Jeddah in March 1972, following a prior decision taken by the Islamic Conference in Karachi, (Islamic Republic of Pakistan) in 1970. The objectives of IINA are: 1. to develop close and better relations between member states in the information field. 2. to promote contacts and technical cooperation between the news agencies of member states and 3. to work for better understanding of Islamic peoples and their political, economic and social problems. IINA is one of the four specialized institutions of the OIC. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Specialized Institutions and Organs)
 43. They were: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, North Yemen and UAE. Iran and Morocco did not attend the Conference as they did not have good relations with Libya. The PLO the Arab League and Iraq attended as observers.
 44. Hasan Mohammad Tohamy was then the special advisor on Islamic Affairs to the Egyptian President, Anwar al Sadat.
 45. By the time mutual mistrust among the member states disappeared, lack of enthusiasm towards the organization removed, difficulties of finance solved and lack of infrastructural facilities necessary for its day to day functioning improved a lot. The additional donation of some oil rich states, particularly Saudi Arabia, made the Islamic Secretariat possible for maintaining substantial reserves. Many irritants operating within the Arab-Islamic world were neutralized, creating a more conducive atmosphere for cooperation and understanding.
 46. The invited members were: 1. Afghanistan, 2. Algeria, 3. Bahrain, 4. Chad, 5. Egypt, 6. Guinea, 7. Indonesia, 8. Iran, 9. Jordan, 10. Kuwait, 11. Lebanon, 12. Libya, 13. Malaysia, 14. Mali, 15. Mauritania, 16. Morocco, 17. Niger, 18. Oman, 19. Pakistan, 20. Qatar, 21.

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- Saudi Arabia, 22. Senegal, 23. Sierra Leone, 24. Somalia, 25. Sudan, 26. Syria, 27. Tunisia, 28. Turkey, 29. North Yemen 30. South Yemen and 31. UAE. The new members were: Bangladesh, Cameroon, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Uganda , and Upper Volta. The PLO was elevated from its erstwhile Observer status to full membership.
47. The Islamic Solidarity Fund, a subsidiary organ of the OIC was established in pursuance of a resolution of the Second Islamic Summit Conference, held in Lahore, February 1974 with a view to taking all possible steps to raise the intellectual and moral levels of the Muslims in the world; providing required material relief in case of emergencies such as natural catastrophes and man-made disasters, that may befall the Islamic States; and granting assistance to Muslim minorities and communities so as to improve their religious, social and cultural standards. It is the earliest subsidiary organization of the OIC and located at the General Secretariat of the OIC in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Subsidiary Organs).
 48. It endorsed the membership of two more Islamic states, i.e., Iraq and Maldives. Turkey was for the first time represented at the level of its Foreign Minister. Nigeria, the Arab League and the World Islamic Congress attended it as observers.
 49. It was established in pursuance of a resolution adopted by the Sixth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in July 1975. The main objectives of the Organization are: to propagate the principles of the Islamic Da'wa and teach the Arabic language; to get Muslim peoples to know one another; to explain and fight for Islamic causes; to strengthen the spirit of brotherhood among the Muslim peoples; to develop cooperation between the Islamic technical organisms and institutions of member states in the field of broadcasting; and to produce and exchange radio and television programmes for promoting the objectives of the Organization. The Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU) is in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Specialized Institutions and Organs)
 50. The Committee was established pursuant to resolution 1/6-P adopted by 6th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from 12-15 July 1975. The objectives are to follow-up the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Organization and by other international organizations that support or are in line with the OIC position; to liaise with other bodies, and to offer to Member States proposals it deems appropriate on implementation of resolutions, achieving their objectives, and on taking steps on developments that may arise within these terms of reference; and to implement all the resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict in view of the fundamental connection between

the Al-Quds question and the conflict. It is now consisted of 16 members. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Standing Committees)

51. IRCICA is a cultural organization which started its activities in 1980 as the first subsidiary organ of the OIC though its establishment was proposed by the Republic of Turkey during the Seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Istanbul, in 1976, and adopted by the Conference by Resolution no. 3/7-ECS. The Establishment Statute of the Centre was adopted by the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Dakar, Senegal, 1978) by Resolution no. 1/9-C. The Statute was amended later and readopted by the Twelfth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Baghdad, Iraq, 1981). Finally, the Sixth Islamic Summit Conference (Dakar, 1991) adopted the Framework Statute of the Subsidiary Organs of the OIC by its Resolution no. 1/6-Org (IS). IRCICA's headquarters are located in the three buildings named Seyir Pavillion, Cit Qasr and Yaveran Qasr in the historical Yildiz Palace in Besiktas, Istanbul. It has various objectives. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Subsidiary Organs) for the objectives and other information.
52. The Federation's constituent Conference was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on March 26, 1976 and the project was approved by the 7th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers by Resolution No. 7/18-AF. The Federation represents the Arab-Islamic Schools all over the world and seeks to support and assist them. The Federation also works for the dissemination of Islamic culture and the teaching of Arabic, the language of the Holy Quran, by extending support to the schools and cultural centers, and by training personnel and developing cooperation among the institutions endeavoring to spread Arabic language and Islamic culture all over the world as well as by creating sponsoring supervisory Arab-Islamic Schools. The Federation Headquarters is in Cairo, Egypt. It has Regional Offices in Madinah (Saudi Arabia), Peshawar (Pakistan), and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Affiliated Institutions)
53. The idea was approved by the First Conference of the ICCI held in October 1977 in Istanbul. Its Constitution was adopted by the Second Conference of Chambers of Commerce and Industry held in December 1978 in Karachi, Pakistan. The name of the ICCI has been changed to Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) at the 28th General Assembly Meeting of the Islamic Chamber, held in Istanbul Turkey on 11 April 2012. The Islamic Chamber is an affiliated organ of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and represents the private sector of 57 member countries. It aims at strengthening closer collaboration in the fields of trade, commerce, information technology, insurance/reinsurance, shipping, banking, promotion of investment opportunities and joint ventures in the member countries. *Ibid.*

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54. Iran, Egypt and Sudan were not represented as they had not cordial relations with the host country Libya. They had suggested to shift the venue from Tripoli to some other Arab capital. See *Dawn*, March 19, 1977. Nigeria, the UNO, the OAU, the Arab League and several other Islamic organizations like the Muslim World League attended as observers.
55. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Subsidiary Organs)
56. *Ibid.* (Specialized Institutions and Organs)
57. Nigeria, UNO, OAU, Arab League, NAM, IDB, International Islamic News Agency, Islamic States Broadcasting Organization (ISBO), and eight other Muslim organizations in various parts of the world attended as observers.
58. The Organization of Islamic Capitals (OIC) was established as an organization affiliated to the Organization OIC by the Resolution No. (9/9-P) issued by the 9th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers. The 10th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Fez, in 1979 endorsed the draft of the Organization's constitution by the Resolution No. (25/10-P). The Organization was officially established in 1980 under the name "Organization of Islamic Capitals" by the virtue of a resolution issued by the Organization's 1st General Conference held in Makkah on 29-30 January 1980 where the Organization's constitution was ratified, and the Organization's Administrative Council and Secretary General were elected. Hence the Organization's name was amended to the current name "Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities" (OICC) by the virtue of the resolution No. (5/2 G) issued by the Organization 2nd General Conference held in Islamabad during the period from 18-10 April 1982. Its objectives are to preserve the identity and heritage of Islamic capitals and cities; to achieve and enhance sustainable development in member capitals and cities and establish and develop comprehensive urban norms, systems and plans that would serve the growth and prosperity of Islamic capitals and cities for the promotion of their cultural, environmental, urban, economic and social conditions; to promote the levels of services and municipal utilities in Islamic capitals and cities; to enhance and promote capacity building programs for Islamic capitals and cities; and to consolidate cordiality, brotherhood, and friendship among Islamic capitals and cities, support and coordinate the scope of cooperation between them. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Affiliated Institutions)
59. IUT is a subsidiary organ of the OIC in implementation of the resolution No.5/9-E of the Conference, initially named as ICTVTR, and later Islamic Institute of Technology. The name was changed to the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) according to the resolution 48/28 adopted by the 28th ICFM held in Mali on 25-27 June 2001. The

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- University is located at Board Bazar, Gazipur, Dhaka, Bangladesh. *Ibid.* (Subsidiary Organs)
60. ISESCO is a specialized institution of the OIC. The Eleventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers adopted Resolution No.2/11-C, concerning the approval of the Statute of this institution following the decision of the Tenth Conference, to establish it. The decision was notified by the Third Islamic Summit in 1981. ISESCO's constituent conference was held in Fez, Kingdom of Morocco, in May 1982. The Headquarters of ISESCO is in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco. *Ibid* (Specialized Institutions and Organs)
 61. Syria and South Yemen remained absent from the Conference because of their closer ties with Moscow. Afghanistan boycotted the Conference on the ground that it considered it as an “imperialist plot” against Afghanistan and as an instrument of propaganda and interference in its internal affairs.
 62. Libya did not attend the Conference on the pretext that it had severe diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia. Iran took the stand that since President Saddam Hussein of Iraq was going to be present in the Conference, it would not attend it.
 63. The Peace Committee was set up on September 26, 1980, after the declaration of war. President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan was the Chairman and OIC Secretary General, Habib Chatty and Yasser Arafat, the PLO Chief, were the members of the committee. The enlarged form of the Peace Committee was to be composed of Bangladesh, Gambia, Pakistan, Guinea, Turkey, the PLO Chief and OIC Secretary General.
 64. See www.oic-oci.org (Subsidiary Organs)
 65. It is an affiliated institution of the OIC established in order to coordinate and unify the efforts of the members in realizing cooperation among the maritime companies, in member states, to maximize profit; to encourage members to set up joint maritime companies and shipping lines between member states; to establish contact between the Islamic world and other countries within an integrated maritime network, to develop periodical and regular freight and passenger voyages between Islamic and other countries; to assist in drawing up a unified policy for the Islamic maritime transporters; and to conduct studies and research in the various disciplines of maritime transport. The Association has its headquarters in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *Ibid.* (Affiliated Institutions)
 66. The COMIAC was established pursuant to resolution 13/3 – P (IS). This followed the desire of the Organization to give information and culture in the Islamic Ummah a fresh beginning so as to acquaint international public opinion with the noble causes of the Islamic *Ummah*, in particular with the question of Palestine and AL Quds Al Sharif. It is also intended to confront unfair campaigns against Islam and Muslims. The duties of the

Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs include following up the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Organization within its term of reference; searching for ways to promote cooperation between member states in the areas of information and communication; and preparing programmes and proposals that could enhance the capabilities of states in these areas. Its Headquarters is in Dakar, Republic of Senegal. *Ibid.* (Standing Committees)

67. This COMCEC was established pursuant to resolution 13/3-P (IS). The Committee follows up the implementation of resolutions in the economic and trade fields, explores possible means of strengthening cooperation among the member states, and prepares programmes and proposals capable of improving capacities in these areas. Its Headquarters is located in Ankara, Turkey. All member states of the OIC are its members. *Ibid.*
68. The COMSTECH was established pursuant to resolution 13/3 –P (IS). It follows up the resolutions in the fields of science and technology. It also studies possible means of strengthening cooperation among the OIC member states, as well as prepares programmes and proposals capable of improving member states capacities in these areas. All members of the OIC are its members. Its Headquarters is in Islamabad, Pakistan. *Ibid* .
69. By the Resolution No.17/11-C of the Eleventh ICFM and Resolution No.7/3-C of the Third Islamic Summit it was decided to establish the “Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation”. It was formally established on 6 May 1985 mainly with a view to strengthening Islamic solidarity among youth in Member States and promoting Islamic identity in the fields of sports. The Headquarters of the Federation is in Prince Faisal Bin Fahd Olympic Complex in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *Ibid.* (Affiliated Institutions)
70. Iran requested for a change of venue from Baghdad to a new place because of its war with Iraq. The request was rejected on the ground that Iran had boycotted the Summit Conference held at Taif. In addition to Iran, Syria continued to boycott the conference. The membership of Egypt and Afghanistan stood suspended.
71. Resolution No.8/3-C, (I.S.) adopted by the Third Islamic Summit Conference, held in Makkah and Taif called for the establishment of an Islamic Fiqh Academy. The objectives of IFA are to achieve the theoretical and practical unity of the Islamic *Ummah* by striving to have Man conform his conduct to the principles of the Islamic *Sharia* at the individual, social as well as international levels; to strengthen the link of the Muslim community with the Islamic faith; and to draw inspiration from the Islamic *Sharia*, to study contemporary problems from the *Sharia* point of view and to try to find the solutions in conformity with the *Sharia* through an authentic interpretation of its content.

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- The Headquarters of the Academy is located in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. See www.oic-oci.org (Subsidiary Organs)
72. The 13th Session of the ICFM welcomed, in paragraph 99 of its Final Declaration, the establishment of an International Islamic University in Malaysia (IIUM) in line with its commitments to the objectives and principles of the OIC. The IIUM was formally established on May 20, 1983 after an exchange of Diplomatic Notes of co-sponsorships between the Government of Malaysia and, a number of the OIC Member States and the OIC General Secretariat. Under its Resolution No. 9/14-C, the 14th Session of the ICFM which was held in Dhaka, invited the OIC Member States to sign the document establishing the university within the framework of cultural cooperation with the Government of Malaysia so as to enable the University to fulfill the purposes for which it was established. In October 2010, The Government of Malaysia submitted a request to grant the IIUM an affiliate status to the OIC. This request was examined and approved by the 38th Session of the CFM, held in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan, from 28 to 30 June, 2011, through its Resolution. No. 2/38-ORG. The Headquarters of the IIUM is in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. *Ibid.* (Affiliated Institutions)
73. The membership of Egypt and Afghanistan had been still suspended. Iran resumed to attend by the Conference.
74. Egypt, Afghanistan (the two suspended members) and Iran were absent. Iran was absent because of its disagreement about contents of the draft resolution on the Iran- Iraq conflict which was adopted by the previous Fourteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers at Dhaka and had deferred to the summit's consideration.
75. Afghanistan could not attend it on account of its suspended membership. Iran was absent because of its displeasure about the venue of the Summit. Iran tried to get the venue changed because of the Kuwait support to Iraq in the Gulf War.
76. For last several years Iran's participation to the OIC was irregular and it developed a sort of uneasy relationship with the OIC. Iran's attitude to OIC changed mainly due to two reasons: firstly, its war with Iraq having ended earlier in that year and secondly, its desire to get a strong resolution passed against Salman Rushdie, for his novel *Satanic Verses* considered blasphemous to the Prophet of Islam. It is to be noted that earlier the Iranian spiritual leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, had issued a decree calling for Rushdie's death. See. Keesing Record for World Events, March 1989, p. 36537
77. After the unification of the North and South Yemen in May 1990 the number of the member-states then came to 45 from 46.
78. A. G. Noorani, *The Gulf War; Document and Analysis*, New Delhi, 1991, p. 54
79. *Asian Recorder*, 12-14 February, 1992

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80. The creation of BAYT MAL AL QUDS AGENCY was the initiative of the late King Hassan II, King of Morocco who presented the idea to the Al-Quds Committee during its 15th session in Ifrane, Kingdom of Morocco in 1995. The idea was presented to the 23rd Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in 1995, where it was decided that the BAYT MAL AL QUDS AGENCY be created. The Agency was granted its statute, and later received its final legal status when its first director was appointed and allowed the official commencement of its activities on 30 July 1998. The agency held its first meeting on 14 February 2000 under the high auspices of Muhammad VI, the King of Morocco, chairman of the Al-Quds Committee and in the presence of the Secretary General of the OIC. It was created in order to salvage the city of Al Quds Al Sharif (Jerusalem); to extend assistance to the Palestinian population and Palestinian institutions in the holy capital; and to safeguard and restore the Al Aqsa Mosque and other holy sites in the city as well the city's cultural, religious, cultural and architectural heritage. See www.oic-oci.org (Standing Committees)
81. *The Daily Star*, 25 March 1997, Dhaka
82. ICYF-DC was granted with the status of institution affiliated to the OIC by the virtue of the resolution N3/32-C adopted by the 32nd session of the ICFM in accordance with the resolution N 15/31-C adopted by the 31st session of the ICFM held in Istanbul. The ICYF-DC was established at its Founding General Assembly held in Baku, Azerbaijan on 1 - 3 December 2004. The ICYF-DC is aimed at coordination youth activities in the OIC countries. ICYF-DC Headquarters are resided in Istanbul at the Istanbul World Trade Center. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Affiliated Institutions)
83. See Appendix-V
84. See Appendix-IV
85. Secretary-General of the OIC, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, told a news conference, “The new charter embraces the United Nations language to reflect moderation and tolerance of Islam and focus on development and solidarity in action between members.” See *The Daily Star*, 15 March, 2008, Dhaka
86. OIC-CERT was granted the status of OIC Affiliated Institution by virtue of Resolution INF-36/2 with a view to strengthening the relationships between Computer Emergency Response Teams in the member states; promoting exchange of information; preventing or minimising electronic (Cyber) terrorism and computer crimes; enhancing education and awareness programmes; raising the level of cooperation in the domains of technological research and development. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Affiliated Institutions)

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87. In fact, SMIIC was established by signing its Statute during the 15th the COMCEC (Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation) Meeting held in Istanbul, on November 4-7, 1999. The SMIIC Statute entered into force after fulfilling the ratification requirement of 10 OIC Member States on May 2010 and the Institute established in August 2010. SMIIC aims mainly at achieving uniformity in metrology, laboratory testing and standardization activities among member states and ensuring education and training and providing technical assistance to the OIC Members in the domain of standardization and metrology. Its Headquarters is in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey. See the official website of the OIC www.oic-oci.org (Affiliated Institutions)
88. See Resolution No. 5/38-ORG regarding the changing of emblem and Resolution No. 4/38-ORG regarding the changing the name of OIC. See also Appendix-II
89. The ATAIC was established in 2003. The ATAIC Annual Technical Conference is held once a year on a rotating basis. The conference discussed the Tax challenges that confront tax Systems in Islamic Countries in addition to the methods of modernizing tax policies and legislations. The First ATAIC Technical Conference was launched in Putrajaya, Malaysia from 4-7 October 2004. Its sixth conference, held in Sudan on 11-15 October 2009, successfully adopted the Statute of the Association. In December 2010, The Government of the Republic of the Sudan submitted a request to grant the ATAIC an affiliate status to the OIC. This request was considered and approved by the 38th Session of the CFM, held in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan, from 28 to 30 June, 2011, through its Resolution. No. 7/38-ORG. The Headquarters of the ATAIC is in Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan. *Ibid.*
90. It recognized the need to further institutionalize cooperation among Member States to effectively implement the Strategy on Combating Islamophobia adopted by the 11th Islamic Summit and the importance of expediting the implementation process of its decision on developing a legally binding international instrument to prevent intolerance, discrimination, prejudice and hatred on the grounds of religion, and defamation of religions and to promote and ensure the respect for all Religions. It recognized the need for the Eminent Persons Panel to continue its work in close coordination with the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission to address the malaise of Islamophobia, and requested the Commission to report in this regard to the next meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers. It stressed in on strengthening inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations, suppressing Islamophobia. It commended in this regard the efforts of ISESCO and the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) in countering the negative stereotyping of Islam and Muslims, promoting correct knowledge of Islamic civilization and their contribution to

world civilization, combating Islamophobia and fostering dialogue of cultures, civilizations and religions. See the *Cairo Final Communiqué*, OIC/SUM-12/F.C./ FINAL 17-20

91. The situation of Rohingya has two dimensions, humanitarian and political. The Rohingya, even by UN standards, are the most disadvantaged ethnic group in the world. The Summit denounced the continuation of atrocious acts against Rohingya Muslim community in Myanmar which represents a serious violation of the international law and international human rights covenants; and urged the Government of Myanmar to take all necessary measures to protect their basic rights, including their basic right to a nationality and from all forms of discrimination in accordance with UNGA Resolution A/RES/67/233. It affirmed the responsibility of the international community to work with the Government of Myanmar to take all necessary measures to protect minorities in its territories and put an end to violence against the Rohingya Muslim minority; and called on the Government of Myanmar to grant easy access for humanitarian aid to be channeled to the affected and the needy. It stressed the need to promote cooperation and dialogue with non-OIC member states hosting Muslim minorities and communities, and also with the true representatives of those communities, in such a way as to safeguard their rights, including their right to a nationality, and likewise emphasized the need for continued, close monitoring of any new developments; welcomed the invitation extended by the Government of Myanmar to the OIC Secretary General to visit Myanmar, including the Rakhine State and urged the Government of Myanmar to facilitate this visit as soon as possible. It also welcomed ASEAN Member States' firm commitment to help resolve this issue; and the participation of the OIC and the international community to work closely with the Government of Myanmar to continue addressing this issue in support of the democratic and reform process in Myanmar. The summit called upon the authorities in Myanmar to cooperate with all related parties and allow the humanitarian assistance to reach all people and groups affected, and requested the OIC General Secretariat to coordinate with the authorities in Myanmar for the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Contact Group on Rohingya to visit Myanmar to assess the needs of humanitarian assistance for those affected and coordinated with the authorities in Myanmar to develop a plan for the urgent provision of this assistance. It appreciated all assistance offered by member states to Rohingya Muslims, including the significant USD 50 million financial support provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and humanitarian assistance provided by Turkey, UAE and others. See the *Cairo Final Communiqué*, OIC/SUM-12/F.C./ FINAL 13-14

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92. Iran is the staunch supporter of Assad, whose Alawite sect is an offshoot of the sect, while Sunni states such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the Muslim Brotherhood-led Egypt strongly back the rebels. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made a historic visit to Egypt to attend the summit and discuss the Syrian crisis. Ahmadinejad was the first Iranian head of state to visit Egypt in 34 years.
93. The Summit stressed the need to preserve Syria's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity; strongly condemn the ongoing bloodshed in Syria, and underlined the Syrian Government's primary responsibility for the continued violence and destruction of property. It expressed grave concern over the deteriorating situation, the increasing frequency of killings, which claimed the lives of thousands of unarmed civilians, and the perpetration of massacres in towns and villages by the Syrian authorities. It called for immediate cessation of violence, killings and destruction, for the respect of Islamic values, human rights, and for saving Syria from the danger of an all-out civil war, including its dangerous consequences on the Syrian people, on the region, and on international peace and security. It urged the Syrian regime to show wisdom, and call for a serious dialogue to take place between the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution, Opposition Forces and representatives of the Syrian Government committed to political transformation in Syria and who had not been directly involved in any form of oppression, in order to pave the way for a transition process that would lead the Syrian people to achieve their aspirations for democratic reforms and changes. It appealed to the National Coalition for Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces to speed up the constitution of a transitional government representing all parties and factions of its people without any discrimination or exclusion, and to be ready to assume the political responsibility in full until the completion of the political change process sought. It also warned that the continued military escalation which had been rejected and condemned by the international community will push the country to slide towards dangerous risks threatening peace, security and stability in the country and in the entire region. It expressed its support for the mission of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States. It called on the Security Council to assume its full responsibilities by putting an end to the ongoing violence and bloodshed in Syria and finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the Syrian crisis. It also affirmed the importance of protecting religious and historical sites in Syria from destruction, and urge to take the necessary measures in this regard. It affirm our strong commitment to secure humanitarian assistance for the Syrian people, and urged Member States to donate generously to the Syrian people in coordination with the competent international and regional bodies, including the OIC General Secretariat to

implement all its humanitarian assistance activities in Syria and to coordinate also in this connection with the Support Unit of National Coalition for Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces. See the *Cairo Final Communiqué*, OIC/SUM-12/F.C./ FINAL 5 -

94. The Summit firmly condemned the acts of diverse terrorist groups and movements as well as the transnational organized crime and drug trafficking networks which constitute a real threat to the security and stability of Mali and entire region, aimed at disrupting the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Mali. It reaffirmed its full solidarity with the people of Mali and its National Union Government. It reiterated its firm support for the efforts aimed at recovering the territorial integrity and re-establishment of state authority by the Republic of Mali on its entire national territory. In this regard, it took note of the adoption of resolution 2085 (2012) by UN Security Council which set out a global approach for resolving the multidimensional crisis in Mali and the initiatives by the African Union and the Economic Commission of West African States. It called for the accelerated deployment of the International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) and invited member states to provide logistical and financial support to this mission. It strongly condemned the heinous acts perpetrated by terrorist groups and organizations against the civilian population, the destruction of cultural sites in Timbuktu especially those classified by UNESCO as world cultural heritage and call upon ISESCO to participate in the protection and preservation of this heritage. It urged the Transitional Authorities to implement the road map by organizing free, transparent and credible Presidential and Parliamentary elections and the adoption of a comprehensive approach taking into consideration all the dimension of this crisis. It insisted once again on the importance of supporting the development efforts in the Sahel region in general and in Mali in particular. See the *Cairo Final Communiqué*, OIC/SUM-12/F.C./ FINAL 10 and *Resolution No. OIC/SUM-12/DEC.-MALI*
95. The Summit reaffirmed the centrality of the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif to the Muslim *Ummah* as a whole and the need to use all its powers and legitimate ways and means to defend the inviolability of the Islamic and Christian holy places. It reiterated its strong condemnation of Israel for its aggression against the Islamic and Christian holy places in Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It welcomed the UN General Assembly's adoption of resolution 19/67 on 29 November 2012 upgrading the status of Palestine in the United Nations to Observer State. It condemned the barbaric Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip in November 2012 and demanded to stop the illegal collective punishment of the Palestinian people and to lift fully the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip by Israel. It called for an urgent action to move ahead in the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip after the colossal damage caused by the abhorrent Israeli military aggression of December 2008 and

January 2009, as well as the aggression of November 2012. It emphasized, on the provisions of the international law and the UN Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1850 (2009) and relevant UN General Assembly Resolutions including 19/67 (2012), as well as on the terms of reference of the Madrid Peace Conference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Arab Summit in Beirut on 28 March 2002 and the Quartet's Roadmap, for just, peaceful and comprehensive settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. It called upon all OIC member states to engage with the Palestinian cause and the question of Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the primary issues on which Member States must adopt a unified stand at the international fora. It called on member states to establish an Islamic Financial Safety Net to assist Palestine. It condemned strongly Israel's continuous building of the Apartheid Wall around the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It reiterate its our call upon States, entities and international organizations to abide by the international resolutions on the city of Al-Quds as an indivisible part of the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied in 1967. The Session stressed the need to implement UN Security Council resolution 237 on the return of Palestinian displaced persons and UN General Assembly resolution 194 on the return of the Palestinian refugees to their land and properties as two crucial foundations for any comprehensive and just settlement. It called on all Palestinian parties to join forces under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and in this regard, invite all Palestinian factions to respond promptly to the calls of President Mahmoud Abbas. It called on the UN Security Council and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to take necessary measures to ensure the respect by Israel, the occupying power, of international law and cease all unlawful and illegal actions in the occupied Palestinian territory including in and around Al-Quds city, including its attempts to destroy Palestinian natural and cultural heritage in the south western part of the City. It strongly condemned the persistence of the Israeli archaeological excavations and works in the Old City of Jerusalem and the failure by Israel to provide the World Heritage Centre with adequate and comprehensive information about its archeological activities thereon. See *Resolution No. OIC/SUM-12/2013/PAL-RES/FINAL*

96. For list of Secretary Generals see Appendix-IV

97. See Appendix-VII

98. See Appendix-VII

The history of Muslims in Indian subcontinent is conterminous with the history of Islam in the world. The Muslims of the Indian subcontinent played a vital role in the process of forming a recognizable world Muslim organization. During the British rule the South Asian Muslims maintained a proper link with the Muslim *Ummah* and participated in various Islamic conferences. Even, after the independence of India and Pakistan the Muslims of the subcontinent had shown considerable interest in forging links with the Islamic entities. In the late nineteenth century the Indian Muslims not only supported the Pan Islamic Movement but also played an active role in the process of globalizing the idea. Jamaluddin Afghani, the founder of Pan Islamism and Muhammad Iqbal, a renowned poet and philosopher, of the subcontinent worked together to carry the Movement forward. The Pan Islamism had hardly immediate success and results and it failed to preserve the integration of the Khilafat Movement and the power and prestige of the Caliph. But the Pan Islamic idea had never died in the minds of world Muslims. The Muslims of the subcontinent were very much impressed by the idea.

The Indian Muslims launched the Khilafat Movement motivated by the Pan Islamic idea during and after the First World War (1914-18). During the First World War Britain and her allies fought against Turkey and the central powers. After the War, Turkey was dismembered into pieces and the sovereignty of the Turkish Khilafat was totally seized by the Allied Forces. The Allied forced the Caliph to sign a treaty called the Treaty of Sevres (10 August, 1920). The Muslims of the subcontinent initiated a movement for the protection of the Khilafat and to recover the glory, prestige and privileges of the Caliph. All Indian Khilafat Committee, led by Maulana Muhammad Ali (1874 – 1951) and Maulana Showkat Ali (1873 - 1939), made a legal pressure on the British Government through its frequent meetings, agitations and other activities. In 1919, influential *ulama* organized the *Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind* (Association of Indian *Ulama*) to join in the movement for the preservation of the Ottoman Caliphate. But later on the Movement lost its initial enthusiasm did not survive for long. It may be noted here that the Turkish Ottoman Khilafat was finally abolished on 3 March 1924 by Turkey itself under the leadership of Musafa Kamal Ataturk and not by the alien powers. The non-cooperation of the Arabs within the Turkish Empire to Turkey during the First World War was also one of the important causes of its collapse and ultimately the dissolution of Sultanate (on November 1, 1922) and Khilafat (1924),

the temporal and spiritual power of the Ottoman Caliphs respectively.¹ Therefore, the Indian Muslims had nothing to do in this respect.

In the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries the Muslim *Ummah* felt the necessity of Islamic unity and solidarity and arranged Islamic conferences at different times facing different circumstances. But the Palestine crisis paved the immediate way for the Rabat Summit Conference in 1969 which led to the establishment of OIC. The Palestine Liberation Movement made a great impact on world nations and it was fast gaining new adherents, friends and supporters everywhere. In fact, the Palestine problem became the core issue in the Middle East in the contemporary world. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century the Muslims of the South Asian subcontinent were very much conscious and concerned about their duties and responsibilities to Islam and the Muslim *Ummah*. This Muslim population accounted for more than 100 million on the eve of their independence from about the two hundred years of the British rule, and the division of the region, mainly between the Muslims and Hindus into separate lands (e.g. Pakistan and India), 65 per cent of whom later constituted the population of the sovereign state of Pakistan.

The Muslims of the subcontinent were very much concerned with the happenings in the Muslim world as in Palestine. Before emergence of Pakistan and India as separate states, the Muslim League and the Khilafat Movement, the two representatives and popular political organizations of the Muslims of the subcontinent were concerned with the crises in the Muslim *Ummah*, particularly the Arab and the Palestine cause. These organizations espoused whole-heartedly the cause of the Palestine and rendered political, moral, and material support to the Palestinians. During the Khilafat Movement the Muslims of the subcontinent became anxious about Zionist Movement of the Jews for the establishment of a Jewish state in the regions of the two ancient Jewish Kingdoms, i.e. Judea and Israel, in the Palestinian territory.² The Balfour Declaration (1917) during the First World War and the subsequent activities of the Allied Forces, specially the British, and the Jews aroused suspicion not only in the minds of the Arabs but also the Muslims of the subcontinent.³ They denounced Zionist and British intrigue for turning Arab territory and the holy land Jerusalem into a homeland for Jews through a series of meetings and demonstrations. The Khilafat

leaders objected to the proposed mandate system and suggested that Arab lands should be governed by the Arab themselves. They appealed to the Muslims of the subcontinent not to join British armies to fight their Arab brethren. The Muslim League leaders from 1918 until 1947 spoke on Palestine, held discussion and passed numerous resolutions on the issue at every Muslim League session, at Council and Working Committee meetings of the party and elsewhere.

In December 1918, a resolution was passed at the Muslim League's eleventh annual session at Delhi strongly protesting against the occupation of Jerusalem and other holy places by the British forces. The League's President Maulana Hasrat Mohani (1875-1951) said in his presidential address at the fourteenth annual session of the League at Ahmadabad, in December 1921, that Palestine should be free from non-Muslim influence and should not be under British mandate.⁴ In October 1937, the President of the All Indian Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), in his presidential address at the Lucknow session in October 1937, condemned the British proposal to partition Palestine. He warned the British that it would "be digging its grave if she fails to honour her original proclamation, promises and intentions ... which were so unequivocally expressed to the Arabs and the world at large". He also said that the Muslims of the subcontinent "will stand solid and will help the Arabs in every way they can in the brave and just struggle that they are carrying on against all odds".⁵ At the Patna session in December 1938, he declared:

I know Muslims will not shirk from any sacrifice if required to help the Arabs who are engaged in the fight for their national freedom...All our sympathies are with those valiant martyrs who are fighting the battle of freedom against usurpers.

In a speech at the Aligarh Muslim University Union in March 1944, Jinnah said:

If President Roosevelt, under the pressure of the powerful world Jewry, commits the blunder of forcing the British Government to do injustice to the Arabs in Palestine it will set the whole Muslim world ablaze from one end to another. Grave wrongs had already been done to the Arabs. If the Jewish immigration is allowed to continue, I have no doubt that not only the Muslim League will revolt, but the whole Muslim world will revolt.⁶

Allama Iqbal, in 1937, emphasized that the problem of Palestine “does not concern Palestine alone but will have wide repercussions in the entire Islamic world”.⁷

The Muslim League passed numerous resolutions on Palestine question in its sessions in different places and at different times. Following is at a glance the main resolutions adopted by the Muslim League in its different sessions pertaining to Palestine:-

1. adopted the demand that the Balfour Declaration should be immediately withdrawn;
2. condemned British mandatory control of Arab lands and called for the annulment of mandates;
3. condemned Britain’s pro-Jewish policy;
4. strongly protested Britain’s scheme of partition in order to create a Jewish state in Palestine;
5. asked the British to rectify the grievances of the Palestinian Arabs;
6. protested against the threat of British use of force in Palestine and demanded that Indian troops should not be sent to any Muslim lands;
7. demanded that the British goods should be boycotted;
8. expressed concern at Jewish immigration into Palestine with the support and assistance of Britain and USA;
9. protested against Zionist terrorization of the Palestinian Arabs and the gross injustice against them;
10. warned against the carving out of sphere of influence in the region;
11. expressed sympathy and support for the Palestinians’ struggle for self-determination and gave them assurance of all help by the Muslims of the subcontinent;
12. appealed to world Muslims to save Palestine; and
13. condemned the US government’s unscrupulous anti-Arab policy in the Middle East.

The other significant steps were taken in regard to Palestine by the Muslim League in 1938-39. A Muslim League delegation was sent to attend the Palestine Conference held in Cairo and later on in London.⁸ The object was to put pressure on the British to refrain from partition of Palestine. The delegation met with Arab leaders and rendered help and support to them during negotiations with the British. It also met with British

leaders and submitted to the British Government a statement of Muslim views on Palestine. It also went to Geneva to submit a written protest against Britain's Palestine policies to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations.⁹ Two delegates also tried to meet Mussolini in Rome at great risk of their lives in order to send arms to the *Mujahidins* of Palestine to fight the British. The meeting could not be arranged as circumstances were not propitious prior to that.¹⁰

The Muslim League opened a Palestine Fund in 1939. Prior to that "Palestine Day" was observed throughout the country in 1938 and followed up in 1945. Mufti Alhaj Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Palestine, and some other Palestinian leaders also visited the subcontinent and met the Muslim leaders. The Muslims did this all for Palestinians despite the severe limitations and great risk on them, because subcontinent was still a part of the British Empire.

After the independence of Pakistan and India, Muslims of both states increased Islamic link to the *Ummah* and attended conferences either officially or by private capacities. After the independence of Pakistan, development of close and fraternal links with the Muslim countries has been an abiding objective of its foreign policy.¹¹ The Muslim world which, so far as Pakistan's foreign relations are concerned, constituted a special category, received some legislative attention in all phases of Pakistan's parliamentary proceedings.¹² Pakistan, after her independence, laid great stress on the colonial situations of Morocco, Libya, Somaliland, Eritrea, the liberation of Algeria and Tunisia, Dutch action in Indonesia and some other crises in the Islamic *Ummah* on the legislative agenda. In the early days of Pakistan (1951 and 1952), it moved with a proposal for a conference of Muslim prime ministers and it concluded treaties of friendship with Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Indonesia and so on. It also moved for economic and cultural contacts with independent Islamic states. In 1962, a more comprehensive proposal to create a Commonwealth of Muslim Nations was made in which a Muslim neutral bloc led by Pakistan was planned. Later, suggestions of this kind included the forming of a confederation of RCD countries.¹³ The basic content of the Pakistan's relations with the Muslim states included the common ideals of the Muslims, the religious and fraternal ties between them and the need for Muslim unity and ideology.

Pakistan, since its inception in 1947, gave support to the Palestine cause and considered the Palestine issue at the top most priority in her international affairs. Pakistan delegation to the UNO under directions from Mohammad Ali Jinnah took the position in favour of the Palestinians and opposed partition scheme of Palestine. They argued that the scheme was contrary to the principle of self-determination and would lead to strife. They suggested that the juridical questions involved in the problem should be referred to the International Court of Justice and the Jewish refugees should be reintegrated in the European countries from where they had been driven out. Pakistan cast her negative vote against the partition resolution of the UNO. After the partition of Palestine in 1947, Pakistan criticized the decision declaring it insult to the sentiments of Muslim world. She warned that the Muslim world was determined to wipe out this decision no matter how long it might take. Jinnah sent a telegram on 8 December 1947 to Henry Truman (May 8, 1884 – December 26, 1972), President of the USA (1945–1953), strongly condemning the decision taken by the UNO. Pakistan in 1949, also voted against the administration of Israel into the UNO. Pakistan sponsored the UN resolutions on the problem of Palestine refugees. It provided aid to the Palestinian refugees through the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRAW).¹⁴ Pakistan gave unstinted support for the cause of the Arabs and Palestine against the Israel's expansionist aims in the international agencies and forums with those of the UNO. The issues can be summed up as follows:-

1. The seizure or status of Jerusalem
2. The question of vacating Arab occupied territories
3. The desecration of the Al-Aqsa and Ibrahimi Mosques
4. Israel's violation of human rights in the occupied territories and bombing and shelling attacks on Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon
5. The recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) at Rabat and at subsequent Islamic Conferences
6. Recognition of PLO either by UNO-affiliated organizations or other international organizations
7. PLO's participation in the Geneva Conference
8. The issues of the Palestine refugees
9. The Arab oil embargo, et cetera.¹⁵

Pakistan spoke in favour of Arabs and the Palestinians in the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD). In the RCD, Pakistan consistently supported the cause of the Palestinian Arabs, Turkey and Iran. Pakistan endorsed the demands of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Conference held at Algiers in September 1968 in support of the Arab and Palestinian cause.

With other things the subcontinent Muslims had profound concern with the Turkish Khilafat considering it as the office of their central political and spiritual leadership and they tried their best to protect it. After the abolition of the Khilafat in 1924, the Ulema of al-Azhar arranged an Islamic conference known as Khilafat Congress (Mutamarul Khilafah) in Cairo, in May 1926, with a view to nominating a new Caliph. With other representatives of the Islamic people of the world, Indian representatives, mainly those of the All Indian Khilafat Conference and *Jamiat-e-Ulema* were also invited. Indian Khilafat Conference and *Jamiat-e-Ulema* declined the invitation. The leaders of the two organizations argued that it was too late to organize such a conference. Two years passed since the Khilafat had been abolished. By this time, Turkey had become a secular state. When the Indian Muslims were strongly moving to protect and strengthen the existing Khilafat from the Allied forces, no effective response came from any portion of the Muslim world and specially from the Arab world. The Indian Muslims had the conception that picking up an abolished Khilafat was more complicated than the existing one. The division among the Muslims during the First World War had not still removed and the wound that the Islam and Muslims suffered from the subsequent events of the World War I not still alleviated at all. Moreover, ideological differences became more and stronger in Muslim brethren. Even, Egypt, where the conference was assembled, was a secular state and the Egyptian Government declared its neutrality regarding the appointment of a Khalifa. Under the ground the Indian Muslims thought it was inconvenient time for convening a conference and under the circumstances the Congress did not generate any enthusiastic response in the Muslim world as well as among the Muslim leaders of the subcontinent. Nevertheless, Indian Muslims were represented by an insignificant delegate, who is said to be a Professor of the Islamic College in Peshawar, in his private initiative.

The Indian Muslim representative enthusiastically attended the Mecca Congress in June 1926 at the invitation of King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud. Among the 60 delegates from various parts of the Muslim world who attended the Congress, Ali Brothers from India played the prominent part. These two brothers were the outstanding personalities of the Muslim world and they had to perform leading job within the Congress activities. The Congress decided to constitute itself a permanent organization named “The World Muslim Congress” (Mutamar Al-Alam Al-Islami) in which the Ali Brothers had active role.

The conference of the World Muslim Congress was held after six years gap in Jerusalem by the initiative of Al-Hajj Mohammad Amin al-Hussaini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and President of the Muslim Council in Palestine, with the assistance of the Indian Khilafat Committee leader Maulana Showkat Ali. The World Muslim Congress was supposed to be assembled annually at Mecca, but King Ibn Saud took no initiative in organizing any annual conference in the subsequent years. Amin al-Hussaini then seized the opportunity in organizing it in Jerusalem. Maulana Showkat Ali as an important member of the Preparatory Committee of the Congress declared its purpose.¹⁶ In fact, the Jerusalem Congress was fully motivated by the two persons and even charges were brought against them that they desired to strengthen their positions in their respective countries through organizing such a Congress. It was the first one which attempted to institutionalize the Congress. One of the peculiar characteristics of the Congress was the appointment of leaders in its various offices through elections. In the Congress the Indian delegation was led by Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal who was elected the Vice-President of the Congress.

After the Jerusalem Congress of the *Mutamar* the Muslim leaders of the subcontinent, specially Mohammad Ali Jinnah, were in close touch with it in spite of the fact that the organization was practically defunct.¹⁷ The emergence of Pakistan as an independent state was momentous for the politics of the Indian sub-continent as well as for the Muslim world. Pakistan was a unified state with the combination of West and East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) territories and formed the world’s biggest Muslim population. This unique feature of population among other things played a very vital role in paving the way for Pakistan to establish itself a leading position in the Muslim world. As the largest Muslim country Pakistan was also conscious about

its responsibilities to the world Muslim *Ummah*. In other way it can be said that Pakistan was born with a commitment to the Muslim cause.¹⁸ In the post World War II period nationalist and independence movements in the colonial regions of the world contain almost similar goal; the evacuation of colonial powers and self determination of the natives. In that sense, the Pakistan movement was qualitatively different from those of the other ex-colonies as it signified the demand for the withdrawal of the British from the subcontinent as well as the creation of a separate independent Muslim state on the basis of the Two Nation Theory.

On the basis of cooperation among Muslim countries Pakistan from the very outset designed her foreign policy. The spirit of Two Nation Theory is still maintained through Pakistan's special relationship with the Muslim world as against India. On the specific common ideological basis of Islam Pakistan started working for Islamic solidarity with a missionary spirit. Some favourable conditions facilitated Pakistan to come close to the Muslim countries. These are highlighted below:-

Firstly, Pakistan was a neutral Muslim country and had a common acceptance to almost all Muslim countries of the world. The Islamic world particularly the Arab world was divided ideologically at that time. Pakistan immediately after its creation was not directly inclined to any bloc or did not take any opposite stand in the controversial affairs in the Muslim world.

Secondly, Pakistan had to be considered as a leading component in the World Islamic organizations and forums because of its large number of Muslim population. Without its participation the success of a world-wide Islamic organization would remain incomplete.

Thirdly, in strategic location Pakistan was a non-Arab Islamic state which facilitated it to appear in the role of mediator in the reconciliation process among the politically and ideologically segregated Arab states.

Fourthly, Pakistan had comparatively better trained manpower needed for maintaining strong foreign policy.

Fifthly, the economic infrastructure of Pakistan was undoubtedly in a better condition and its economy emerged a solvent one.

Pakistan in the early days of its independence made serious efforts to bring the entire Muslim world closer by hosting several Islamic conferences. After the birth of the Muslim-majority state of Pakistan on August 14, 1947, under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, its first Governor-General, eminent Signatories of the World of Islam, began working for the revival of the *Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami*. In the second year of its emergence attempts were made to revive the practically defunct organization “World Islamic Congress” which was previously constituted at Mecca in 1926. It started functioning again at Karachi from February 1949.¹⁹ A non-official session of the Congress was held in Karachi. Delegates from 19 countries attended in their non-official capacities. It was the third in a series after the Mecca Congress of 1926 and the Jerusalem Congress of 1931. In the same year, the Pakistan government tried to host a congress which was to be attended by official delegates from Muslim states but there was no success. Several Arab and non-Arab Muslim countries showed no interest in such a gathering for mainly two causes:-²⁰

1. The Muslim world witnessed the failure of previous three conferences of Cairo, Mecca and Jerusalem. The Muslim leaders and heads of states could not ascertain about the future of such a Congress.
2. The Congress was not an original idea. It was an initiative first taken by Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia. It would be better if the Congress was resumed by Saudi Arabia itself.

The fourth session of the World Islamic Congress was held also in Karachi from February 9-11, 1951 with the assistance of the government of Pakistan. This Congress gave a new form and shape to the *Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami*, making Karachi the Headquarters of the *Motamar*, with Alhaj Amin al Hussaini, the Grand Mufti of Palestine, as its President and Dr. Inamullah Khan as its secretary-general. It set up a Constitution drafting committee. Its two separate sessions dealing with ‘the Women of Islam’ and the ‘Youth of Islam’ aroused immense interest in the World of Islam.²¹

This session was also not inter-governmental. It was the second attempt from the Pakistani part. Delegates from Muslim countries and the countries where there were a considerable number of Muslim population (that is like China) attended the Congress. India and USSR did not attend it due to the regional and international politics and

diplomacy. Pakistan's Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan (1947-assassinated on 16 October in 1951), inaugurated the Congress. He explained Pakistan's stand arguing that:

It is, therefore, part of the mission which Pakistan has set before itself to do everything in its power to promote closer fellowship and cooperation between Muslim countries. The world is in sore need of light. I have no doubt that light can be provided by Islam.²²

The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem presided over the Congress and he endorsed Liaqat Ali Khan's call for unity of the Muslims and asked for the creation of a Muslim bloc cooperating in matters of culture, economy, politics and defense.²³ The Congress had some notable contributions. Among them were the proposals for establishing a World Muslim News Agency and an International Muslim Development Bank. In this respect, Pakistan's intention for an Islamic bloc was in fact a good initiative. But it did not get any positive response from some other Islamic states. Specially, the secular Muslim states due to their secular commitments could not agree to such a bloc on the Islamic basis. Some of them were doubtful about Pakistan's intentions in this regard.

The response from the Muslim countries was not satisfactory from such political gatherings in the two sessions of the World Islamic Congress held at Karachi. After the third session, Pakistan concentrated in the cooperation of Muslim states in more tangible areas of economy. Consequently, at the end of 1949, a new semi-official organization, namely International Islamic Economic Conference was founded at the initiative of Ghulam Muhammed, Finance Minister of Pakistan. The organization held its first session in November 1949 at Karachi. Pakistani Prime Minister, Liaqat Ali Khan in his inaugural speech, explained the motives and objectives of the Conference. He declared, "Pakistan has only one and only one ambition – to serve Islam and humanity as we all belong to the great brethren of Islam. Islam alone can solve some of the problems facing today."²⁴

Ghulam Muhammad was the President of the Conference. The Conference recommended the economic cooperation and mutual exchange of knowledge and expansion of trade within the Islamic countries. The Conference ended with high hopes of regional economic cooperation among Muslim nations. A permanent

Secretariat was established in Karachi, the then capital of Pakistan. The conference was to meet annually and Tehran was chosen as the venue of the next conference to be held in 1950. After Tehran two other Conferences of the International Islamic Economic Conference were held; one in Syria in 1951 and another in Iran in 1954. The Organization was even recognized as an associate by the United Nations.

Although the headquarters of the World Muslim Congress and International Islamic Economic Conference continued to be located in Karachi, but soon after, Pakistan began to lose interest to the organizations mainly because of the poor response from other Muslim countries. The World Muslim Congress lost direct patronage of the government of Pakistan which it had enjoyed for the first four years of its revival in 1949. On the other hand, the International Islamic Economic Conference lost its initial enthusiasm. Some Arab states could not accept Pakistani leadership under the banner of world Islamic organization. They could not accept a non-Arab state like Pakistan's call for conference in the name of Islam. From the rise of Islam the Arabs have been considering themselves superior to the non-Arabs regarding at least the religious matters. As a result, Pakistan's initiative for Islamic solidarity in this period became a matter of joke to some of the Arab states.²⁵ Due to the reluctance of the Arab states to Pakistan's initiative to organize conferences, it was not able to organize even a single inter-governmental conference at the official level.

The subsequent initiatives of Pakistan to organize inter-governmental conferences also failed as the other Muslim states did not show any interest in the initiative taken by Pakistan to convene such a conference. Pakistan made a serious attempt in 1952 to organize an inter-governmental conference. For this purpose, in the early 1952 Sir Zafarullah Khan, Foreign Minister of Pakistan visited several Islamic states upon the instructions of Pakistan's Prime Minister. He had discussed the common interest of the Muslim states during his tour. After the tour, Prime Ministers of 12 Muslim countries were invited by Pakistan to a meeting. But the conference never took place.²⁶

Pakistan's initiatives for arranging conferences met with poor success. The allegations and criticism that Pakistan had to face from the Muslim *Ummah* for such Islamic initiatives could not be washed off fully, though Pakistan earnestly explained that she

had no other motive in calling the conference than to serve humanity and Islam. The consecutive failures of Pakistan in Islamic conferences from 1949 to 1952 became a turning point in changing the outlook of Pakistan Government in her foreign policy. Pakistan from that time paid only lip service to the cause of Islamic solidarity. Losing trust on the Muslim World, Pakistan for her national security interest, specially against India, sought new ally and thus entered the Western alliance under the guardianship of the United States. As a result, Pakistan in 1954 accepted military aid from the United States, joined the CENTO in 1954, and signed the Baghdad Pact in 1955.²⁷

Pakistan continued her Islamic link with *Ummah* despite her alliance with the West. The Karachi based Muslim Congress continued to function as a non-official international organization and to hold its conference sessions every now and then at one or the other place. In the fifth session of the Congress held in Baghdad in 1962, Inamullah Khan led the Pakistani delegation.²⁸ Inamullah Khan in the session was elected as the Secretary General of the Congress. The sixth session of the Congress was held Mogadishu in 1964.²⁹ The conference appealed to Muslim governments to set the ideal of building up a commonwealth of Muslim countries, which was actually the idea of Pakistan since the revival of the Congress in 1949.

The *Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami* enjoys Consultative status with the UN in New York through the *ECOSOC* and *UNICEF* and observer status with the Jeddah-based Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Between 1951 and 1999, the *Motamar's* Conferences held in different parts of the Islamic World have contributed immensely to the arousing of a feeling of fraternal solidarity in the Muslim *Ummah* and the promotion of institutions for mutual cooperation in diverse fields, including political, economic, religious, educational, and cultural interests. Since its establishment in 1926, the *Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami* has championed the cause of Muslims in Palestine, Kashmir, Mindanao, freedom for Muslim people from European colonial rule, and the economic emancipation of the Muslim *Ummah*.³⁰

In the 1960's the Muslim world witnessed the leadership of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia in forging a common united platform. His call for an Islamic summit for Islam and Islamic solidarity that faced President Gamal Abdel Nasser's (1954-70)

opposition was accepted by the President of Pakistan, Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan (1958-69). The defeat of Arabs in the 1967 war and later arson in al-Aqsa Mosque provided an opportunity to Faisal to call for an Islamic Summit Conference which was proposed to be held in Rabat, Morocco. Pakistan became a member of the Seven-Nation Preparatory Committee which met in Rabat from 8 to 9 September 1969 to organize the conference.

One of the problems that seriously disturbed the conference was the issue of India's admission to it. Indian representation in the world Islamic conferences was frequent before its division with Pakistan. India on regular basis abstained to attend the World Muslim Congress session as its headquarters was located at Karachi and some other factors like the geo-politics of the subcontinent. However, India had hoped to be invited to the conference. India from the very beginning had pleaded that since it contains the third largest Muslim community of the world, it should not be excluded from the Summit.³¹ The Preparatory Committee decided not to invite India. The Committee argued that four categories of countries would be invited:

1. countries with a Muslim majority and a Muslim head of state
2. countries with a Muslim majority and a non-Muslim head of state
3. countries with a Muslim head of state and non-Muslim majority and
4. countries with an almost equal number of Muslims and non-Muslims

Since India did not come under any of the four categories of the countries invited to the conference its request was not conceded by the Preparatory Committee. The decision was clarified by the Moroccan Ambassador while he was visiting Cairo. He stated, "The exclusion of India from the Islamic Conference scheduled to be held in Rabat is based on the fact that the majority of the population there is not Muslims."³²

There were, however, some logical grounds by which India had expected to be invited to the conference which are briefly discussed below:-

Firstly, India had a deep rooted engagement with the Arab world and some other leading Islamic states outside Arabia before and after its independence. Even before the OIC began to take concrete shape, India had shown considerable interest in forging links with the Islamic entities, above all, the Arabs. It had built good bilateral

and multilateral relations with some leading Arab states. Its historical links with Islamic entities were indeed facilitated by developing close bilateral relations with many of the Arab countries. India's warm relations with Egypt under Nasser had played a legendary role in fostering Afro-Asian solidarity, in particular, and the solidarity of the third world countries, in general.³³ Even with countries, like Saudi Arabia, India's relations were cool but correct.³⁴ Against this background, India felt that it should find a place in the founding conference of the OIC. India expected that it would get those states aside in favour of its demand. It appeared so convinced of its claim that not even a high powered delegation was sent to the founding conference at Rabat in 1969 at the invitation of King of Morocco.³⁵ Indian perception was not wrong. Even some of the members of the Preparatory Committee of the proposed conference were in the proposition to include the Indian representation. But the Committee was overwhelmed by Pakistan which had the definite objective of excluding India. However, India, after its dispossession finally and forever from OIC since the Rabat Summit Conference, has been maintaining the trend of good link with the leading Arab and Muslim countries (i.e. Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh etc.)

Secondly, India had a very good historical Islamic connection with the Muslim *Ummah*. From the Pan Islamic Movement to Rabat Summit Conference, India had profound ties with International Islam and it played a leading role in some international Islamic conferences. During the sixties, Indian delegations, composed mostly of Muslims did attend a number of meetings of representatives of Islamic countries and put forward rather forcefully India's views on many issues of contemporary interest.³⁶ From this point of view, India had reinforced its demand in favour of her invitation to Rabat.

Thirdly, India was at that time the third largest country of Muslim population in the world.³⁷ Therefore, Indian claim in this regard was not unfounded.

India could not thus accept the decision taken by the Preparatory Committee and reacted at once. Indian Foreign Minister criticized and protested against the decision of the Committee and demanded that India be invited. The Indian Government described it as an act of serious discrimination against the people of India and its

Muslim population. India's protest was conveyed through its ambassadors in all the capitals of the seven countries which were involved to the Preparatory Committee.³⁸ The Indian Minister for Industrial Development, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, said that it was unfortunate that an attempt was made to exclude India which had "the third largest Muslim population in the world and these Muslims are as such much concerned with happenings in Palestine as the Muslim population elsewhere."³⁹

India tried its level best to be invited to the Rabat Summit despite the final decision of the Preparatory Committee. Indian delegation was kept waiting outside the conference hall for attending the inaugural conference. Due to the constant diplomatic support of friendly states like Egypt and Malaysia, India was able to get the conference to reconsider the issue after it opened on September 23. Consequently, the official Indian delegation to participate on behalf of the Muslim minority of India was approved on the basis of the suggestion of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. Faisal accepted the argument that the desecration of the third holiest place in Islam was a matter of concern to all Muslims, not merely to Muslim states. To him, the large number of Muslim population of India was entitled to be concerned with the matter. Pakistan then convinced and agreed to King Faisal's request to allow the Indian delegation to represent the Muslim community. However, this decision could solve the problem, but it was made complicated by another declaration.

Immediately after the decision to invite India to attend was taken, Ahmed Laraki, the conference spokesman, declared the official Indian delegation headed by the Minister of Industrial Development, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, would arrive next day and until then the Indian Ambassador to Morocco, Gurbachan Singh, would represent his country at the Rabat Summit.⁴⁰ Problems were compounded by this declaration. At this point President Yahya Khan of Pakistan, who had earlier agreed to King Faisal request, questioned the credentials of Gurbachan Singh, a non-Muslim, to represent the Muslim minority of India.⁴¹

President Yahya Khan adopted the anti-Indian attitude not for his individual purpose. The two main factors acted behind this:

1. The people of Pakistan expressed severe reaction against the Indian participation to the Rabat Summit. Even the popular political leader of Pakistan, Z. A. Bhutto, held the view against Indian participation to Rabat and made strong opposition in this regard. He argued that “if India could claim participation on the strength of 10 per cent of Muslim minority residing there, then by the same token Israel can also make out a case for similar privilege”. It can be noted there that before the Rabat summit USSR also sought such an invitation on the same ground but could not be granted.
2. The Rabat Summit was summoned at that time when the Muslim community of India, particularly those of the Indian town of Ahmedabad, had suffered a heavy loss of life and property by the communal clashes.⁴² That was one of the main factors of anti-Indian sentiment of the people of Pakistan. In that situation, the newly empowered military ruler General Yahya Khan could not take any decision independently by his own against the public opinion of Pakistan.

The rigid attitude of President Yahya Khan almost paralyzed the conference work on September 24. Even, he withdrew from the conference and declared not to attend it as long as India was represented. He argued that “if the criterion of participation in the conference is a large Muslim minority then why not to invite Soviet Union, China or Albania, not to say Israel? From the way it treats our brothers, India is to Pakistan what Israel is to the Arabs.”⁴³ In the question of India, the conference members divided into three; some sided with Yahya Khan, some supported India and the others remained neutral.⁴⁴ In this situation, the main purpose of the conference was to be foiled and a mediation mission was required to avert the conference from the imminent collapse. The “Mediation Mission” was practically headed by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman. He conveyed a suggestion to the Indian delegation that it refrain voluntarily from taking part in the meeting.

The Head of the Indian delegation, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, asserted that India considered herself a full member of the conference in accordance with the unanimous decision taken by the conference itself. The mission proposed him to attend India as an observer, but he rejected the offer of observer status for the Indian delegation. The

Tunku Mission finally advised him that it was the consensus of opinion of Muslim leaders that he should avoid interrupting the historic Summit and stay away. On September 24, non-attendance of the India delegation was guaranteed. Yahya Khan got assured. The conference was then extended by one more day upto September 25 for a one-day full-fledged session.

A question may be raised here why the founding Muslim countries of OIC finally agreed with the opinion of Pakistan and its supporters despite of strong advocacy towards India by some of leading Arab states including Saudi Arabia. Was it a diplomatic breakdown of Saudi Arabia, which was the vanguard in its leadership in the sixties on the world of Islam and also in the Rabat Summit? In answering the question it can be said at first that Saudi Arabia did not appear as the opponent to Pakistani leadership. Pakistan, at that time was a united state with the population of East and West Pakistan, formed the largest Muslim population of the world. Pakistan's secession from the OIC meant the death knell to the organization before its birth. Saudi Arabia and other Muslim states, which supported India, realized the situation and followed Pakistan. Rabat Summit was actually the idea of Saudi Arabia and its King Faisal wanted its success at any cost. After the end of Nasser's leadership, Saudi Arabia was able to set up its paramount position on the Muslim *Ummah* by its leadership and the formation of OIC moved its leadership a step forward. Therefore, it may be said that the existence of OIC and its survival for future was much more important to Saudi Arabia than the participation of India in it.

Indian secession from the OIC led a furious controversy in India. The people of opposition parties questioned of seeking membership of such a communal Islamic organization India being a secular state. The Indian government became the target of severe criticism, particularly from the rightist segments of the opposition who considered it as a national humiliation. Indira Gandhi's government with the support of the left justified its decision by referring it to the intrinsic political nature of the Summit Conference and was able to defeat the opposition motion.

From the time of the formation of OIC till today, Indian participation in the OIC has seemed to be important and significant to both India and the OIC. The causes may be clarified as below:-

Firstly, the OIC is certainly a global organization. With total members being 57 in 2013, it is the second largest international organization in the world after the UNO considering the number of its members. The members of the OIC are also the members of various international and regional organizations.⁴⁵ Around one-third members of the UNO are the members of the OIC. The OIC, therefore, is a factor of relevance in multilateral gatherings and does influence the outcome of elections to U.N. bodies and their decisions. India had rightly realized the political, economic and cultural importance of such an organization.

Secondly, geographically, Muslim countries form the immediate and proximate neighbourhood of India in South, South East, Central and West Asia. Particularly, its near neighbours, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives and Mali are its full-fledge active members. Hence, from a geo-strategic point of view, India can hardly afford to overlook the OIC.⁴⁶

Thirdly, the OIC could be the important medium for India in her stand regarding the Kashmir issue, Indo-Pak wars and the politics of the subcontinent. India had a great opportunity to tackle the Pakistani influence on the OIC and the OIC's biasness to Pakistan, the accusations that India had been frequently made against Pakistan and OIC, particularly regarding the Kashmir issue, if it was its member. In fact, India's absence from the organization certainly left it wide open for Pakistani diplomacy, and Pakistani influence in the OIC grew by leaps and bounds.⁴⁷ India held the view that all the resolutions endorsed by the OIC on Kashmir issue had been taken in favour of Pakistan. India held the perception that the OIC was totally dominated by Pakistan, and it was simply serving the purpose of Pakistani foreign policy, particularly vis-à-vis India.⁴⁸ Pakistan and its friends have succeeded in preventing India from entering into the organization for more than four decades and India's absence left the space wide open for their hostile disposition towards India. The situation could be different if India had the full involvement in the OIC.

Fourthly, though the OIC had been created on the basis of Islamic unity and solidarity, its activities did not confined within the religion only. Its area of activities has been enlarged subsequently in various aspects. The OIC has hardly success from

the political point of view. It has notable success in the economy spheres. Particularly, its specialized agency Islamic Development Bank (IDB) successfully runs its activities. The bulk of the economic activities of the OIC are executed through the IDB and these activities are confined mainly within the member states of the OIC. However, it has a well developed on-going programme for aid and assistance in education, particularly for the minorities living outside the OIC member states. Direct loan and grants are provided on selective basis to various educational organizations in such countries as well as scholarships for higher studies are available; but these are mainly focused on school education. Many years back the Islamic Development Bank was permitted to operate a programme in India. The late Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, did allow in early 1970 the disbursement of such OIC educational grants to various minority educational institutions and registered societies run in India, and by now, this programme has picked up and is continuing.⁴⁹ It is specifically this area of educational activities that the government of India could show a little more enthusiasm and interest for attracting grants. If India manages to become even an associate member, it would be entitled to the disbursement of loans and grants under other on-going programmes of IDB also.

Fifthly, OIC has a notable success in the cultural area also. India possesses a rich heritage of Islamic culture and civilization. India could encourage more participation and exposure of its scholars and opinion-makers to their counterparts in the OIC countries. A greater participation of Indian scholars and their interactions with the cultural activities of the OIC could be better for Indian diplomacy and by the interactions India had the opportunity to attract the people within the OIC member states to their culture and heritage.

It is clear from the above discussion that India was not finally allowed to participate as full delegates mainly due to the stand taken by the Pakistani delegation. Pakistani arguments may have some logical grounds for that particular time and condition, but these have been proved invalid by the subsequent activities of the OIC. OIC granted observer status to Thailand (1998), a Buddhist country and Russia (2005) with less than 25 million Muslim. It is also irony of sorts that the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), of which India is a founding member and has several non-Muslim countries,

got observer status in 1977. Why not India, then? This is simply because the issue has been fully dominated by Pakistan. At the beginning Pakistan opposed Indian participation to OIC referring it not a Muslim majority. After the accession of Russia and Thailand to it, Pakistan set another pretext again its accession to OIC and that was the Kashmir issue.

India since 1969 has emphasized on the bilateral relations with the leading Muslim countries. India tried to gain the maximum benefits from those countries although it was not an OIC country. In the recent times, export of Indian manpower to the Middle East and other Islamic countries has increased rapidly due to its relations with those countries. The making of political balance in the subcontinent is another important cause of such relations so that Pakistan and its friends cannot use OIC against India regarding the Kashmir and some other issues. Behind this stance, India had emerged stronger it could afford to ignore the OIC and concentrate on further developing bilateral relations with friendly countries irrespective of their OIC membership. Though Saudi Arabia still holds the view in favour of Indian participation in OIC by granting it as an observer status, but it could not be implemented as Pakistan objected it as earlier and India did not evince any interest to it.

On the eve of historic visit of King Abdullah to India in 2006, he said that “India should have an observer status like Russia in the OIC and it would be beneficial if Pakistan proposes India’s candidature”. Pakistan objected that any country wishing to get the observer status with the OIC should not be involved in any dispute with a member state. On the other hand, OIC was assessed by India no more than a paper organization which had no purposeful role to play except a decorative and demonstrative one.⁵⁰ It was argued that there was no point in wasting time in courting such an organization. It has drawn a big question mark whether India is at all interested to get merely an observer status. In 2006, Hamid Ansari, the former diplomat and Indian Vice President, said that India deserved to be an OIC member, not just an observer. India as an original invitee definitely can deserve the OIC membership. India would be accepted as a member simply on the basis of its legitimate claim of having the second largest Muslim population in the world. But in this respect, India has to come forward at first. As per the OIC charter, a country has

to take its own initiative for any kind of membership of the OIC. India should hope to cultivate relationship with the OIC through its friendly states like Egypt, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Malaysia, to counter Pakistan propaganda among the member states of the OIC. India will have to make formal move asking the OIC for accepting it as an associate member. It is only after this initial move has been made, the friendly countries could play a role in India's favour. A policy decision of Indian foreign policy-makers is needed on such a membership. On the other hand, the OIC authority has also to re-think about how far it is rational to conduct such an organization of the greater Islamic *Ummah* leaving a huge number of Muslim population in India outside the organization.

Pakistan played an important role in strengthening cooperation among Muslim states by its active participation in the programmes and activities of the OIC. It played a very vital role in the subsequent Summits and conferences of Islamic Foreign Ministers of the OIC. Her first mission to stop Indian accession to OIC was successful. In the first Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers (held in Jeddah on March 22-23, 1970), Pakistan played a crucial role in setting up a secretariat and in getting it through. Pakistan's plea was that such a body was necessary for the smooth working and proper servicing of all future meetings of Heads of Governments and other leaders of Muslim countries. Pakistan as a leading Muslim country got the opportunity to host an Islamic Summit in Karachi between 26 and 28 December, 1970. Dr. Abdul Muttalib b Malik, head of the Pakistan delegation, elected as its chairman. His proposal and choice to elect Tunku Abdur Rahman, former President of Malaysia, as Secretary-General of the Secretariat was endorsed by the conference.

The conference was inaugurated by the Pakistani President, General Yahya Khan. In his inaugural speech he emphasized on the meaningful cooperation among the Muslim *Ummah*. He said, "We should concentrate on what is common among us and extend gradually this common consent and areas of agreement to our mutual benefit." He affirmed Pakistan's firm and unwavering support for the Arab cause and expressed his hope that the conference "will once again demonstrate our united stand that the aggression must be vacated and the sons of the soil regain their birthright".⁵¹ In the conference Pakistan submitted proposal for establishing an International

Muslim Bank for Trade and Development. By the end of Karachi conference, the OIC got firmly rooted. The conference had taken vital decisions regarding its organizational structure, its charter, appointment of Secretary-General, establishment of Islamic News Agency, Islamic Cultural Centres and Islamic Bank etc. Some of these issues were adopted as agenda in the upcoming Third Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers, to be held in Jeddah from February 29 to March 4, 1972, for further discussion. In short, the Karachi conference proved to be vital significance in the history of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The disintegration of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state in 1971 marked a new phase in the history of both the countries. Pakistan after its disintegration designed its foreign policy and the relations towards Islamic *Ummah* and the OIC in a new setting. At the same time, Bangladesh as a separate independent state designed its foreign policy on the basis of the state's fundamental principles. From Pan Islamic Movement to 1971, the Muslims of East Bengal and East Pakistan, as part of South Asia and later of Pakistan respectively, had the similar concern to Islam and the Muslim *Ummah*. The overwhelming majority of Bangladesh are Muslims. In spite of its separation from West Pakistan, Bangladesh was still then the second largest Muslim country in the world. It is natural that the country, after its independence, would be keen on establishing close relations with all other Muslim countries, particularly the countries of the Middle East. Regarding its relations to Muslim *Ummah*, the first priority was given to remove the misconceptions about its independence. Bangladesh had successfully done the job and a dramatic breakthrough took place at the Second Summit of the OIC in 1974 by which Bangladesh was formally admitted to the OIC. This in turn marked a turning point in its integration more profoundly than before to the global Islamic network.

Notes and References:

1. During the First World War the British signed a secret agreement with the Arab nationalists led by Sharif Hossein of Mecca. The British High Commissioner of Egypt, McMahon, and Hussein signed an agreement after their correspondence in Cairo, called 'McMahon-Hussein Correspondence'. By the agreement, the British promised to provide all kind of support and help to the Arab nationalists in their movement for creating a greater Arab empire under Hussein, provided that the Arab nationalists would support the British and fight in the war against the Ottomans. The British won the victory and in lieu of transferring power to Sharif Hussein and creating a greater Arab empire, they divided the region into pieces and imposed Mandate rule over the areas.
2. The term 'Zionism' is derived from the root word 'Zion'. 'Zion' is a name of a hill in Jerusalem where Prophet David and his successors lived. The Jewish prophets and their successors built temples and palaces over the hill. The Jews believe the Rock of 'Zion' as the midpoint of their religious and cultural life. Palestine has been regarded as the land of peace and prophets since Prophet Abraham's coming (around 2000 B.C.) to Canaan (Phoenicia) or Palestine (the land of Philistines) from Ur (centre of Chaldean Civilization). After long time gap of Abraham's going to Egypt his descendant Moses returned to the 'Promised Land' (around 1200 B.C.) with the Banu Israelis (the successors of Israel, a nickname of Prophet Jacob). Later on, Saul established the Kingdom there and David, Solomon and their successors gradually enlarged it. The Kingdom was then divided into two Kingdoms; Judah and Israel. The Kingdoms were gradually invaded by the Assyrians (721 B.C.), Babylonians (586 B.C), Greeks, Ptolemys, Romans (63 B.C.) and Byzantines (395 C.E). The Jews were driven out from the land and they scattered in Arabia, China, North Africa and Europe (upto Poland and Russia) during this period of invasion. Finally, Palestine came under the Muslim rule (634-till to date). But the hope of returning one day to the 'Promised Land' of the Old Testament never died among the ousted Jews. In the late nineteenth century, the Christian Europe committed oppression to Jews considering them as the killer of Jesus Christ and they were regarded as second class citizens despite of their huge wealth and resources. Consequently, the Jews or the 'Lovers of Zion' started a movement demanding a homeland for them in Palestine and expanded it throughout the world which was called the 'Zionist Movement'.
3. During the First World War the British and the Allies sought the support of Jews in favour of the War against the Central Powers. Simultaneously, the Zionist organizations, with those of the USA (where the Jews were in better position in economic and political spheres) made pressure on the British Government for the creation of a national homeland

in Palestine. As a result, the British Foreign Minister, Arthur James Balfour, issued, on 2 November 1917, the 'Balfour Declaration' where the British Government promised to set up a national homeland in Palestine for the Jews. On the other hand, the British made a commitment to the Arab nationalist or Arab rebels, led by Sharif Hussein of Mecca against the Ottomans, for their assistance in building up a greater Arab Empire including the Palestinian territory. The double standard of the British regarding Palestine was the main cause of the Palestine Crisis.

4. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada (ed.), *Foundation of Pakistan; All-India Muslim League Documents: 1906-1947*, Vol. II, National Publishing House, Karachi, 1970, p. 584, p 594, p 600
5. S. Sharifuddin Pirzada, "Quaid-i-Azam and Islamic Solidarity", *Pakistan Horizon*, Fourth Quarter, Karachi, 1976, pp. 60-72
6. Jamiluddin Ahmad (ed.), *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II, Lahore, 1964, p. 14
7. Allama Iqbal was a poet, philosopher and political leader of Pakistan. He is also considered as the spiritual founder of Pakistan. See 'Iqbal's statement on the partition of Palestine', G.A Allana (ed.), *Pakistan Movement: Historical Documents*, Paradise Subscription Agency, Karachi, 1968, pp. 149-52
8. The delegation comprised Choudhry Khaliqzaman, Abdur Rahman Siddiqui, Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Maulana Irfan. London Conference was attended by Choudhury Khaliqzaman and Abdur Rahman Siddiqui only.
9. The League of Nations was the first international organisation founded in 1920 as a result of the Paris Peace Conference that ended the First World War with the mission of maintaining world peace. Its primary goals were preventing wars through collective security and disarmament, and settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration. At its greatest extent from 28 September 1934 to 23 February 1935, it had 58 members.
10. Choudhury Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Longman Green & Co. Ltd, Lahore, pp. 198-203, 208-210
11. Masuma Hasan, *Pakistan in a Changing World*, Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, Karachi, 1978, p. 98
12. *Ibid.* p. 92
13. The RCD was a regional organization which was established on 22 July 1964 between Pakistan, Turkey and Iran.
14. According to a statistics, Pakistan had contributed for the Palestinian refugees \$76,2227.00 between 1952 to 1974, See *Pakistan Horizon*, Third Quarter, 1974, p. 85

15. Masuma Hasan, *op.cit.*, pp. 221-222
16. He declared that the purpose was “to investigate the actual situation of Islam and measures to be taken in defense of its interest”. See H.A.R. Gibb, ‘The Islamic Congress at Jerusalem in 1931’, *Survey of International Affairs*, Oxford, 1934, p. 101
17. See Appendix- VIII
18. Sisir Gupta, ‘Islam as a Factor in Pakistan’s Foreign Relations’, *India Quarterly*, New Delhi, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 234
19. See Appendix-VIII
20. Aslam Siddiqui, *Pakistan Seeks Security*, London, 1960, p. 303
21. See Appendix-VIII
22. *Dawn*, February, 10, Karachi, 1951
23. *The Islamic Review*, London, Vol. 39, July 1951, pp. 24-36
24. *Dawn*, 26 November, 1949
25. As for example, King Farooq of Egypt once made a contemptuous remark about Pakistan’s initiatives for arranging Islamic conferences and its Pan-Islamic concern, “Don’t you know that Islam was born on August 14, 1947” (the Pakistan’s date of birth).
26. See Sisir Gupta, *op.cit.*, pp. 240-241. See also Sulayman S. Nyang, ‘Pakistan’s Role in the Organization of Islamic Conferences’, *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*. Vol. 7, No. 3, Spring 1984, p. 15, pp. 30-31
27. As the consequences of the Cold War (1945-91), the states or nations of the world were directly or indirectly influenced either by the Communist Russia (USSR) or the Capitalist USA. There was no war between the two powers directly, but a balance was maintained between the two blocs in different regions of the world through local proxy wars with their assistance. Some nations tried to maintain neutrality forming Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Pakistan at the very outset of her independence tried to hold neutrality making a strong tie with the *Ummah*. After its failure in the attempt to achieve Islamic solidarity, Pakistan felt national insecurity in the regional politics of South Asia. Pakistan’s alliance with the US bloc is the consequence of the circumstances. CEATO and Baghdad Pact were the alliances directly sponsored by the US bloc. For the Pakistani involvement with the US alliance system, India, another powerful state of the region, strengthen her ties with the USSR for her security against Pakistan. This trend was continued in the later period and its effectiveness was shown through different events of the subcontinent, specially during the disintegration of Pakistan and independence movement of Bangladesh.
28. For a detailed account of the Congress, see A.B.A. Haleem, ‘The Baghdad World Muslim Conference’, *Pakistan Horizon*, Karachi, Vol. 15, No. 3, p. 1963

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29. For details , see Inamullah Khan, ‘The M’otamar al-Alam al-Islami: A Brief Description of Its Sixth Conference held at Mogadishu’, *Islamic Review*, Vol. 53, No. 6, June 1965, pp. 27-29
 30. See Appendix-VIII
 31. See Ram Dhamiji, ‘The Rabat Episode’, *India and Foreign Review*, November 1, 1969, New Delhi, pp. 11-12, p. 24
 32. *The Morning News*, September 18, Karachi, 1969
 33. Zafar Imam, *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Continuity and Change and India*, ABC Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000, p. 71
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. *Ibid.*
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. The number of Muslim population of India at that time was around 120 million. It was the third largest after that of Pakistan and Indonesia. At present, India has more than 200 million of Muslim population. It is the second largest Muslim population after that of Indonesia. India has been maintaining this position since the independence of Bangladesh from Pakistan.
 38. See *Times of India*, September 17 and 18, New Delhi, 1969 and ‘India Protest to Malaysia’, *Hindustan Times*, September 20, New Delhi, 1969
 39. See ‘Islamic Summit Conference’, *Asia Recorder*, Vol. 16, January 8-14, New Delhi, 1970
 40. *The Daily Telegraph*, September 24, London, 1969
 41. *Dawn*, September 25, 1969
 42. See ‘Rabat Moot urged to tackle Muslim Genocide in India: Cables Sent to Leaders’, *The Morning News*, September 23, Lahore, 1969
 43. *Asia Recorder*, No. 19, New Delhi, 1970, p. 9324
 44. King Hussain of Jordan, the Foreign Minister of Turkey and the Reza Shah of Iran solidly sided with Yahya Khan. Reza Shah warned the conference Chairman, King Hassan of Morocco, that he would immediately join any walk out by General Yahya Khan should India attend the session. King Hussein of Jordan also decided to stay away in support of Yahya Khan. On the contrary, UAR, Algeria, Sudan, Libya and South Yemen stood firmly in favour of India’s participation.
 45. The OIC accounts for about 29 per cent of the total membership of the UNO, 47 per cent of the African Union, 100 per cent of the membership of the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), 50 per

cent of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), 30 per cent of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

46. Zafar Imam, *op.cit.* p. 73

47. *Ibid.* p. 72

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.* pp. 76-77

50. *Ibid.* pp. 72-73

51. For the text of his address see *Pakistan Times*, December 27, 1970

In the previous two chapters there has been an attempt to portray on the background, genesis and major activities executed by OIC through its summits and other conferences and the role of South Asian Muslims to Islam and *Ummah* in general and the Bengalee Muslims in particular prior to the emergence of Bangladesh. This chapter will be dwelt upon the overall nature of foreign Islamic linkage of Bangladesh with the Muslim world specially the OIC. In the entire gamut of foreign Islamic linkage of Bangladesh OIC forms a very important aspect. The linkage dates back hundreds of years prior to the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state. During the War of Independence of Bangladesh (March- December 1971) its global Islamic connection temporarily detached due to the Pakistani propaganda against Bangladesh in the Islamic world. The leftist elements in politics, secular and socialist ideology and Indo-Soviet inclination of Bangladesh became the primary factors of Pakistani campaign and misconceptions of the Islamic countries. The situation began to change by the gradual working of Bangladesh government by designing its external relations with the Islamic countries in a new shape. It took several years to remove the misconceptions. Immediately after its independence, Bangladesh in quest of recognition and material support for the war- ravaged country required to reconnect itself with the Islamic world. The triumph became fully successful when Bangladesh was integrated with the highest body of the Islamic *Ummah*, the OIC during the historic Lahore Summit in 1974. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1972–75) and his government played an important role in the process of reintegrating Bangladesh to the *Ummah* and in its admission to the OIC. Since then, Bangladesh has been actively and very sincerely participating in all the activities of the OIC and playing unique role in some cases. In the post-Mujib period, de-secularisation and anti-leftist ideology were taken and Islam re-emerged as an important factor of the country which definitely brought Bangladesh closer to the *Ummah* than before. The military regimes along with political and economic reforms gave increasing attention to Islam and laid impetus on promoting relations with the Islamic countries. This trend was impeded later and the nature of relations of Bangladesh with the Islamic countries as well as the OIC almost got the way of the nature of its internal and official Islamic ideology.

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state in December 1971 from Pakistan in the Indian sub-continent appears to be a unique phenomenon in international affairs. The Caesarean birth of Bangladesh marked the success of the

first armed separatist struggle in the post 1945 era, post-colonial Third World.¹ It appears to be the only country which was created out of another newly independent country, Pakistan.² One of the peculiar features of the newly independent Bangladesh was that it surpassed its mother country, Pakistan, from its number of Muslim population and became the second largest Muslim country in the world after Indonesia. Internally also, around 90 percent of its population is Muslim. Historically, the peoples of Bangladesh³ and Arabia, the cradle of Islam, have ancient links dating back to the seventh century A.D. The Arabs had commercial, religious and cultural contacts with the area, now comprising Bangladesh, long before the Muslim conquest of Bengal in the beginning of the 13th century. This contact became closer and far more intimate after the Muslim conquest. Bangladesh territory was ruled by the Muslims more than 550 years prior to the British and they left Islamic influences in the region in religion, language, culture, customs and tradition etc. Throughout the medieval age⁴, Bengal was ruled almost by the outsider Muslim rulers and as such spontaneous global connection of Bengal with Muslims and Islam was built up during the period. Furthermore, many Arab saints and savants sailed for this country to propagate Islam. In this way, this area gradually came in close contact with the Arabs.⁵

Though, the Muslims in the region fostered Islam tempered with local characteristics, held the sentiment of keeping up ties with the Muslim *Ummah*.⁶ Bengalee Muslims upheld the sentiment even during the British period and assimilated themselves with the international Islam despite the limitations imposed on them. East Bengal which was renamed East Pakistan in Pakistan period and Bangladesh after its independence had shown considerable devotion to Islam and Muslim *Ummah* through ages as part of South Asia in general and Bengal in particular. The re-emergence of the *ulema* in the arena of Bengal politics in 1919 spearheading the pervasive anti-British Khilafat movement with Muslim support at every level, Islam and *ulema* continued to play very important roles in the political mobilization of the Bengalee Muslims up to the partition of 1947. The Khilafat Movement stirred up Bengalee Muslims with righteous indignation.⁷ The people of East Bengal had been taken in by the ostensible religious slogans of the Muslim League.

During the India-Pakistan partition, the territory was incorporated with Pakistan for the sake of Islam. The Bengalee Muslims made their commitment in the process to the partition of India and supported the demand for Pakistan even more vigorously than the Muslims in West Punjab, Sind or other places which later on constituted West Pakistan.⁸ Bengalee Muslims were associated with the different phases of Pakistan movement during the period 1940 to 1947 and they played an active part in materializing an independent homeland for the Muslims. Bengalee Muslim League leaders were instrumental in putting forward the Muslim League Resolution which marked the real starting point for the Pakistan movement. It was Abul Kashem Fazlul Huq (1873-1962) hailing from East Bengal, who officially proposed the Lahore Resolution which was supported by all the Muslim League representatives including the Bengalee members at the 27th session of the Muslim League. He wanted to incorporate Bengal with the Pakistan state in order to political and economic emancipation as well as religious independence of Bengal which its Muslims had not enjoyed since the coming of the British. The Muslims of Bengal worked wholeheartedly for the creation of Pakistan from 1940 onwards. H. S Suhrawardy and some other Bengalee Muslim leaders also supported the cause.

During the Pakistan period the people of East Pakistan showed the similar sentiments to the cause of Islamic *Ummah* as the other Muslims of the world including those of West Pakistan. The East Pakistani legislators were vocal to the Muslim cause and in this matter interestingly enough, some East Pakistani legislators demonstrated chauvinistic tendencies more pronounced than those of the West Pakistanis.⁹ Despite the discrimination carried out by the West Pakistani ruling class, East Pakistan demonstrated the identical identity as West Pakistan in foreign relations with the Islamic countries.

The historical links of East Pakistan territory with the Islamic *Ummah* began to disconnect with the decline of integration between West Pakistan and East Pakistan. When the disparities between the two parts of Pakistan reached at its height and East Pakistan moved towards the War of Independence, most Islamic countries incorporated with West Pakistan's stand against Bangladesh. The Islamic countries had great reservation on the armed struggle for independence of the people of Bangladesh against Pakistan. During the Liberation War of Bangladesh, Pakistan

began a domestic and international propaganda campaign about the problem and attained success. As a result, the people of the Islamic countries saw the liberation war of the people of Bangladesh with suspicion. They perceived the freedom struggle of Bangladesh as the disintegration of Pakistan as well as the disintegration of Islamic *Ummah*. The Muslim states particularly the Arab world thought that it was an internal matter of Pakistan and termed the struggle as a secessionist war. The Islamic countries considered the war against an Islamic state, Pakistan, as a foreign conspiracy to weaken the solidarity of Islamic *Ummah*. Some took the Independence Movement as an act of ruining the Islamic values in a state which achieved independence in 1947 in the name of these values. Even the Muslim community of India kept quiet and did not seem to support the independence war of Bangladesh. Unlike the Islamic countries they perceived the armed conflict against Pakistan as fratricidal.¹⁰ Pakistan made its endeavours to raise anti-Bengalee Muslims sentiment among the Muslim countries by underestimating the Bengalee Muslims that they were converted Muslims from Hindus and they fostered Hindu culture and the freedom struggle of Bangladesh was instigated and influenced by Hindus of India. Pakistan tried to make understand that the independence movement was a secessionist movement carried out by a section of misguided people with the support of India and it required tough handling. Even President Ayub Khan rated the Bengalis as “inferior Muslims”.¹¹ All these things confused the perception of the Islamic countries about Bangladesh which required counter advocacy and propaganda in favour of Bangladesh that was totally absent.

Pakistan was able to fully exploit the misconceptions of the Islamic world against Bangladesh. Diplomatic support was given to Pakistan during the conflict by Iran and the Arab states of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco and the Sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf, while the other Arab states - Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Algeria remained comparatively silent, as did the Muslim countries of Southeast Asia.¹² Majority of Islamic states chose either to support Pakistan or remain neutral in the struggle for independence. The Islamic countries had hardly knowledge about the Pakistani exploitation towards the East Pakistani people. The original truth was not exposed to them and thus the Islamic countries appeared to fall victims to the alleged propaganda of Pakistan.¹³ The Islamic world and more specifically the Arab world inclined to Pakistan's cause for different reasons. These may be noted below:-

1. Pakistan was one of the strongest Islamic countries in terms of military power. It assisted the Islamic countries by providing its soldiers during the internecine strife of those countries. From the very outset Pakistan had maintained extremely good relations with those countries. In the multilateral forum its advocacy on the causes of Islam was renowned. In return, the Islamic countries lent their full support to Pakistan when it faced the crisis in 1971. Bangladesh, though a part of Islamic *Ummah*, was badly misunderstood by the Islamic countries upon the campaign of Pakistan and they had no other option without supporting Pakistan under the situation.
2. Pakistan had the skilled and semi-skilled manpower exported in some of the countries as workers. Some had established themselves as tradesmen, shop owners and sales person. They kept the economy of those countries running since early 1950s. In other word, economy of those countries much depended on the working of those people. They had great influence on the governments of those countries and maintained a strong lobby with the governments and expressed their views against the war of independence and in favour of Pakistan Government.
3. The Islamic world and the OIC upheld their views in general in favour of Pakistan despite India having very good ties with some of Islamic countries regarding the Indo-Pak hostility.¹⁴ The Indo-Pak hostility in one hand and Indo-Bangladesh ties on the other led Pakistan to carry out anti- liberation propaganda of Bangladesh. Pakistan became successful to persuade the Islamic countries by the propaganda that India encouraged Bangladesh to fight for independence from Pakistan. Pakistan was able to persuade that the disintegration of Pakistan would weaken Pakistan and enable India to gain a big strategic advantage over Pakistan in South Asia.¹⁵ The existence of Pakistan in the eastern part of India created a psychological pressure and security problem for India in restoring and maintaining stability and peace in the eastern states, i.e. the Seven Sisters. Therefore, from the military point of view Bangladesh's geographic position is of immense strategic value to India.¹⁶ The Islamic countries did not actually want that Pakistan, the largest Muslim Country in the world be dismembered and thereby rendered weak in the context of the global political environment.¹⁷

4. Whereas Pakistan continuously made its propaganda against Bangladesh, unfortunately, Bangladesh could not counter it and wash off the misconceptions from the minds of the people of Islamic countries during the Liberation War of 1971 and immediately in the post independence period. It took several years to remove the misconceptions. The history of Pakistan's relations with the Muslim countries from 1947 to 1971 had been entirely circumscribed by West Pakistani interest and perspectives.¹⁸ Even until 1965 at least, East Pakistan exhibited no separate identity in foreign policy issues.¹⁹ During the time of 1965 September War, Pakistan had the absolute control on the central authority and as such they could use their official representatives and embassies in different Islamic countries in favour of Pakistan against India. East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) could not use its official communicating elements. In this regard, its friendly states like India and Soviet Union could not play any role as these countries were not beyond the suspicion of the Islamic countries. It happened at a time when Soviet influence in West Asia and the Middle East was beginning to decline and the severe defeat of Pakistan by Indo- Bangladesh forces was regarded universally as a resounding success for Soviet diplomacy in South Asia. This defeat sent shock waves to the Islamic countries. The Islamic world thus believed whatever Pakistani representatives stated. Bangladesh was thus constantly alleged by Pakistan and it did not avail to disprove the charges brought against it.

Indo-Soviet influence and the leftist elements in the government appeared to be one of the factors of misconceptions. During the nine month long war the Awami League appeared to have aligned itself to some of the ideals of a leftist party.²⁰ The Mujibnagar government, the first government of Bangladesh during the time of independence movement, was largely influenced by the left-wing elements. The pro-Moscow supporters in Bangladesh played a prominent role in influencing the Mujibnagar government. The pro-Moscow communist parties in Bangladesh supported the formation of the Mujibnagar government. The leftist parties had the dominant role in the War of Independence. The Communist Party of Bangladesh led by Mr. Moni Singh and the Pro-Moscow National Awami Party (NAP) led by Professor Muzaffar Ahmed closely worked with the Awami League leaders for the War of Independence. Even the pro-Peking Bangladesh National Awami Party and its

leader Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani had linkage to Communist Chinese government. Bhashani sent a message to the Chinese Prime Minister Chou-En-Lai urging him to recognize the Mujibnagar government.²¹ The Islamic countries with some exceptions taking the international politics and national ideology in the subcontinent under consideration adopted the pro-Pakistani stand. The Islamic countries and even the US administration failed to read the situation correctly and they laid emphasis on the prevention of war between India and Pakistan instead of resolving the core political issues behind the Bangladesh crisis. They could not understand that the creation of Bangladesh was the best solution for Pakistan's political troubles.

As Bangladesh was influenced by the left-wing elements and ideology, it gained full support of India and Soviet Union for the independence struggle and as a result Bangladesh became very close to India and the Soviet Union and its 'satellite countries' in Eastern Europe.²² After independence, the relations with India and the Soviet Union strengthened with every passing day during this time. Bangladesh was grateful to both these countries for the assistance extended to them during the war of independence. Even after its independence very close relationship with other communist countries like Cuba, Yugoslavia, North Vietnam and North Korea along with Soviet Union and Eastern European Communist countries was preferred. As a result, recognition came quickly from the communist countries where Western countries were slow in recognizing Bangladesh. Soviet ideology played a very prominent role in the society and politics of Bangladesh right after its independence in 1971. The newly independent Bangladesh demonstrated the left-leaning economic policy by nationalizing all the industries in 1972.

Soviet-Bangladesh good relationship was an important element of Pakistani campaign against Bangladesh in the Arab countries. As a part of Cold War Soviet Union maintained a good relationship with India; lent its support to the cause of the people of Bangladesh and extended its good relationship with Bangladesh; and exposed its rivalry to Pakistan.²³ On the one hand, the Indo-Pak hostility and on the other, India's unconditional support to Bangladesh during the Liberation War against Pakistan became a source of anger of Pakistan and other Islamic states. India began its own media campaign in defense of the pro-independence faction. As India was considered

a non-Muslim nation, the majority of conservative Arab nations were in support of Pakistan. Furthermore, the Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty in 1972 sent a wrong message to the Western and Islamic countries.²⁴ The Treaty was also contrary to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's vision of neutrality of Bangladesh as he declared earlier. The Treaty actually locked Bangladesh formally for 25 years into Indo-Soviet orbit in view of the fact that India concluded another similar Friendship Treaty with Soviet Union in August 1971.

The misperceptions affected the Islamic countries so profoundly that no Arab country recognized Bangladesh immediately after its independence. Some countries like Syria, Algeria and Egypt showed a comparatively early interest in recognizing Bangladesh. Egypt extended its support to Bangladesh during the Liberation War and criticized oppressions of Pakistan against it.²⁵ Of all the Arab nations, Egypt was the most sympathetic and responsive to Bangladesh in the first three years of its existence.²⁶ Yet, these countries restrained to recognize Bangladesh, because, Pakistan threatened to cut off diplomatic relations with nations that recognized Bangladesh, thus discouraging these Muslim states from helping the new nation. The other Islamic countries did not come forward enthusiastically to recognize Bangladesh. Islamic world took time to recognize it. They earlier took the issue of the War of Independence and dismemberment of Pakistan negatively influenced by the Pakistani campaign. Their suspicion about the legitimacy of the liberation increased when the Indo-Pak war started on December 3, 1971 and within the next 13 days the Pakistan army surrendered to the Joint Command of the Indian and Bangladesh armies. The people of the Islamic countries and even a portion of Bangladesh itself accepted the Pakistani defeat with much grief. The new state was ignored by the Muslim countries for two reasons:-

1. misinformation about the independence of Bangladesh propagated to them by Pakistan and
2. the nature of Mujib government.²⁷ Their suspicion was prolonged due to the presence of the Indian army in Bangladesh soil till March 1972. More importantly, they saw that Bangladesh emerged as a country where Islam did not play vital role and even Islam was neglected in the very first constitution enacted in 1972.

Besides, some internal policies and reforms impeded the positive image of Bangladesh.²⁸

The misconceptions were found in a consolidated form when Bangladesh adopted the state constitution, unlike that of India, emphasizing on secularism and socialism keeping Islam aside. Of the four principles or pillars of the state policy, namely, nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism, the expressions 'secularism and socialism' were misunderstood in the Islamic countries.²⁹ They seemed to have confused secularism with atheism and socialism with communism. Secularism and socialism were the alien concepts and the general people had never been prepared to work for these concepts during the Liberation War. Even after independence, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his associates were not clear about how to implement socialism and secularism in Muslim majority Bangladesh, where most of the population were both religious and in favour of private property, which forms the cornerstone of the concept of capitalism. The people of Bangladesh, who fought for independence, actually were not familiar with the concept of secularism and socialism. The application of these alien concepts in Bangladesh during the post-independence period, in the state's policies and actions, just indicates an ideological colonialism of alien powers over an independent state. Bangladesh which once upon a time became the colony of Pakistan physically between 1947 and 1971 was brought under the ideological colonialism of India and Soviet Union at least for few years after its independence. It seems that Bangladesh is passed from one colonial power to another.

In fact, the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 was the fulfillment of Bengalee nationalism which is said to have originated thousand years before the birth of Pakistan. Bengalee nationalism got the secular character more profoundly by the influence of Indian secularism. It bears such peculiar features as it is non-sectarian and secular; it is the spirit of self-determination; and it glorifies Bengalees as a separate entity. The hold of Bengalee nationalism rooted so profoundly in East Pakistani politics that despite the constant political Islamization in the name of Islamic solidarity and Muslim separatism under the guidance of the Pakistani ruling classes during 1947 and 1971, most East Bengalee Muslims distanced themselves from political Islam and started preferring secular institutions for the sake of their Bengalee identity. The victory of 'Bengalee nationalism' over the religion-based state

of Pakistan signaled the departure of “political Islam” or Islam-based state ideology of the Pakistani period (1947–71) because ‘Bengalee nationalism’ assimilated with the secular character. In that sense, unification of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and West Pakistan in a single unit from 1947 to 1971 based on religion was a temporary solution and the struggle was in fact not between West Pakistan and East Pakistan; rather it was struggle between the West Pakistani autocracy and Bengalee nationalism. The clash of these two identities—“Islamic” (Pakistani) and “secular” (Bengalee)—ultimately led to the creation of Bangladesh.

The creation of Bangladesh delegitimized the “Two Nation Theory,” which in 1947 justified the communal partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan. The adoption of the four-pronged state ideology of nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism soon after its emergence marked the departure of Islam-based state ideology. The four principles indicated not only its separation from Pakistan physically but also ideologically. However, this trend did not last long. In the early years of its independence, this trend continued till the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1972–75). Resultantly, the overthrow of Awami League government by a military coup d’état in August 1975 brought into forth Islam-oriented state ideology by shunning secularism and socialism. Thus Islam re-emerged as an important factor in the country, both socially and politically.

Bangladesh in its early phase faced difficulties in establishing formal relations with the Islamic countries. As misconceptions prevailed in the Arab and Islamic world, the Islamic countries made strong reservations towards Bangladesh.³⁰ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman expected that Islamic countries would recognize the existence of Bangladesh and help it in salvaging the economy with their immense financial resources. He and his colleagues were surprised, however, to find that some of the Islamic countries adopted an ostrich-like attitude and continued to harp upon the so-called Islamic unity of Pakistan.³¹ They did not accord recognition to Bangladesh, although a majority of Muslims of former united Pakistan were the citizens of this country. In the immediate aftermath of the war of independence, war-devastated Bangladesh needed goodwill and financial aid from all the countries specially the rich Muslim countries to relieve it from the damage.³² But the Muslim nations of the world mourned the blow to the surrender of Pakistan, an avowedly Islamic state. The OIC, despite the reservations of

some states, passed a resolution reiterating support for the territorial integrity of Pakistan in the third ICFM, held from 29 February to 4 March, 1972.³³ Mujib's socialist policies were not in tune with the viewpoints of most Muslim states, especially the conservative Arab states of the Middle East.

Pakistan did not stop its anti-Bangladeshi campaign even after the confirmation of its disintegration and the creation of independent Bangladesh. Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto of Pakistan toured various Arab states late in January 1972 to stave off their recognition of Bangladesh on the grounds that this would give him time to prepare the way for Pakistan to normalize relations with Bangladesh.³⁴ He was misleading the world by saying that he would start negotiations with Sheikh Mujib to restore united Pakistan.³⁵ In fact, the Arabs agreeably responded to Mr. Bhutto's overtures for withholding recognition presumably on the consideration that this would give him necessary time to prepare ground for normalizing relations with the new nation.³⁶ Under the circumstances, it was taken in the realization that Bangladesh's survival as an independent state both politically and economically largely rested on its Islamic character. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman himself realized the fact but the situation and limitations did not permit him to redesign Bangladesh on Islamic lines. It was after his assassination that the situation and limitations were removed fully and the post-Mujib military rulers worked independently for sustaining the Islamic character through adopting internal policies and reforms and enhancing its external Islamic links.

This sense of grievance manifested itself in a desire on behalf of Sheikh Mujib's government to demonstrate its solidarity with the political objectives of the Arab states and influential Arab organizations.³⁷ Bangladesh sought to remove the nagging misconception in the Arab world by sending high-level emissaries to explain her independence struggle in its proper perspective. There is a deep-rooted emotional reason which irresistibly drew the Arabs towards their brethren in Bangladesh. The common bond of religion facilitated to unite the Arabs with their Muslim brothers in Bangladesh in the everlasting fraternity of Islam. The age-old moral and spiritual ties stimulated the two brotherly peoples with sense of joy and sorrow, anger and indignation at different ages and at different stages of history.³⁸ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman himself toured to various brotherly countries with the mission to reintegration of the Arab world and Bangladesh. His visit had been conducive to the

promotion of lasting bonds of friendship with the Arab world resulting in the mutually expected expansion of political, economic and cultural cooperation.³⁹ The sympathetic Arab world was evidently eager to enlarge the area of meaningful cooperation and positive participation in the economic programme of Bangladesh.⁴⁰

With a view to removing misconceptions Bangladesh persistently maintained link with the Arab world pertaining to Islamic issues. The people of Bangladesh were concerned with the happenings in the Islamic world and showed their same zeal as the other Muslims in the world. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his government took active part in the burning issues of the *Ummah*. The desecration of the sacred sanctuary of Islam at Jerusalem by the Zionist ignited the flames of anger and hatred throughout the length and breadth of Bangladesh in the same way in which it did in the Arab world.⁴¹ Bangladesh took a firm stand on the core issue of Palestine and Jerusalem extended its full moral support to the Arab people in their just struggle against foreign aggression and colonial domination. Bangladesh expected a solution of the Middle East problem on the basis of respect for the sentiments of the uprooted Palestinian Arabs and the Arab countries involved in the crisis.⁴²

Bangladesh recognized PLO as the legitimate organization and Yasser Arafat as the legitimate leader of the Palestinians. In order to convince the Arabs, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman refused to set up diplomatic relations with Israel and supported the cause dear to the hearts of the Arabs. Israel had been one of the first countries in the world to announce its recognition of Bangladesh. Such proposal was rejected accordingly and concentrated to support to Palestine and Arabs causes. It called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied territories. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, at the same time, himself exposed the war with Pakistan as a liberation struggle about which the Arabs were generally misinformed. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with a view to smearing the misconception regarding Soviet influence on Bangladesh declared Bangladesh as the 'Switzerland of the East'. By this declaration he made it clear that Bangladesh would remain neutral from Cold War rivalry. Such declaration proved to be fruitful by the admission of Bangladesh in the NAM in 1973. It may be noted there that Bangladesh became less enthusiastic about its relations with the Soviet Union in the last two years of Mujib's administration.⁴³ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman wanted to lessen

Indian military influences and by his endeavour Indian Army departed from Bangladesh in March 1972.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman did everything to foster friendly relations with the Arab world. During the Ramzan War (known to the Israelis as Yom Kippur War) of 1973, Bangladesh supported the Arabs and Palestinians and sent a medical team and relief supply.⁴⁴ This was highly appreciated by the Arab countries and there was a significant change in their attitude towards Bangladesh. In return they enabled Bangladesh to become a member of NAM at the Algiers Summit in 1973 and pressured Pakistan into recognizing Bangladesh in order to get Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to go to the 1974 OIC Summit in Lahore, as he stated that was his only condition.⁴⁵ As almost all the Muslim countries were members of the NAM, this membership automatically paved the way for Bangladesh admission to OIC. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman emphasized the importance of the membership of Bangladesh in the Commonwealth in order to open for Bangladesh a wider sphere in developing relations with non-communist countries including the Muslim countries. He attended in the Conference of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in September 1973 in Algiers largely with a view to developing relations with the third world leaders as well as the Muslim states.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's participation to the Lahore Summit of the OIC in March 1974 is indeed a landmark in the history of this organization. The Summit marked a dramatic breakthrough in Bangladesh relations to Pakistan as well as Islamic countries. It had been earlier agreed that Bangladesh would be formally admitted to the OIC at the Summit. But Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took the position that unless Pakistan formally extended its recognition, Bangladesh would not be able to attend the Summit. Some Islamic states persuaded Z. A. Bhutto to bend a little and implore Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to forget the past and join the Islamic fraternity. The Muslim leaders pressurized Pakistan to recognize Bangladesh. Due to the pressure of Islamic countries Pakistan had to accord recognition to Bangladesh in February, 1974. On the other hand, a high OIC Ministerial level delegation, headed by Kuwaiti Foreign Minister, came to Dhaka to escort Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to the Summit.⁴⁶ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman responded favourably, not so-much for the sake of the so-called Islamic unity but keeping in view the essential requirements of the new state to get

recognition from economically powerful Islamic states.⁴⁷ In fact, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's relations with Islamic countries were based more on political consideration than religious one.⁴⁸ Even his support to the Palestine Liberation Front in its struggle for Palestinian independence and against Zionism was anti-imperialist stand and not a religious one.⁴⁹

Bangladesh's participation in the Summit and its admission to the OIC in the session had long lasting impact on Muslim leaders. This was a major diplomatic gain for Bangladesh. Through this Summit, Bangladesh fully consolidated her position in the Muslim world and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman came face to face with the Muslim leaders. Consequently, their earlier misconceptions on the directions of foreign relations of Bangladesh towards Indo-Soviet alliance were greatly removed. The task would be easy if Bangladesh could avail the membership of the OIC immediately after its independence. Bangladesh took more than two years to be the member of the OIC. There were some reasons of the delay. Firstly, the Muslim states enthusiastically did not come forward to recognize Bangladesh because of their soft corner towards Pakistan on the one hand and their misunderstanding about Bangladesh influenced by Pakistani campaign on the other. Furthermore, Pakistan Government's threat to cut off diplomatic relations with the countries recognizing Bangladesh also acted as deterrence. Mujib Government had given the first priority in its foreign relations with *Ummah* to get recognition from the Muslim states. Only the recognition from the Muslim states became the way out of Bangladesh membership in the OIC. Secondly, India insisted that Bangladesh should not join the Organization of the Islamic Conference because it will strengthen the rightist forces in the country.⁵⁰

Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh was considered as a major breakthrough in starting the process of reconciling between the two countries. At the same time, the Islamic countries particularly the oil-rich Arab countries extended hands to Bangladesh and offered substantial economic aid and assistance. Bangladesh received substantial bilateral aid from these countries in various nation building projects during the critical initial years of her nationhood. By 1974, almost all Islamic countries had recognized Bangladesh except Saudi Arabia.⁵¹ Within a few months of joining OIC, Bangladesh was admitted as a member of the United Nations with the full support of

the Islamic states. Within a period of four years, Bangladesh was elected as a member of the UN Security Council in 1978 with the support of these countries. In return, Bangladesh extended its resolute support for the Arab and the Palestinian cause during its two-year tenure (1979-80) membership at the Security Council. The persistent support to the Palestine cause enabled Bangladesh to be a member of the OIC Al-Quds Committee as Arab countries in OIC held a prominent part.

After the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 15th August 1975, President Khondokar Mostaque Ahmed was in power till early November, 1975. Foreign policy of Bangladesh underwent a subtle change after the killing of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and was geared to foster better relations with conservative Muslim countries headed by Saudi Arabia. These countries of the Arab world fully supported the new regime of Bangladesh in the name of Islamic unity and sought to bring Bangladesh and Pakistan again together for the sake of Islamic solidarity. With the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and in the wake of the overthrow of the BKSAL regime in August 1975 the Islamic parties outpaced the various secular and leftist parties. President Ziaur Rahman and his successors promoted Islam and Islamic parties, including the Jamaat and Muslim League. This type of state-sponsored Islam fetched the military rulers much dividends internally and externally. The post-Mujib military rulers rightly realized that Bangladesh foreign policy is significantly known for its close linkage with the Muslim countries. Since August 1975, the successive governments in Bangladesh differed substantially from the Awami League regime in both domestic and foreign policy. Khondokar Mostaque dramatically changed the direction of foreign policy emphasizing relations with Islamic and Western countries and minimizing the relations with India and Soviet Union. On 7 November 1975 General Ziaur Rahman was catapulted to state power and became *de facto* ruler. He replaced the outwardly secular 'Bengalee nationalism' with 'Bangladeshi nationalism'.⁵² The term 'Bangladeshi nationalism' has geographical and linguistical connotations; nevertheless, the term highlights the Muslim identity of the country, differentiating its Muslim majority Bengalees from their Hindu majority counterparts of West Bengal of India. It was a part of his de-secularisation policy and the term 'Bangladeshi nationalism' underscores the nationalism of such territory whose majority people belong to Islam.

President Ziaur Rahman amended the constitution of Bangladesh in 1977 and inserted a provision [Article 25 (2)] stating that Bangladesh “shall endeavour to consolidate and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic solidarity.”⁵³ This provision remained till the fifteenth amendment, 2011. Consistent with the obligations in terms of the Constitution, Bangladesh plays an active role in all bodies and committees of the OIC.⁵⁴ In the process of de-secularisation, President Zia amended the constitution replacing socialism and secularism with “social justice” and “absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah” respectively [Article 8 (1)]. He added a new clause [Article 8 (1A)] stating that “Absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah shall be the basis of all actions.”⁵⁵ He also had “In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful” (in Arabic) inserted at the beginning of the constitution. President Ershad (1982- 90) amended the constitution introducing Islam as the state religion [Article (2A)].⁵⁶ President Zia lifted Bangladesh from the dead end of the Indo-Soviet axis and Indian hegemonic circle. Bangladesh came closer to the Muslim world of more than fifty states, which began to take fresh look at Bangladesh and its problems. Ziaur Rahman even promoted trade, commercial and cultural relations with Pakistan despite having disputes on some issues.⁵⁷ A famous statesman once said about a great country that it “has no permanent friends, no permanent enemies; only permanent interests.”⁵⁸ Ziaur Rahman’s Pakistan policy was probably guided by this fact.

In the international level Mujib’s foreign policy was not appreciated mainly for two reasons: viz; first and foremost Indo-Soviet influences on Bangladesh and then exclusion of Islam as a religion with special status in constitution. Therefore, the change of government was much appreciated, though not publicly, by a number of states.⁵⁹ The military rulers in Bangladesh from 1975 to 1990 realized the importance of Islam due to the internal politics and external Islamic connections. It is said that foreign policy is an extension of the domestic policy. Sometimes, it is also said that domestic and foreign policies are two sides of the same coin. The internal policies and reforms of the military rulers had substantial impact on the external linkage of Bangladesh. The military rulers may have motives behind their Islamization process to legitimize their rule to the people. This type of state-sponsored Islam may be classified as ‘political Islam’.⁶⁰ But, their Islamization and de-secularizing process

was motivated mainly by the two factors. Firstly, the dissatisfaction of the majority people of the country against the Awami League government particularly for its secular stance resulted in the rise of popular sentiments among them. The military rulers took cognizance of these popular sentiments.⁶¹ Secondly, Bangladesh needed external resources in form of aid and loan in its ambitious economic programmes. So, the military rulers wanted to appease Islamic countries and make a good relationship with them by adopting such provisions in the constitution with a view to making balance with those of the Islamic countries. As for example, it may be mentioned that with a few exceptions, most Muslim countries have adopted Islam as the state religion in the constitutions, including the secular countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Tunisia.⁶² The growing role of Islam in Bangladesh, symbolized by the adoption in 1988 of a constitutional amendment recognizing it as the state religion, indicated a major effort to widen ties with the Islamic world. President Ershad also declared Friday as the weekly holiday in lieu of Sunday with a view to maintaining similarity with the Islamic countries. He introduced the *Zakat* Fund to raise poor-tax in accordance with the teachings of Islam. Islamization brought Bangladesh nearer to the Islamic countries particularly the conservative ones.

The subsequent governments after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gradually leaned toward the orbit of oil-rich Muslim countries of the Middle East and the West. Consequently, Bangladesh began to come under the positive perceptions of the Islamic countries and some leading Arab countries which had stern preservation on the independence of Bangladesh spontaneously came forward to the formal recognition of Bangladesh. Significantly, the Saudi recognition of Bangladesh came only after the assassination and overthrow of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Meanwhile, Bangladesh's transformation into a quasi-Islamic state by discarding socialism and secularism went unhindered because the West, especially the United States, preferred pro-Western Islamists to pro-Communist social democrats during the peak of the Cold War in the 1980s. Bilateral ties between Bangladesh and the oil-rich Arab states were becoming increasingly important in the mid and late 1980s. Due to the cordial relations with the Islamic countries during the military regimes, financial assistance from these states particularly from the oil rich Arab states increased tremendously during this period. The donation and loans of Arab states, especially of Saudi Arabia,

poured into the country since 1975, with much of the aid channeled into Islamic education and culture. The Saudis donated money for the construction of an Islamic university, mosques, and other religious centers. Bangladesh exported labours to several Middle Eastern countries. The export of labour has increased day by day with some exceptions, contributing a lot to foreign remittance. This is because of the normalization of relations of Bangladesh with the Islamic countries.

Bangladesh became a member of the OIC in February, 1974, during the Second Summit Conference held in Lahore, Pakistan. Since then, Bangladesh has been actively and very sincerely participating in all the activities of the OIC. It has been actively participating in all the OIC Summits, Islamic Conferences of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) as well as in other important meetings and conferences. Bangladesh as the second largest Muslim country made its firm and unequivocal commitment to the principles of the OIC. It holds the same view with the objectives of the OIC. In the initial period of Bangladesh's independence Dhaka's firm commitment to the OIC charter and its initiative and principal stand in Arab and Muslim cause received great appreciation from the OIC countries.⁶³ Involvement of Bangladesh with OIC activities has appeared to be more for its economic, political and security interests than the religious purposes. The general objectives which Bangladesh wants to achieve through its diplomatic relations in the OIC are as follows:-

1. To get economic and financial assistance and other benefits for its development from concerned institutions of the OIC.
2. To use its diplomacy as a leverage, for its relations with affluent Arab-Islamic countries, upon which it depends for aid, oil and foreign exchange remitted by its nationals working in these countries.
3. To get political and diplomatic support of the Islamic solidarity for the achievement of its foreign policy objectives in the international organizations.
4. To enhance its sense of security in countering any threat to its national security and also as a deterrent to the possible threat.⁶⁴

Bangladesh has expanded its ties with the worldwide Islamic community through the Organization of Islamic Conference. She has been playing an active role in different crises situation in the Muslim countries and in some cases it has unique role.

Bangladesh has been assigned different activities and responsibilities in different subsidiary, affiliated and specialized organs and institutions and standing committees as well as in the main bodies of the OIC.⁶⁵ As a member of the Al-Quds Committee, one of the standing committees of the OIC, it has been playing a vital job. It played a pro-active role in protecting rights of Muslim minorities in Cyprus and Philippines. Bangladesh is a member in the OIC Committee of Eight on the Southern Philippines. Bangladesh played the yeoman's service to mediate a ceasefire between Iran and Iraq during their eight-year war (1980-88) in the one-member OIC Peace Committee. President Ziaur Rahman played a very significant role in this connection till his tragic assassination on 30 May 1981, cut short his ceaseless efforts to bring about a peaceful solution of the fratricidal war. Bangladesh firmly opposed Soviet intervention and subsequent occupation of Afghanistan (1979-89) and called for an emergency meeting of the OIC for taking collective action on the issue. President Ershad made several trips to the Middle East in an attempt to achieve peace. Bangladesh received the unique honour to host the 14th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in December 1983. The successful completion of the 14th ICFM in Dhaka undoubtedly had a salutary effect on increasing the image of Bangladesh in the Muslim *Ummah*.⁶⁶

The economic diplomacy of Bangladesh in the OIC is comparatively more successful. In fact, the OIC itself is more successful in its economic activities than any other sector. Bangladesh played a prominent role in setting up economic programs in the OIC. Bangladesh is a founding member of Islamic Development Bank (IDB). IDB started its operation in Bangladesh since March 1977. Bangladesh became one of members of the Board of Executive Directors of IDB with Indonesia, Malaysia and Maldives. Bangladesh has been getting all types of aid provided by IDB in the form of loan and assistance for various projects, trade activities, technical and other productive purposes.⁶⁷ As a result Bangladesh's share in trade with Islamic countries showed a higher growth rate.⁶⁸ The sixth annual meeting of the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Finance Ministers' Conference were held in Dhaka in 1985. President Ershad attended the 1987 meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Kuwait, where nineteen Bangladeshi economic initiatives were accepted as joint ventures.

At the proposal of Bangladesh the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange was established in Karachi in 1977. Bangladesh proposed to establish an Islamic Food Bank in the 8th ICFM at Tripoli in 1977. Bangladesh also coordinated emergency assistance to OIC countries affected by natural disasters. It also proposed the establishment of Joint Shipping Line together with Joint Islamic Insurance arrangement to handle trade between the OIC member countries. Bangladesh as the coordinator of the Least Developed Countries (LDC) at the UN and at the Group of 77 played a pioneer role in those forums as well as at the OIC, for special assistance to the LDC's. Bangladesh placed four point proposals for economic cooperation at the sixth ICFM, one of which was regarding the formation of Islamic Economic Community. This proposal later on developed into the idea of Islamic Common Market. The proposal for the formation of common market was co-sponsored by Bangladesh and Turkey at the third Summit at Taif in 1981. Though it was not approved fully it took special interest in the problems of the LDC countries of the OIC. It was taken under the consideration of the OIC and the ninth Summit at Doha in 2000 stressed the necessity to establish an Islamic Common Market, including a Free Trade Zone.

Bangladesh held the position of Assistant Secretary General of OIC for a number of years. She sought to secure the position of the Secretary General four times namely in 1979, 1983, 2000 and in 2004.⁶⁹ Bangladesh had to withdraw candidature every time on political consideration. Some internal and external factors also accounted for taking away from top most race of the OIC. She has the remarkable contributions in the subsidiary organizations of the OIC. It has been playing an active role in Statistical, Economic, Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC). It has the membership in Research Centre of Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT), International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA), Islamic Solidarity Fund and its Waqf (ISF). Bangladesh proposed for the creation of an Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training in Dacca at the eighth ICFM in 1977. Accordingly this was approved and the Centre was established in the 9th ICFM in 1978 at Gazipur. Subsequently, ICTVTR was raised to the status of Islamic Institute of Technology (IIT) and Islamic University of Technology (IUT) respectively under the aegis of

OIC. Bangladesh is also an active member of the OIC specialized organization namely Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO).

An assessment of more than four decades of OIC-Bangladesh relations show that Bangladesh has been actively involved in the OIC and its various organs. It has taken the organs as forums of discussing problems of common interest to the Islamic countries and taking united action in dealing with them. The Islamic states also provided a unique opportunity to Bangladesh to get closer to sister Muslim countries including those where Bangladesh did not have any diplomatic missions to present her.⁷⁰ Bangladeshi nationals have served in high positions in OIC and IDB secretariats in Jeddah.

The Bangladesh-OIC relations and the Bangladesh-Muslim *Ummah* relations appeared as supplementary and complementary to each other. In the early stage Bangladesh entered into the OIC as a member and its activities by strengthening its relations with Muslim *Ummah*. Active participation of Bangladesh in the OIC activities further paved the way for making all-round relations with the Muslim countries. Both politically and economically, the benefits accruing from close relationship with the Islamic countries were three fold which are underlined below;-

1. The bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the sister Islamic countries were strengthened to their mutual benefits;
2. Bangladesh derived and added strength from that of the rising influence of the Islamic countries in the developing bilateral relations with non-Muslim countries; and
3. Further there was the multiplier beneficial effect in the influential lobby provided by OIC in multilateral forums like the UN, the NAM, and the Group of 77, in political and economic negotiations with major actors in international politics and influencing their behaviour.⁷¹

Politically, Bangladesh supported the international policies of the Islamic nations of the Middle East. Bangladesh has opened its resident diplomatic missions in almost all the Islamic countries. Bangladesh's relations with Saudi Arabia, United Arab

Emirates, Kuwait, Egypt and Libya have expanded and deepened in economic and other fields.⁷² Bangladesh strongly condemned Israeli policies and favoured the creation of a Palestinian state. It supported the Palestine Liberation Organization under the leadership of Yasser Arafat (1929-2004). In 1987 the government reported that 8,000 Bangladeshi youths had volunteered to fight for the Palestine Liberation Organization. At the invitation of Bangladesh, the President of Turkey Suleyman Demirel and Palestinian Chairman Yasser Arafat attended the 25th anniversary of Bangladesh's National and Independence Day in 1997. Bangladesh coordinates its policy with the Islamic states within the umbrella of OIC on international and regional issues affecting Muslims. It does not support an Islamic country in a dispute with another Islamic country. It rather prefers to settle the dispute peacefully either by the reconciliation between themselves or through OIC peace committee.

The concern of Bangladesh to the cause of the Muslim *Ummah* specially the Middle East serves not only the political and diplomatic purposes but also the economic and commercial interests. Bangladesh's interest in a durable peace for the Middle East lies not least in the opportunity it will provide for the economic development of the region and the growth of Arab markets for Bangladeshi goods.⁷³ Bangladesh has three pronged strategy to deepen its economic relations with the Islamic countries: to continue traditional trade, to expand and diversify Bangladeshi exports into new products and to continue to contribute to the economy by sending Bangladeshi workers to the Islamic countries.⁷⁴ Bangladesh continues to strengthen its fraternal ties with the Middle East.

Export of manpower to the Islamic states specially in the Middle East is one of the important components of Bangladesh-Muslim *Ummah* relations. A large number of skilled, semi-skilled manpower was exported to the Arab countries. The process of extensive manpower export started in 1974 and the number has steadily grown over the period of years. The oil-rich Arab states gave impetus on intensified development process when prices surged in 1974. They needed huge manpower in their modernization drive and Bangladesh availed the situation. There was a substantial rise in the recruitment of manpower from Bangladesh to the Gulf countries after the Gulf War (1990).⁷⁵ Bangladesh in the Middle East forms the largest part of the worldwide

Bangladeshi diaspora.⁷⁶ Bangladeshis who go to the Middle East are primarily guest workers or day labourers. Besides, Bangladeshi professionals, medical doctors and engineers are also employed in the Middle East. Their earnings in foreign currency help Bangladesh to have respectable reserves in the Bangladesh Bank. Bangladesh's trade and investment in the Middle East and even Central Asia is growing day by day.⁷⁷ In turn most of Bangladesh's oil is imported from this region. As a member of D-8, Bangladesh is exploring economic cooperation with the member countries of the organization as well as other Islamic countries.⁷⁸ Bangladesh hosted the second Summit of D-8 in March 1999.

In the cultural field, there is a historical relationship between Bangladesh and Islamic world. Since the post-independent period, many students have been studying in many universities of the Islamic countries. Many students from the Islamic countries particularly those of the Gulf countries come to Bangladesh for higher education. This certainly leads to promotion of education sector in Bangladesh. Islamic countries and charities provide economic aid usually to advance the Islamic agenda, including funding mosques and madrassas. This forms a cross-cultural dimension to the OIC-Bangladesh relations.

Islamization of the constitution and the Islam-oriented policies and reforms did not please the leftist leaders and even those of Bangladesh Awami League. Particularly the leftists who were inclined to alien ideologies strengthened themselves with the weakness of the military government. They played important role for ousting Ershad's government. In the post 1990 period the leftist parties appeared as an important element in the politics of Bangladesh. In the recent years, these parties have come closer to the mainstream political parties and wanted to return Bangladesh as it was in the immediate post independence era. In 2009, the Grand Alliance led by Awami League where the leftist parties had a prominent part, came to power and under the influence of the leftist leaders the Grand Alliance Government adopted some internal activities which seemed to be somewhat non-Islamic to the Islamic world. The Grand Alliance Government under Sheikh Hasina resembles to the Mujibnagar and Mujib governments by nature.⁷⁹ The ruling Government inserted, substituted and omitted some vital clauses in the constitution through the 15th amendment of 2011 that were

omitted, substituted and inserted respectively by the post-Mujib governments. The main substituted and omitted clauses that heckle Islamic identity of Bangladesh are mostly related to secularism, socialism and Bangladesh–Muslim *Ummah* relations. The government substituted clause 8 (1) and omitted clause 8 (1A) and 25 (2).⁸⁰ The government of Bangladesh set up International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) in 2009 for the trial of war criminals.⁸¹ All these issues have been taken seriously by OIC and some Islamic states specially those in the Middle East and Bangladesh is again being misperceived by these states and OIC, though not publicly or officially.⁸² Such a situation has again pushed back Bangladesh in the comity of the Islamic countries and thus Bangladesh-Muslim world relations hampered seriously. This situation with other causes and with other things has affected on its economy specially manpower export.⁸³ In these circumstances, question arises, is Bangladesh going to be distanced from the *Ummah* once again?

Despite overall good relationship between Bangladesh and OIC affiliated Islamic states; some barriers have been automatically cultivated in relationship between Bangladesh and the Islamic world. These have created a severe wound in strengthening ties with OIC and the Islamic states and affected socio-economic and political stability of Bangladesh. Though Bangladesh has been able to remove largely the early misconceptions through internal and external activities yet strong impression in the Islamic world specially in the Middle East could not be created. It has not been able to establish credentials in the minds of Middle Eastern policy makers. It failed to create its appropriate image. Its national interest has been kept hostage by the constant propaganda about its people of not being proper Muslims.⁸⁴ Bangladesh, as the second largest Muslim country and one of the LDCs was supposed to gain the maximum benefit from the oil rich Middle East. Unfortunately, Bangladesh lagged behind in this particular sphere of economic interest.

An analysis of the above discussion reveals that Bangladesh-Muslim *Ummah* relations dates back to more than hundreds of years which have enabled Bangladesh to enhance further the extensive relations existing with Islamic countries and OIC. Bangladesh relations with Islamic world went through warp and woof in the first few years as misconception prevailed in the *Ummah*. The admission of Bangladesh in OIC was a

milestone in reintegrating her with the *Ummah* more widely. Subsequent process for the Islamization of Bangladesh with the progress of time helped a lot in its participation in OIC activities and bilateral and multilateral relations with the Islamic countries pro-actively. In some particular issues and sectors of OIC, Bangladesh has kept unique contributions. Nevertheless, the nature of Islamic linkage of Bangladesh with the Muslim world and OIC has frequently changed with the changing of governments and with the adoption of new internal policies and reforms which impeded consistency and proper Bangladesh-*Ummah* relations. Bangladesh has to rethink about its flaccid foreign relations with OIC and Islamic countries and take steps to strengthen ties with the *Ummah* on the basis of religious sentiments that Bangladeshi people have been fostering through ages. This is due to the fact that Bangladesh-Muslim *Ummah* relationship is based on deep-rooted fraternal sentiments cemented by the bond of Islam which cannot be vitiated by other considerations.⁸⁵

Notes and references:

1. Mizanur Rahman Shelly, *Emergence of a New Nation in a Multi-Polar World: Bangladesh*, Dhaka, 2007, p. 3
2. Harun ur Rashid, *Foreign Relations of Bangladesh*, Rishi Publications, Varanasi, India, 2001, pp. 32-33
3. The independent Bangladesh was formed with the same territory of East Pakistan during Pakistan period (1947-71) and East Bengal during the post-partitioned Bengal under British (1905-47). From the ancient period to the partition of Bengal (1905), the area had no demarcation lines and thus the present Bangladesh territory comprises a part of Bengal or more specifically eastern part of Bengal in this period.
4. The Medieval age of Bengal is counted from the Muslim conquest to British overlordship in Bengal. The period covers thirteenth to mid eighteenth century (1204-1757).
5. A. Z. M. Haider, 'Arab Countries and Bangladesh', *Morning News*, 8 April, 1973
6. Islam in Bangladesh embraced local character through ages. Islam came in the subcontinent mainly through the Arabs, Persians and the Turks. The Bengalees are not culturally as close to the Arabs, Persians or Turks as the Pakistanis or North Indians are. Islam began to enter in North-Western India in early eighth century with the conquest of Sind by Muhammad bin Qasim in 712 CE. In Bengal, it took place after about 5 hundred years in 1204 CE when Ikhtiar Uddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiar Khalji defeated Laxman Sena, the independent King of Bengal. Comparatively short span of domination of the external rulers in Bengal than the North-Western part of the subcontinent resulted in less cultural influences. During the Muslim rule, Bengal also remained a defiant region. The distinct and separate identities were deep rooted in their age old culture, traditions and religion. Geographically Bangladesh belongs to the region of South Asia and lies as a bridgehead between South and South East Asia. Pakistan was a geographically split country between East and West Pakistan with India in between. Bangladesh is surrounded by India on three sides and in the south-east of the country lies Myanmar (Burma). South East Asia is closer to Bangladesh than the Middle East, Central Asia and Pakistan, the regions where there were early Islamic bases and Islam had predominant influence over the regions. Consequently, India and South East Asia have the dominating influences on the culture and civilization of Bangladesh through ages. After its integration with West Pakistan in 1947, Bangladesh, formerly known as East Bengal and later as East Pakistan, upheld such distinct culture and civilization. See also Azizul Haque, *Trends in Pakistan's External Policy 1947-71*, Dhaka, 1985, pp. 177-80
7. A. Z. M. Haider, *op.cit.*

8. Virendra Narain, *Foreign Policy of Bangladesh (1971- 1981): The Context of National Liberation Movement*, Aalekh Publishers, Jaipur, India, 1987, p. 163
9. Hamid H. Kizilbash, 'Legislative Participation in Pakistan's Foreign Policy', Masuma Hasan (ed.), *Pakistan in a Changing World*, Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, Karachi, 1978, p. 83
10. Harun ur Rashid, *op. cit.* p. 29
11. President Ayub Khan, *Friends, Not Masters*, Oxford University Press, London, 1967
12. Ali, Asghar, 'Bangladesh and the Muslim World', *United Asia*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 1971, p. 193
13. The West Pakistani political leaders made their first major aggression by attempting to impose Urdu, an alien language, as the state language of Pakistan instead of Bengali. In the way of such cultural aggression, they subsequently made discriminations with the East Pakistani people in social, economic and political areas. The resources of East Pakistan were being exploited and used for development of West Pakistan. The defence and finance were absolutely run by the West Pakistani leaders in the 24 years of history in the united Pakistan's Federal Government. East Pakistan was deprived in all spheres of developmental activities. Finally, the East Pakistani leader Bangabandhu (the Friend of Bengal) Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his party Awami League were deprived from the right to form the government of Pakistan despite securing an absolute majority in the general elections of the National Assembly of Pakistan. The declaration of independence of Bangladesh on 26th March 1971 and the beginning of the nine months liberation war was not a pre-planned course of action from Bangladesh but a counter action taken against the West Pakistani atrocious assault. The brutal military crackdown under the name of 'Operation Searchlight' on the unarmed Bengalee population in East Pakistan on 25 March 1971 by Pakistani military junta without warning compelled the Bengalees to counter them.
14. The Indo-Pak hostility began during the British period particularly after the declaration of 'Two Nation Theory'. The conflict was rooted after the separation of Pakistan and India in 1947 and continued and even gained an extensive form by some major Indo-Pak wars namely the wars in 1948, 1965 and 1971 because of the territorial dispute on Kashmir and some other issues. Even, the unconditional support of India to Bangladesh in the struggle for its independence added a degree of antagonism between India and Pakistan. Besides, the nuclear tests in May 1998 by both India and Pakistan created an atmosphere of suspicion between the two countries.
15. This is somewhat true in the contemporary perspective of the subcontinent. Because, the Liberation War of Bangladesh and Indo-Pak war happened concurrently and it was

natural that India would help and instigate any anti-Pakistani force to weaken it through its dismemberment. The existence of Pakistan to two sides of India made a strategic drawback and an embarrassing situation to India for her national security. India availed the opportunity and Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi and her government instantly expressed support for the struggle of the people of Bangladesh on the pretext to protect the people of Bangladesh. Nevertheless, India's resolute campaign on behalf of the people of Bangladesh, its military and material support and above all its philanthropic assistance to the refugees from Bangladesh were remarkable.

16. Shaukat Hassan, 'The India Factor in the Foreign Policy of Bangladesh', M. G. Kabir, Shaukat Hassan (ed.), *Issues and Challenges Facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy*, Bangladesh Society of International Studies, Dhaka University, Dhaka, 1989, p. 52
17. Harun ur Rashid, *op. cit.* p. 29
18. Denis Wright, *Bangladesh: Origins and Indian Ocean Relations (1971-75)*, New Delhi, 1988, p. 224
19. *Ibid.* p. 225
20. Harun ur Rashid, *op. cit.* p. 52
21. *Ibid.* p. 21
22. After the Second World War (1939-45) Europe was divided into two blocs. The western European countries were influenced by the United States and adopted the ideology of capitalism and democracy. On the other hand, the Eastern European countries were influenced by the Soviet Union and held the ideology of communism and anti-imperialism. As the effects of the Cold War (1945-90) the Eastern European States became the Satellite states of the Soviet Union. The US-led Western European states adopted the 'Truman Doctrine' (1947) and 'Marshall's Plan' (1947) and signed the 'Treaty of Brussels' and above all the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization-1949) against communism. The Soviet Union and Soviet-led Eastern communist states formed COMINFORM (Communist Information Bureau-1947) and COMECON (Council for Mutual Assistance-1949) and signed the 'Warsaw Pact' (1955) against Marshall's Plan and NATO.
23. There were some specific reasons behind the Soviet-Bangladesh good relationship and Soviet- Pakistan rivalry. During the Cold War, both the USA and the USSR extended their sphere of influence in the Indian subcontinent as the other regions of the world for their interest. Simultaneously, India and Pakistan, the two most influential countries of the region, were also aligned to the USSR and the USA respectively for their existence and security interest. Soviet Union was aligned to India during the entire period of the Cold War as the United States supported Pakistan against India. Pakistan in 1950s joined

to the US bloc for her security interest and signed security related treaties with the USA. On the other hand, the military regime in Pakistan continued to ban the Communist Party in Pakistan. Besides, China's friendly relations with Pakistan and the USA were also a threat to the Soviet interest in South Asia. Soviet Union, considering the regime in Pakistan as reactionary and anti-Soviet, extended its support to anti-Pakistani powers in South Asia, i.e. India and Bangladesh, to counter the influence of tri power, i.e. USA, Pakistan and China. Soviet support to the cause of Bangladesh was influenced by India and the communist leaders of both India and Bangladesh. Indian response to the crisis made it clear to Soviet Union that the crisis was not confined within the internal affairs of Pakistan and realized that the independence of Bangladesh would strengthen the power of India and Soviet Union and weaken the power of USA and Pakistan in South Asia.

24. The Indo- Bangladesh Friendship Treaty was signed between the two countries on 19th March, 1972 for a term of 25 years. According to the terms, the Treaty lapsed in 1997.
25. As for example, *Al-Ahram*, the most influential Daily of Egypt, extended unqualified support to the liberation struggle of Bangladesh against the oppressive military rule of Pakistan. See. A. Z. M. Haider, *op. cit.*
26. A. Z. M. Haider, *op. cit.* p. 231
27. Akmal Hussain, 'Bangladesh and the Muslim world', Emajuddin Ahmed (ed.), *Foreign Policy of Bangladesh*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1984, pp. 84-85
28. One of the measures taken by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the introduction of the one party government in the name of the so-called Bangladesh Peasants' and Workers' Awami League (BKSAL). This act established a Soviet-style government where top-ranking bureaucrats, university teachers, and even the chiefs and deputy chiefs of the armed forces, had to join the BKSAL.
29. "The principles of nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism, together with the principles derived from those as set out in this Part, shall constitute the fundamental principles of state policy."-Article 8(1) of the un-amended constitution of Bangladesh.
30. Such attitude was fully demonstrated when all Islamic countries except Egypt and Iraq voted against the admission of Bangladesh into WHO (World Health Organization) in 1972. Bangladesh was represented by a four- man delegation at an Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference held in Cairo on 10 January 1972 for the purpose of its admission as full membership of the organization. Pakistan boycotted the opening session of the conference because of the presence of the Bangladeshi delegation. Libya, in support of the Pakistan position, even threatened to withdraw if Bangladesh was admitted. The issue was finally solved by the decision of an organization committee which showed that as long as the

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- status of the relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh remained in open question, Bangladesh's sovereignty in the eyes of the Islamic states was not a settled matter.
31. Virendra Narain, *op. cit.* p. 166
 32. During the nine-month war (26 March-16 December 1971), communication infrastructure were completely destroyed. The people of Bangladesh faced socio-economic adversity, poverty and unemployment problems. Bangladesh was confronted with huge problems of rehabilitation of people and construction of infrastructure in the country. Thus it needed aid from any quarter of the world particularly from the Muslim world.
 33. Indonesia, Malaysia and Senegal had reservations on the resolution as they in the meanwhile recognized Bangladesh. Egypt, having good relations with India, also did not favour the resolution. See. Noor Ahmed Baba, *Organization of Islamic Conference: Theory and Practice of Pan-Islamic Cooperation*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1994, p. 79
 34. By this time several offending states of Pakistan like Bhutan (4-12-1971), India (6-12-1971), Burma (15-12-1971), Bulgaria (11-1-1972), Mongolia and Poland (12-1-1972), East Germany (14-1-1972), Nepal (16-1-1972), Denmark (20-1-1972), Sweden, Barbados and Finland (21-1-1972), Yugoslavia (22-1-1972), Soviet Union (24-1-1972), Czechoslovakia (25-1-1972), Hungary (26-1-1972), Cyprus (27-1-1972), Australia, New Zealand and Fiji (31-1-1972) recognized Bangladesh. Most of those countries had cold diplomatic ties with Pakistan. See. Denis Wright, *op. cit.* p. 173. See also *Morning News*, Dacca, 8 April, 1972
 35. Harun ur Rashid, *International Relations and Bangladesh*, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2004, p. 226
 36. A. Z. M. Haider, *op. cit.*
 37. Denis Wright, *op. cit.* p. 226
 38. A. Z. M. Haider, *op. cit.*
 39. Obaidul Huq, 'Arab World and Bangladesh', *Bangladesh Observer*, 14 November, 1974
 40. Iran warmly welcomed to Bangladesh and offered financial assistance. Jordan recognized Bangladesh on 15 October 1973. Kuwait announced its recognition on 4 November 1973.
 41. *Ibid.*
 42. Abdul Malek Ukil, 'Middle East Crisis and Bangladesh', *Bangladesh Observer*, 2 November, 1975
 43. Denis Wright, *op. cit.* p. 230
 44. The Yom Kippur War is also known as Arab–Israeli Ramzan War of 1973 and the Fourth Arab–Israeli War, was a war fought by the coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria against Israel from October 6 to 25, 1973. The war began when the coalition launched a

joint surprise attack on Israeli positions in the Israeli-occupied territories on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Judaism, which occurred that year during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Egyptian and Syrian forces crossed ceasefire lines to enter the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights respectively, which had been captured and occupied by Israel since the 1967 Six-Day War. Both the United States and the Soviet Union initiated massive resupply efforts to their respective allies during the war, and this led to a near-confrontation between the two nuclear superpowers. In return of the humanitarian assistance given by Bangladesh, Egypt's President Anwar Sadat sent as gift two US made tanks to Bangladesh. Unfortunately, these very tanks were used by the Armoured Corps Regiment during the August 15, 1975 coup d'état.

45. In 1973, Pakistan National assembly in its resolution had authorized recognition of Bangladesh but Z. A. Bhutto waited for some suitable opportunity to make that decision. The issue of trial of 195 Pakistani prisoners by Bangladesh who were kept in Indian camps was also linked to willingness of Pakistan's recognition. Pakistan recognized Bangladesh on February 22, 1974 and next day, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman arrived at Lahore to attend the OIC summit. In return, Bangladesh agreed to drop the issue of 195 PoWs and Bangladesh decided not to proceed with the trial as an act of clemency by the Trilateral Agreement (India-Pakistan-Bangladesh) of April 9, 1974.
46. The Delegation, in addition to the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministers, comprised the foreign ministers of Lebanon and Somalia, representatives of Algeria, Senegal, the PLO and the Secretary General of OIC.
47. Virendra Narain, *Op. cit.* p. 167
48. *Ibid.* p. 168
49. *Ibid.* p. 174
50. Shaukat Hassan and Abdur Rob Khan, "Bangladesh Floods: The Political Debate", M. G. Kabir, Shaukat Hassan (ed.), *Issues and Challenges Facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy*, Bangladesh Society of International Studies, Dhaka University, Dhaka, 1989, p. 86
51. Saudi Arabian attitude towards the creation of Bangladesh was not favourable as evident from their support to Pakistan and refusal to meet any Bangladesh representative during the Liberation War. This attitude continued even after the creation of Bangladesh mainly due to the adoption of secularism and socialism as the two fundamental principles of its state policy. Following the change of Mujib-Government in August 1975, Saudi Arabia announced its formal recognition to Bangladesh. Bangladesh Ambassador was posted there in October 1976. Saudi Government also opened its Embassy in Dhaka later. See

Brief on the visit of Mr. A. R. Shams-ud Doha, Foreign Minister to the Organization of Islamic Conference, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, 1983, p. 29

52. There is a controversial opinion about 'Bengali nationalism' and 'Bangladeshi nationalism'. The term 'Bangladeshi nationalism' seems to be more appropriate than that of the 'Bengali nationalism' in accordance with the nature of the newly independent nation-state, Bangladesh. The term 'Bengali' can be defined mainly in two ways; geographically and linguistically. In geographical definition, the term 'Bengali' is derived from 'Bengal' which means a region comprising of both East and West Bengal. Linguistically, 'Bengali' means those people (Bengalee) who speak in Bengali. There are many non-Bengali speaking people in modern Bangladesh as well as in greater Bengal of ancient, medieval and modern period. In this respect, 'Bengali Nationalism' is comparatively extended and old perception which is not properly matched with independent Bangladesh. On the other hand, 'Bangladeshi nationalism' is a conception which geographically comprises a certain land previously called East Pakistan or East Bengal (narrowest part of greater Bengal) and includes all the Bengali and non-Bengali speaking people within its territory. Therefore, the application of the term 'Bangladeshi nationalism' is proper and appropriate to pursue the nationalism of the territory of the post-independent Bangladesh. See also, Shireen Hasan Osmany, *Bangladeshi Nationalism: History of Dialectics and Dimensions*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1992
53. Clause (2) was added to Article 25 by the Proclamation Order No. 1 of 1977
54. Harun ur Rashid, *International Relations and Bangladesh*, *op. cit.* p. 157
55. Article 8(1) and 1(A) were substituted for the former Clause (1) by the Proclamation Order No. 1 of 1977
56. This provision was inserted by the constitution (Eight Amendment) Act, 1988 (Act XXX of 1988), S, 2. The Article stated that "The state religion of the Republic is Islam, but other religions may be practiced in peace and harmony in the Republic."
57. The normalization of BD-Pak relations started with the recognition of Bangladesh and Pakistan each other in February 1974. The release of 195 Pakistani PoWs removed another stumbling block in BD-Pak normalization of relations. Bhutto's visit to Dhaka in June 1974 brought a valuable opportunity to resolve contentious issues between the two countries. After the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, diplomatic relations with Pakistan were resumed by Khondakar Mustaq government in 1975. Diplomatic envoys were exchanged in January 1976. President Ziaur Rahman took a trip in September, 1977 to Pakistan and met with General Ziaul Huq and discussed bilateral issues to improve

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- bilateral relations. Reciprocal visits were made by the heads of both the states in the subsequent years and some agreements were concluded between the countries. Nevertheless, the transition of BD-Pak relations from animosity to gradual normalization is still an on-going process. For details see Dr. Moonis Ahmar, *BIISS Papers: Pakistan and Bangladesh: From Conflict to Cooperation*, No. 19, March 2003, pp. 1-11 and 25-38
58. Obaidul Huq, *op. cit.*
 59. Akmal Hussain, *op. cit.* p. 88
 60. Hashmi, 'Islam in Bangladesh Politics', Hussin Mutalib and Taj I. Hashmi (ed.), *Islam, Muslims and the Modern State*, Macmillan Press, London, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1994, pp. 110–13.
 61. Emajuddin Ahmed (ed.), *op. cit.*
 62. Talukder Maniruzzaman, 'Bangladesh Politics: Secular and Islamic Trends', S. R. Chakravarty and Virendra Narain (ed.), *Bangladesh: History and Culture*, Vol. I, South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 1986, p. 46
 63. Mohammad Tawfiqul Haider, 'Reflections on the OIC', Kazi Nurul Islam (ed.), *Nibandhomala*, Uccotor Manobbidhya Gobeshona Kendro (Centre for Advanced Research in the Humanities), Dhaka University, June 2009, p. 255
 64. S, R. Chakravarty, *Foreign policy of Bangladesh*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p. 73, See also Abdur Rob Khan and Ghulam Mostafa, 'Middle East Situation Since Camp David: Implications of Bangladesh', *BIISS Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January 1982, p. 42
 65. For the assigned responsibilities to Bangladesh by OIC during the first decade after its admission to the organization, see Syed Anwar Hossain, 'Bangladesh and the Organization of the Islamic Conference', *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 9, No. 2, April-June 1987, pp. 18-19
 66. *Brief on the visit of Mr. A. R. Shams-ud Doha, Foreign Minister to the Organization of Islamic Conference*, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, 1983, p. 8
 67. For details about the activities of IDB, see Mizanur Rahman Khan, 'The Islamic Development Bank: A new approach to Multilateral Financing', *BIISS Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 4, October 1983, pp. 117-18
 68. *Islamic Development Bank*, Ninth Annual Report (1983-84), Jeddah, p. 45
 69. The candidates from Bangladesh were Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury (1979), former Foreign Minister A. R. Shams-ud Doha (1983), former Speaker of Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad (National Assembly/Parliament) and former Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed

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- Choudhury (2000), and Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury, former Political Adviser to the Prime Minister and Member of Parliament (2004).
70. Muhammad Shamsul Huq, *Bangladesh in International Politics: The Dilemmas of the Weak States*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1993, p. 277
71. *Ibid.*
72. Harun ur Rashid, *International Relations and Bangladesh*, *op. cit.* 279
73. Harun ur Rashid, *Foreign Relations of Bangladesh*, *op. cit.* p. 164
74. *Ibid.*
75. This is because Bangladesh firmly and categorically asked for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and also participated in the multinational forces, which freed Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. After the WAR, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia offered generous economic assistance and recruited manpower more than before.
76. Out of the 3,975,550 Bangladeshis abroad approximately 2,820,000 live within the Middle East, 0.075% of the Middle East population, with half of them in Saudi Arabia, and a quarter of them in the United Arab Emirates. Bangladesh is one of the largest labour suppliers to Saudi Arabia, in 2007 Bangladeshi workers obtained the biggest share, with 23.50 per cent of the 1.5 million Saudi Arabia visas issued. 'Bangladeshis in the Middle East', *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, Posted in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladeshis_in_the_Middle_East
77. As for example, Iran has substantial trade and economic ties with Bangladesh and is a large market for her jute and tea. Bangladesh had a balance of trade with Turkey from the very beginning. Its exports to Turkey have steadily grown. A triple agreement was also signed between Iran, Turkmenistan and Bangladesh to facilitate transit of Bangladesh's exports to Central Asia.
78. The D-8 or Developing Eight is a group of developing countries with large Muslim populations that have formed an economic development alliance. It consists of Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Turkey. The objectives of D-8 are to improve member states' position in the global economy, diversify and create new opportunities in trade relations, enhance participation in decision-making at international level, and improve standards of living. The D-8 was established in Istanbul, Turkey on 15 June 1997.
79. There are influential elements of leftist ideology on both the Mujib Government and Grand-Alliance Government led by Awami League. It may be noted that there is a basic difference between the previous Awami League Government (1996-2001) and the ruling government. The government of 1996 to 2001 was indirectly supported by the Islamic party, i.e. Jammāt-i-Islami Bangladesh, where leftist elements were apparently absent.

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80. In clause 8(1), the principles of ‘absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah’, was substituted by ‘secularism’ and ‘socialism by meaning economic and social justice’ by ‘socialism’ by the 15th Amendment Act 2011 (Act XIV of 2011) of the constitution. Clause 8(1A) was omitted fully by the same Act that was inserted in 1977 stating that “Absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah shall be the basis of all actions”. Clause 25 (2) that was also inserted in 1977 stating that, “The State shall endeavour to consolidate, preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic solidarity”, omitted fully by the 15th Amendment of 2011.
81. The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) is a war crimes tribunal in Bangladesh set up in 2009 to investigate and prosecute suspects for the genocide committed in 1971 by the Pakistan Army and their local collaborators, Razakars, Al-Badr and Al-Shams during the Bangladesh Liberation War. The government set up the tribunal after the Awami League won the general election in December 2008 with more than two-thirds majority in parliament. The War Crimes Fact Finding Committee, tasked to investigate and find evidence, completed its report in 2008, identifying 1600 suspects. In 2009 the parliament amended the 1973 act that authorized such a tribunal to update it. By 2012, nine leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami, the largest Islamist party in the nation, and two of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), had been indicted as suspects in war crimes. Some of the Jamaat-e-Islami leaders have already been convicted and sentenced to death. One of them has been sentenced to life imprisonment and another one to 90 years imprisonment.
82. For the reaction of OIC on the issue, see ‘OIC Secretary General calls for restraint in Bangladesh’, Posted in OIC official website
<http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv2/news/?page=11&arc=2013>, 4 March 2013
83. Bangladeshi Manpower export drastically dropped during the first four years of the Grand Alliance Government. At the moment the manpower sector is in a disastrous situation. One Muslim country after another, including Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Iraq and Libya, is closing the doors for importing workers from Bangladesh. Manpower export to Saudi Arabia has almost stopped. Export of manpower to Malaysia has remained closed for three years. India, Nepal and Indonesia have captured this market. The number of illegal export of workers from Bangladesh to the Islamic countries is increasing. Therefore, it can be easily guessed that the country's manpower export is possibly going for a slump in the coming days. See Md. Owasim Uddin Bhuyan, ‘Manpower Export Dropped in Last 4yrs’, *New Age*, December 26, 2012. See also Syed Jamaluddin, ‘Slump in Manpower Export’, *The Financial Express*, September 7, 2012, See also **Appendix-10**
84. Mamun Rashid, ‘Bangladesh and the Islamic World’, *The Daily Star*, 24 March 2009
85. Shaukat Hassan, *op. cit.* p. 57

A general descriptive analysis about the nature of the OIC-Bangladesh relations was dwelt upon in the previous chapter. The present chapter will embrace an in-depth study on the activities of Bangladesh in the OIC summits and conferences and highlight the contribution of Bangladesh in some specific fields related to OIC states. Specific and an over-all assessment of the OIC-Bangladesh relations on the basis of performances of Bangladesh in OIC summits and conferences will be dealt as well. From the discussion of the previous chapter it can be noted that Bangladesh is not the founding member of the OIC as it emerged as an independent state two years or so after the formation of the OIC. Naturally, Bangladesh had no pre-dominance on the organization and the first few years she had to bother removing misconceptions about her independence in the Arab world. Bangladesh successfully removed the misunderstanding in the Islamic world by constant efforts which paved the way for reintegration of Bangladesh with the *Ummah* and at the same time it made the task of Bangladesh's admission to the OIC easy. Bangladesh was formally admitted to the OIC as the full member in early 1974, about five years after the formation of the OIC. Since the admission, Bangladesh has been actively participating in its summits and conferences of the OIC. Bangladesh by virtue of being a member of the OIC is a member of other institutions and organs. It also played very vital role in some standing committees, affiliated, specialized and subsidiary institutions and organs. During the last forty years Bangladesh has made remarkable contribution in some specific issues; i.e. Islamic Common Market, Islamic University of Technology, Islamic Solidarity Games, Islamic Solidarity Fund, Insurance and Re-insurance, Food Security and Agricultural Development et cetera. Furthermore, Bangladesh has played a unique role in some crises in the Muslim *Ummah* like Iraq-Iran War (1980-88), Palestine crisis (1948 till present) et cetera, under the umbrella of the OIC. These activities within the OIC have created a lasting image of Bangladesh in the Muslim *Ummah* and have positive reflections on the bilateral and multilateral relations with the Islamic countries.

Bangladesh issue in the Third Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers:

The Third Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers (hereafter ICFM) held in Jeddah from February 29 to March 4, 1972, was the first one after the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state. The emergence of Bangladesh was a matter of concern to Pakistan as well as to the OIC. The situation in the Indian subcontinent

after the independence of Bangladesh became one of the vital issues and the issue was added to the agenda of the conference, for the first time in the OIC history.¹ In fact, the conference was held in the wake of the Indo-Pak War of 1971 and the consequent separation of the former East Pakistan to make a new state of Bangladesh.² The post-1971 situation of the subcontinent was reflected so adequately in the conference that some Muslim leaders including King Faisal of Saudi Arabia were hurt with the dismemberment of Pakistan.³ Pakistan charged India and Israel behind the conspiracy to weaken Pakistan and made a strong appeal to the OIC for the withdrawal of Indian army from Bangladesh.⁴ Though some states like Libya and Saudi Arabia went along with Pakistan, several countries and the Secretary-General himself supported the breakup of Pakistan and independence of Bangladesh.⁵

Though the independence of Bangladesh was an established fact, several Muslim countries supported Pakistan's cause and in order to satisfy Pakistan a resolution reiterating support for the territorial integrity of Pakistan was passed despite the reservations of some Muslim countries.⁶ Malaysia, Indonesia, and Senegal expressed their reservations on the resolution as these countries had in the meantime recognized the newly independent state of Bangladesh. Egypt, also did not favour the resolution as it had good relations with India. The Conference thus declared unequivocal support for Pakistan and at the same time decided to recognize Bangladesh de facto.⁷

The Conference decided to send a delegation of conciliation to Islamabad and Dacca to bring about reconciliation between two countries. The Delegation composed of six member-states, that is, Algeria, Iran, Malaysia, Morocco, Somalia, and Tunisia.⁸ The delegation could not proceed ahead in the planned visit to Islamabad and Dacca as the Government of Bangladesh made it clear that it "would not receive a mission from states which have not recognized Bangladesh".

Admission of Bangladesh in OIC in the Second Islamic Summit Conference at Lahore:

From the beginning of the emergence of Bangladesh as the newly born state, several Muslim states tried to bring about a rapprochement between it and Pakistan. The six-member delegation which was formed in the Third ICFM could not materialize its mission to Dacca because Bangladesh refused to receive delegates from countries

which had not recognized Bangladesh as an independent state. The member states despite the negative response from Bangladeshi part did not give up their efforts in bringing the two countries closer till the Lahore Summit. The Islamic states in spite of their general inclination to Pakistan laid emphasis on the admission of Bangladesh to OIC. The factors may be noted as below:-

1. Bangladesh after its separation from Pakistan became the second largest Muslim majority country in the world. Even, the number of its Muslim population was then higher than that of Pakistan which had enjoyed the rank of the largest Muslim majority country till its disintegration in 1971. The Muslim states in general, saw Pakistan's participation in OIC vital from the outset of its formation with a view to making it a universal Islamic organization. This was mainly for its large number of population. On the same ground, several Muslim states held the view that such a state which had the second largest Muslim population could not be kept out of the organization permanently.
2. With the passage of time the OIC gained greater strength and began to consolidate and make significant progress in several directions. The years between Lahore and Taif Summits can be rightly called the time of consolidation for the Organization. On the way of its consolidation, it was necessary for the OIC to settle political and ideological differences among the Muslim countries and at the same time to incorporate various Muslim states to it. As a part of this assignment, several Muslim nations tried to dispel malice between Pakistan and Bangladesh and the OIC had taken official measure to incarnate Bangladesh with its body since the Third ICFM.
3. In the early stage of the independence, there was a severe misconception in the Arab and Islamic World about Bangladesh regarding its Liberation War, its foreign relations, its constitution and some internal and external affairs. Within a short time the misperception about Bangladesh was considerably removed due to its persistent diplomatic relations with the Arab and Islamic states. Several Islamic states not only recognized Bangladesh but also extended financial assistance to it. On the other hand, Bangladesh and Pakistan came closer from the previous malevolent disposition and Pakistan had to accord recognition to Bangladesh before the Summit on the pressure of the Muslim

leaders. Under the circumstances, the Islamic leaders considered Bangladesh as an integral and important part of the *Ummah* and felt the emergence of immediate admission of Bangladesh to OIC with a view to making it a viable international Islamic organization.

Under the circumstances, in the mission to bring about a reconciliation between Pakistan and Bangladesh, the Foreign Minister Conference held on February 21, 1974, prior to the Summit Conference decided to form a group of seven members under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister of Kuwait. The other members of the group were the foreign ministers of Lebanon and Somalia, representatives of Algeria, Senegal, the PLO and Mr. Hasan el-Tohami, the Secretary General of OIC. The 'mission of reconciliation' then flew from Lahore to Dacca in a Kuwaiti plane. The goodwill mission had mainly two aims; to resolve the differences between the two countries and to ensure presence of Bangladesh at the Lahore Summit. The mission composed of high Ministerial level delegates was authorized to offer Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh provided that in return of the recognition Bangladesh had to abandon the proposed trial of 195 Pakistani prisoners-of war. The mission was a complete success. Bangladesh cordially received the offer. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh, responded favourably and personally flew to Lahore to attend the Summit.⁹ Bangladesh assured to release Pakistani prisoners-of war. In return, Pakistan accorded full diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh upon the advice of Muslim countries.¹⁰ The reconciliation between the two Muslim states was one of the most important achievements of the Summit which paved the way for further consolidation of the OIC as well as normalization of relations between two states.¹¹

With the formal joining in the OIC, Bangladesh started its responsible working in the organization. Bangladesh in the Lahore summit endorsed the Algerian President Boumedienne's proposal to establish a framework that would unite Arab, Islamic and Third World non-aligned countries on a common front.¹²

Fifth ICFM and Bangladesh:

In the Fifth ICFM held at Kuala Lumpur in June 21-25, 1974, Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr. Kamal Hossain, head of Bangladesh delegation, pledged full support to

Muslim brothers on Middle East problems including Palestine and Jerusalem. Bangladesh reaffirmed its full support to the Arabs and the Palestinians. In the Conference Bangladesh opposed a discussion on nuclear matters saying that the OIC was not the forum to discuss nuclear matters being dealt within the United Nations and elsewhere.¹³ At the same time, Bangladesh urged the 35 nations attending the Conference to consider a concerted effort to secure adequate and credible security assurance for the non-nuclear states against the threat posed by nuclear weapons spreading to more countries. The Conference adopted a resolution on the matter declaring the firm support of the member states of the OIC to the political independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of non-nuclear weapons states against nuclear threat and blackmail.¹⁴ The Conference co-opted Bangladesh as a member of the Experts Committee which was constituted during the Lahore Summit of the OIC in February, 1974.¹⁵

The Sixth ICFM and Bangladesh:

Foreign Minister Dr. Kamal Hossain in the Sixth ICFM in Jeddah in July, 1975, pleaded total support of Bangladesh in liberating occupied Arab territories and restoring rights of Palestinian brethren. He reiterated Bangladesh's commitment to non-alignment and also to support the struggle of the oppressed people throughout the world for achieving freedom and dignity. He also emphasized on the peace of the subcontinent and referred in this regard Bangladesh's consistent effort to promote normalization of relations in the subcontinent.¹⁶ Dr. Kamal Hossain also called for an urgent action in achieving new world economic order based on equitable price for primary commodities and their just relationship with prices of industrial products and capital goods. The Conference endorsed the candidature of Bangladesh for election to the U.N Economic and Social Council at the 30th Session of the General Assembly.¹⁷

Major-General Ziaur Rahman and the Seventh ICFM:

The active participation of Bangladesh and the presence of its leader Major-General Ziaur Rahman to the Seventh ICFM, held in Istanbul on May 12-15, 1976, brought for Bangladesh a unique position in the Islamic world.¹⁸ The view points of Bangladesh on different national and international issues had not only received due attention of the member-countries but it played a major role in formulating common stand on the outstanding issue facing the Islamic countries. In this Conference Bangladesh was

able to reaffirm its solidarity and identity with the Islamic world in a more positive and vigorous manner than before. The Islamic countries could understand the serious problem faced by Bangladesh resulting from withdrawal of waters of the international Ganges River by India. The Conference called for immediate solution of the problem. Major-General Zia's discussions with most of the participating Foreign Ministers in the Conference paved the way for cooperation between Bangladesh and other Islamic countries. Bangladesh was unanimously elected one of the members of the 12-member Joint Communiqué Drafting Committee of the Seventh ICFM. The Conference brought much positive gains for the future of Bangladesh in the economic field. In the Conference Bangladesh was elected unanimously one of the 13 members of the Islamic Solidarity Fund. The Conference called for special priority to be given to the Islamic countries while obtaining labour and other know-how by the member-countries for their economic development. Consequently, labour export in the Islamic countries specially in the Middle East was increasing in the subsequent years.

One of the issues about which Bangladesh has always felt concerned and on which Major General Ziaur Rahman spoke forcefully was the rights of the Palestinians to return to their homes and the vacation of Arab territories forcibly occupied by Israel and the need for creation of conditions in which all states including Palestine could live in peace and reciprocal respect for one another's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. He reiterated the total support of the country for solidarity with the peoples of the Third World in their just struggle against the forces of colonialism, racialism and exploitation. Ziaur Rahman's participation in the Conference, his meeting with some prominent leaders in different countries during the Conference and his visit to some Islamic counties after the Conference was over had been considered as a definite sign of stability in his own country.¹⁹ The Conference expressed deep concern at the impediment to the process posed by the problem of sharing equitably the waters of the international Ganges River resulting in the aggravation of economic hardships and the retardation of the process of national reconstruction in Bangladesh. The Conference expressed the hope that this problem would be resolved expeditiously and satisfactorily through discussion among the countries concerned in the larger interest of peace and stability in the region.²⁰ The Conference elected a new Permanent Council of the Islamic Solidarity Fund composed of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Gambia, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco,

Niger, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Upper Volta, and authorized it to examine requests for project aid and to formulate its disbursement program within the resources available to it.²¹

Eighth ICFM and the proposal for ICTVTR:

The Eighth ICFM held in Tripoli, Libya, on May 16-21, 1977, welcomed a proposal from Bangladesh for the establishment of an Islamic Centre for Vocational and Technical Training and Research (ICTVTR) in Dacca. The Economic Committee of the ICFM approved in principle to set up the Centre in Bangladesh under the aegis of the OIC. The Committee was understood to have suggested that the Secretary General of the OIC should convene a meeting of experts in Dacca to examine, study and finalize the project. The setting up of the Centre had been proposed to impart medium level technical and vocational training. Bangladesh had proposed to the Conference that such a Training Centre should be set up to meet the manpower requirements of the Muslim world. Bangladesh argued that a Centre of this nature was necessary to meet the rapidly rising demand within the Islamic world for trained manpower of various types and levels. It had been suggested that the General Secretariat of the Conference should collect data about the existing training facilities in different member states in order to help plan what facilities should be provided in the proposed Centre.²² It is important to mention here that subsequently, the ICTVTR came into existence at Board Bazar, Gazipur in 1981, and later on renamed as Islamic Institute of Technology (IIT) in 1994 and subsequently as Islamic University of Technology (IUT) in 2001.²³

Bangladesh focused Muslim minority issues in the 8th ICFM:

In this Conference, Bangladesh expressed its concern about the Muslim minorities in different parts of the world. On the Cyprus issue Bangladesh supported the efforts for reaching a bi-communal settlement leading to an independent sovereign and federal republic of Cyprus. Bangladesh also expressed concern about the crisis faced by Muslims in Southern Philippines and urged that the OIC should continue its efforts for bringing about a just and peaceful settlement of their problems. Bangladesh also expressed its desire to be associated with measures to help Muslims in different parts of the world facing formal, material and humanitarian difficulties.

In the 8th ICFM, Bangladesh outlined seven objectives of mutual cooperation within the Muslim world, in economic and social field and urged upon the members to set up a multi-disciplinary body of experts which would study in depth how and to what extent these objectives could be achieved. Bangladesh proposed establishment of an Islamic Food Bank to pool and allocate financial, technological and skilled sources among the member countries to augment food production so that the Islamic world should attain self-sufficiency in basic food item; urged the Conference to consider the possibility of creating a buffer stock of food grains through internal and external procurement to meet emergencies in every part of the Islamic world; suggested to make for exchange of capital and human resources between member countries; proposed establishment of a joint shipping line to handle trade between OIC countries; suggested to work out a joint insurance arrangement; suggested Islamic countries rich in capital resources to increase semi-processed goods from their import of processed and other countries for expansion of trade; and some other objectives concerning larger and ultimate goals. Bangladesh supported fully the inalienable rights of Palestinians to a homeland of their own in the land of their successors and unequivocally committed to the restoration of their sovereignty over the holy city of Jerusalem. Bangladesh supported the initiatives towards making Indian Ocean a zone of peace and establishment of nuclear weapons-free zones in Africa, Middle East and South and South-East Asia. It expressed its full support to the liberation struggles in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Bangladesh was the first to be unanimously elected Vice Chairman of the OIC in the Conference.²⁴ Presidential Adviser Professor Shamsul Huq, who led the nine-member Bangladesh delegation, thanked the delegates for electing him a Vice Chairman of the Conference. It was a token of good will for Bangladesh and Asian region as such. He gave a vote of thanks to Libya on behalf of the conference. Delegates attending the Conference expressed appreciation of the active role paved by Bangladesh delegation in the Conference.²⁵ All these things along with the invitation extended by Libyan President Moammar Gaddafi to Bangladesh President Major-General Ziaur Rahman to visit his country further consolidated the fraternal bonds between Bangladesh and the Islamic countries. This solidarity in fact was a beacon to Bangladesh on its onward march. The Conference received congratulatory messages conveying fraternal

greetings and best wishes for the success of the Conference from Major-General Ziaur Rahman, President of Bangladesh.²⁶

Ninth ICFM and Bangladesh:

In the Ninth ICFM held at Dakar, the Gibraltar of West Africa, on 24 April 1978, Bangladesh called upon the Islamic nations to forge greater unity and solidarity to protect their interests in the backdrop of the contemporary global situation. Professor Mohammed Shamsul Haq, Member, President's Council of Advisers in Charge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh was unanimously elected the Chairman of the Drafting committee of the Conference.²⁷ Bangladesh was also elected as a member of the first advisory Science Council of the Islamic Science Foundation.²⁸ Presidential Adviser Professor Shamsul Huq, who led the 7-member Bangladesh delegation, was the first Asian speaker to welcome Djibuti on her joining as a member of the OIC. In a brief speech he welcomed the brotherly Muslim country of Djibuti and held out assurance of fullest cooperation to her. Mr. Abdou Diouf, Prime Minister of Senegal expressed his deep appreciation for the role Bangladesh was playing for further success of the organization. The Conference received congratulatory messages from President Ziaur Rahman of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.²⁹ The Conference decided to increase the membership of the Al-Quds Committee from 13 to 15 and unanimously elected Bangladesh and Libya as the two new members of the Committee, in addition to the existing thirteen members all of whom were reelected unanimously for another term of three years.³⁰ The Conference also took to notice the candidature of Bangladesh for the Security Council.³¹

The Conference welcomed the offer made by the Government of Bangladesh to establish the ICTVTR. It approved the establishment of this Centre in Dacca, with a view to catering the needs of the Islamic countries for trained manpower, in accordance with the revised project proposal prepared by the group of experts which met in Dacca on March 6-8, 1978 and requested the Government of Bangladesh to take all necessary measures to make the Centre operational at the earliest.³² It also urged all member states to support the establishment of the Centre with financial contributions, and all other administrative measures.³³ Having considered the report of the First International Islamic Seminar held in Dacca, Bangladesh from 20 to 22 March, on 'Human and Natural Resources of the Muslim World', it expressed its

great appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for hosting the seminar as well as for the contribution it has made to its success, in particular to President Ziaur Rahman who inaugurated and underscored the crucial importance of the Seminar.³⁴ The Conference endorsed the recommendations of the Seminar and requested the General Secretariat to give effect to the wide dissemination of the recommendations of the seminar and to initiate suitable action for eliciting the views of member countries on the measures to be adopted for implementation of the recommendations.³⁵

Tenth ICFM and Bangladesh:

In the Tenth ICFM held at Fez, Morocco from 8 to 12 May 1979, Bangladesh held out an assurance to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Muslims all over the world. It expressed its grave concern over the deepening crisis in the Middle East. Bangladesh from the beginning held the firm and sincere conviction that the lasting peace in the region could be secured only through complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories including the holy city of Jerusalem and restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians including their right to a state of their own. The Conference unanimously adopted a resolution initiated by Bangladesh urging the Manila Conference of UNCTAD-V to endorse the Arusha Declaration adopting special measures for least developed countries.³⁶ The Conference elected Professor Mohammad Shamsul Huq, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, as second Vice-Chairman for the Conference.³⁷ The Conference heard the messages of President Ziaur Rahman of Bangladesh.³⁸ It appreciated the gift of 30 acres of land by the Government of Bangladesh for the permanent site of the ICTVTR in Dacca and the arrangements made for its temporary accommodation. It also requested the Government of Bangladesh to render all possible assistance to the Centre and to conclude, if necessary, a Headquarters Agreement with the Centre.³⁹

Bangladesh's suggestion for the First Extraordinary ICFM on Soviet occupation in Afghanistan:

Bangladesh was very concerned with the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan which took place on 31 December 1979. Bangladesh suggested and requested an extraordinary session of the ICFM. The suggestion was endorsed by several member states of the OIC. At the suggestion of Bangladesh the First Extraordinary Session of

the Foreign Ministers Conference of Islamic states was thus convened at Istanbul on January 27-29, 1980, in between the 10th and 11th conferences of Islamic Foreign Ministers.⁴⁰ The role of Bangladesh in the Conference bore eloquent testimony to the sense of Islamic solidarity. The stand of Bangladesh on Afghanistan was clear and unequivocal. Bangladesh attached special importance to the resolution of the crisis and easing of tension in the region. Bangladesh expressed deep concern over the tragic happenings in Afghanistan. It described the presence of foreign troops and their direct involvement in Afghanistan as a serious threat to peace and stability in the region and called for concerted and urgent action by Islamic countries for an immediate stoppage of further spilling of blood in that country. Foreign Minister Professor Mohammad Shamsul Huq, head of Bangladesh delegation, called upon the Islamic countries to act in concert also for complete withdrawal of all foreign troops and restoration of peaceful conditions to enable Afghan brothers freely to decide their own destiny.⁴¹ He said that armed intervention in Afghanistan and continued presence of foreign troops are a violation of principles of the UN Charter and also violation of independent sovereign status of a Muslim country and a founding member of Non-aligned movement. He added that situation in Afghanistan posed a fundamental challenge to the principles of the UN Charter as well as Non-alignment.

Professor Huq further made it clear that Bangladesh had always resolutely opposed external interference in the internal affairs of another country in any form and on any pretext. He urged the conference to adopt a concerted action to ensure security of all Islamic states, not merely through adoption of occasional declarations of unity and solidarity but through concerted, adequate and sustained measures for economic and political cooperation. In fact, Bangladesh upheld the sovereign and inalienable right of the people of Afghanistan to determine freely their own form of government and choose their own political, economic and social system without any external interference or military intervention and it showed that Bangladesh was dedicated to the cause of justice and fairplay. The views of Bangladesh with other Islamic countries were effectively reflected in resolutions of the conference.⁴² The visit of Secretary General Dr. Habib-el-Chatty to Bangladesh immediately after the end of the Conference further placed the OIC-Bangladesh relations on a solid foundation.⁴³

Bangladesh proposal for a six-point suggestion in the Eleventh ICFM:

In the Eleventh ICFM held in Istanbul on May 17-22, 1980, the message sent by Bangladesh President Ziaur Rahman was read out by Foreign Minister Professor Shamsul Huq at the Conference and spontaneously greeted by the dignitaries.⁴⁴ Bangladesh stressed the need for welding the Islamic countries into a self-reliant Islamic community through developing and sharing the resources of the Islamic world and proposed a six-point concrete suggestion to achieve the objectives. Bangladesh stressed on the need for developing and sharing the resources among the Islamic countries on the basis of equilibrium; diversification of investment in Islamic countries with priorities on agricultural development; creation of a special fund to assist the Islamic countries critically affected by energy crisis; development of an Islamic international banking system to coordinate and expand credit facilities within the Islamic community; development of training facilities for technical and professional personnel to make the Islamic countries fully self-reliant; and development and equalization of educational opportunities to promote cultural cohesion and unity within the Islamic world. The six-point recipe, in fact, summed up the grass-root imperatives concerning the Islamic world and its self-reliance philosophy. Bangladesh again reiterated its support for the Palestinians. On Afghanistan issue Bangladesh reiterated its stand for withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan so as to create an atmosphere under which the Afghan people will be free to choose their own political, economic and social system.

The Conference appointed Arshaduz Zaman of Bangladesh as one of the Assistant Secretaries General for a term of two years.⁴⁵ It welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to host the Third Islamic Trade Fair in 1981.⁴⁶ It reviewed the activities of the ICTVTR and adopted some decisions regarding the approval of draft statute, draft internal rules and regulations for the personnel and draft financial regulations and some other matters of the Centre.⁴⁷ Having considered the proposal made by Bangladesh for organizing international games amongst the member countries of the OIC, the Conference decided to approve in principle the proposal for holding periodical international games amongst the member states of the OIC.⁴⁸

Bangladesh's proposal for Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF):

The Cultural and Islamic Affairs Committee of the 11th ICFM approved a Bangladesh proposal for organizing international games among the Islamic countries. Bangladesh at first made the proposal for holding Islamic Games in the Fifth Meeting of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs held in Conakry, Guinea in January 1980 with the objective to strengthen Islamic brotherhood and solidarity among youth of member states and promote Islamic identity in the fields of sports. Bangladesh proposal providing for holding international games in the pattern of other international and regional sports aimed at fostering closer ties of friendship understanding and goodwill among the people of the Islamic countries and to strengthen Islamic solidarity. The Bangladesh proposal was understood to have received wide appreciation from the delegates of the Conference as positive measure to develop closer understanding and goodwill among the Muslim countries. The proposal was endorsed subsequently.⁴⁹

Bangladesh initiative for a Ministerial Standing Committee:

Bangladesh for a few years made an effort for the formation of a conciliation Standing Committee. The idea for setting up of a Standing Ministerial Committee of the Foreign Ministers was first introduced during the Ninth ICFM held in Dakar in 1978. On the initiative of Bangladesh the Tenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers held at Fez in Morocco from 8 to 12 May 1979, adopted a resolution for the creation of conciliation Standing Ministerial Committee.⁵⁰ On the same matter Bangladesh adopted a draft resolution proposing the establishment of a ministerial Level Standing Committee at the First extraordinary session of the Foreign Ministers Conference of Islamic States in Islamabad in 1980 and specified that the Committee would deal with emergency situation. The Bangladesh Delegation pointed out that in view of the ever increasing problem of the international crises throughout the world, in particular in the Islamic world, it was essential that there be a body within the Islamic Conference which could meet at short notice to handle the emergency situation, as and when they arise, without going through the cumbersome and expensive process of convening a full-fledged emergency meeting of Islamic Foreign Ministers. Bangladesh's proposal for Standing Ministerial Level Committee evoked overwhelming support in the 11th ICFM.⁵¹

Bangladesh's concern over the Middle East issue in the Second Extraordinary ICFM:

In the Second Extraordinary ICFM held at Amman on July 11-12, 1980 which dealt exclusively with the West Asian problem, Bangladesh expressed grave concern and anxiety over the Middle East issue and reiterated its complete solidarity with the Arab and Palestinian brothers in their long struggle against Zionist aggression.⁵² Bangladesh expressed its firm conviction that a just and lasting peace in the region could be secured only through the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories including the holy city of Jerusalem. Bangladesh stressed the need for restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians to have a state of their own.

The Third Extraordinary ICFM and Bangladesh's condemnation against Israeli occupation:

In Third Extraordinary ICFM held at Fez on September 18-20, 1980 which also dealt exclusively with the Al-Quds Al-Sharif, Bangladesh played prominent role as a member of the Al-Quds Committee. President Ziaur Raman personally did not attend the Conference. But, the President sent a cabled message addressed to King Hassan II, read out by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Professor Mohamad Shamsul Haq, in which he expressed deep regret at being unable to join the Moroccan monarch and President Al Haj Ahmed Sekou Toure in this Extraordinary Session of the ICFM due to the devastating floods that had hit Bangladesh. In his message, he stressed that he and the people of Bangladesh attached great importance to the work of the Extraordinary Session and expressed their unqualified solidarity with their Arab and Muslim brethren.⁵³ Bangladesh reiterated condemnation of the Israeli design to perpetrate her hold over the illegally occupied Arab and Palestinian territory including the holy city of Jerusalem. Bangladesh described the Israeli move to make Jerusalem its capital under the cover of an illegal law as outrageous and preposterous and cautioned that the threat to al-Quds al-Sharif was a threat to the entire Islamic world. Bangladesh was determined to stand shoulder to shoulder with Palestinian brethren in regaining their lost lands including Jerusalem. Bangladesh Foreign Minister in the Conference stressed the need for unity and solidarity in the ranks of the Islamic countries and firmly believed to be victorious in this regard.

The dominating position of Bangladesh in OIC under Ziaur Rahman in the Third Summit:

The Third Islamic Summit Conference was held at Taif from January 25 to 28, 1981 with its opening session in Mecca. Bangladesh President Ziaur Rahman played a very important role in the Summit Conference which was highly appreciated by all. The appreciation was demonstrated through his unanimous election of one of the three Vice Presidents of the Islamic Summit Bureau.⁵⁴ President Ziaur Rahman was also elected a member in the eight-member heads of state good office team to find a solution to the Iran-Iraq War.⁵⁵ He also presided over the plenary session on Al-Quds agenda. He was the member of the three-member Al-Quds Committee of which King Hasan of Morocco was the Chairman.⁵⁶ The conference adopted the Bangladesh resolution on Least Development Countries co-sponsored by other least developed Islamic countries. The decision envisaged special assistance to the least developed Islamic member states a special relief to overcome the crisis created by the international upheaval.⁵⁷ The Summit noted the recommendations made by the Expert Committee and the Sixth Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs held in Jeddah, on the basis of the proposals made by Bangladesh for the institution of the 'Islamic Solidarity Games' amongst the members of the OIC and the establishment of an 'Islamic Solidarity Games Confederation' with representatives from all the Muslim states of the OIC. It also decided to forward the draft statute of the Islamic Solidarity Games Confederation to all member states for their views and comments and submit these to the Special Committee composed of the following states: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Turkey, Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Tunisia, Gambia, Guinea, Gabon, Somalia, to draw up the final text of the foregoing draft with a view to submitting it to the forthcoming ICFM for adoption and ratification.⁵⁸ At the third Islamic Summit Conference, President Ziaur Rahman proposed to the OIC, the concept of an Islamic Common Market (ICM). Bangladesh still holds the concept for the greater economic development of the Muslim nations.⁵⁹

The Twelfth ICFM expressed deep grief over the tragic death of President Ziaur Rahman:

The Twelfth ICFM was held at Baghdad on June 1-5, 1981, immediately after the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman. Following the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman a wave of profound grief swept over the Islamic world. The entire

Islamic world was deeply saddened at the news of the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman. Islamic leaders denounced the dastardly act which deprived Bangladesh and the Muslim world of an outstanding leader. They described him as a great leader recalling his contribution to bring an end to the Iraq-Iran War and his untiring efforts for the establishment of a Palestinian state and the liberation of Jerusalem.⁶⁰ The OIC Secretary General Habib Chatty expressed deep grief over the tragic death of President Ziaur Rahman and recalled his contributions in his own country and to the Muslim world.⁶¹ *Fateha* was offered for the salvation of the departed soul of the late President Ziaur Rahman before starting the session.⁶² The participants also observed a minute of silence to show respect and homage was paid to him. Among the other Islamic leaders, President Saddam Hussain of Iraq expressed great sorrow and regret for the mishap and recalled the services rendered by President Ziaur Rahman as a member of the IPC.⁶³ The Conference described his passing away as a great loss to the mission. Several resolutions were taken recalling his contributions.⁶⁴ As a tribute to the memory of the late President Ziaur Rahman, Vice-Chairman of the IPC, President Ahmed Sekou Toure of Guinea, the Chairman of the IPC, proposed that a meeting of the mission be held in Dacca (changed to Dhaka in 1984).⁶⁵ Such a proposal, in fact, highlighted the active role that the late President Ziaur Rahman had played to bring the Gulf War to an end.

The Twelfth ICFM endorsed unanimously Dacca as the venue for the Fourteenth ICFM. Bangladesh was also re-elected for a third consecutive term to the 14 member Jerusalem Committee.⁶⁶ In the Conference, Bangladesh moved up the Islamic Common Market issue again and called for immediate convening of a high level expert committee meeting of the OIC to undertake a comprehensive study for its proposal towards forming an Islamic Common Market. The Conference in its resolution decided to refer the aforementioned study to Statistical, Economic and Social Training Centre in Ankara to undertake a study based on the document presented by Bangladesh under the title of “Towards an Islamic Common Market,” and distributed to the member states, on the prospects of setting up an Islamic Common Market which should be referred subsequently to the General Secretariat for examination by a Group of experts on its suitability for submission to the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs.⁶⁷ It noted the offer of the Government of Bangladesh to host an Expert Group meeting on Reinsurance during

1981. It also approved that the Second Islamic Trade Fair be held in Bangladesh and urged the Member States to actively participate in the Trade Fair.⁶⁸ It expressed appreciation for the generous donation of Bangladesh made to the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange.⁶⁹ It took note of the recommendations of the Third International Conference on Islamic Education held at Dacca, Bangladesh, in March, 1981.⁷⁰

Thirteenth ICFM and Bangladesh:

The Thirteenth ICFM, held in Niamey, Niger from 22-26 August, 1982 elected Bangladesh a member of the Permanent Council of the Islamic Solidarity Fund in addition to the Secretary.⁷¹ Bangladesh was unanimously elected senior Vice-Chairman of the Conference in the senior official meeting held prior to the Conference.⁷² PLO was also elected as the other Vice-Chairman at Bangladesh's proposal. The Economic Affairs Committee of the Conference elected Bangladesh one of the members of its Drafting Committee.⁷³ It welcomed the offer of Bangladesh, to host expert level meeting for the implementation of the recommendations of the First Ministerial Conference on food security and agricultural development in Islamic countries.⁷⁴ On the activities of the ICTVTR the Conference stressed on the donations from the donor states and institutions to timely pay their donations at the earliest.⁷⁵ The Conference appreciated the role played by the Government of Bangladesh in preparing a study on the Islamic Insurance and Reinsurance and in hosting the Expert level meeting in Dacca on April 1 - 4, 1982 on it.⁷⁶ It noted that the Second Islamic Trade Fair could not be hold in Dacca (Dhaka), Bangladesh in December, 1981 as planned in the 12th ICFM.⁷⁷ Bangladesh Foreign Minister A. R. Shams-ud-Doha emphasized in the Conference the need for closer cooperation among the members of the Islamic *Ummah* politically and economically and called for solidarity and unity among them for furthering the cause of peace, amity and prosperity in the Islamic world. Bangladesh condemned the Israeli genocide in Lebanon and demanded immediate withdrawal of Israel. Bangladesh reiterated its support of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland and self determination, independence and national sovereignty. The conference adopted a resolution approving Dacca as the next venue of the ICFM. The Islamic leaders paid rich tribute to the role of Bangladesh in the OIC and assured their support and wished unqualified success of the Fourteenth ICFM.⁷⁸

Bangladesh hosted the Fourteenth ICFM:

Bangladesh received the unique honour to host the 14th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in December 1983. The successful completion of the 14th ICFM in Dhaka undoubtedly created a lasting image of Bangladesh in the Muslim *Ummah*.⁷⁹ Before the Conference President Ershad made several trips to the Middle East in an attempt to achieve peace. To organize the 14th ICFM, the Government of Bangladesh constituted a National Committee and nine sub-committees which were entrusted with various responsibilities to cover almost all aspects of 14th ICFM. Bangladesh government successfully completed the preparatory work of the Conference.⁸⁰ The Conference was preceded by the Senior Officials Meeting on December 4, 1983. It was attended by 40 out of the 42 member states. Benin was granted membership during the course of the session and the number of the countries present in the Conference raised to 41. Foreign Minister A. R. Shams-ud-Doha led the 74-member Bangladesh delegation. He was elected as the Chairman of the Conference.⁸¹ He together with Rear Admiral M.A. Khan, psn, DCMLA and Minister for Communication led the Bangladesh delegation.

President of Bangladesh, Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammad Ershad played a very vital and important role in the Conference. On 6th September 1983 the host President inaugurated the Conference. In his inaugural address he referred to the crisis confronting the *Ummah*. He referred that the fundamental rights of the Palestinians continued to be denied and the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque was still being desecrated. Stressing the need for greater cooperation among Islamic countries, he called upon the delegates to pledge themselves towards rebuilding Islamic unity and solidarity. On the question of Iran-Iraq War, he tried his best to solve the problem in the Conference describing the conflict as a “gaping wound” in the body-politic of Islam. He stressed the need for collective efforts to end the fratricidal conflict between Iran and Iraq. Regarding Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, he called for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. He also called for the restoration of the rights of the Turkish Cypriot community in the framework of a bi-zonal federal state in accordance with the Makarios-Denktaş Agreement.⁸² He argued for an active role of the Islamic world for opposing interventions for the eradication of apartheid, for achieving Namibian independence.⁸³ In his address, President Ershad also paid special attention to the needs of the LDCs. He stressed for the greater institutional support including

establishment of universities and research centres in the Islamic countries. The Conference unanimously adopted the inaugural address of the President as an official document of the 14th ICFM.⁸⁴ The Islamic leaders expressed deep appreciation of the speech. It also expressed thanks for warm welcome and generous hospitality.⁸⁵ The Conference conveyed its deep appreciation and gratitude to the people and Government of Bangladesh for the generous hospitality extended to the delegations attending the Conference.⁸⁶

Bangladesh Foreign Minister and Chairman of the Conference A. R. Shams-ud-Doha reviewed the challenges facing the Islamic world. He emphasized on the withdrawal of Israeli troops occupying Palestinian territories and the restoration of the rights of the Palestinians for a just and lasting settlement of the Palestine problem. He urged for unity of the PLO in their struggle for achieving their rights. He stressed on international efforts in some crises in the Islamic world; that is, ending the conflict between Iran and Iraq, a political solution in Afghanistan with the withdrawal of foreign troops, independence of Namibia, the problems of Muslim minorities and disarmament issues. He also called for just and equitable international economic order and the need for special measures to help the LDCs.

The Conference adopted several resolutions on the issues addressed by the Bangladesh President and the Chairman of the Conference addressed. The Conference approved the Dhaka Declaration. The Conference elected Bangladesh as one of the new members of the Financial Control Organ.⁸⁷ The Conference thanked the Government of Bangladesh for the support extended to Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development (IFSTOD).⁸⁸ The Conference supported the proposal of Bangladesh to declare 1410 H as Islamic Heritage Year and further supported the proposal of Bangladesh for a worldwide survey of damages to Islamic Monuments.⁸⁹ The Conference appealed to the member states and all organs and institutions of the OIC to provide technical and financial support to the project for the Islamic University in Bangladesh and to take up the project for consideration at the Fourth Islamic Summit Conference.⁹⁰ The Political Affairs and Information Committee elected Ataul Karim, Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh as the Chairman of the Committee.⁹¹ Mafizur Rahman, Secretary, External Resources Division, Ministry of Finance and Planning of Bangladesh, was unanimously elected as Chairman of the

Economic Affairs Committee. Bangladesh was also elected as one of the representatives of its Drafting Committee.⁹² The proceedings of the Administrative and Financial Committee were conducted by its Chairman Mohammad Mahbubuz Zaman, Secretary of the Cabinet Division of Bangladesh.⁹³ Mujibul Huq, Member of the Planning Commission of Bangladesh, was unanimously elected to chair the Cultural and Social Affairs Committee.⁹⁴ It decided to submit the project for the establishment of the Islamic University in Bangladesh to the Fourth Islamic Summit for consideration and approval.⁹⁵ It welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to host the expert level meeting with a view to examine that the issue of Insurance and Re-Insurance was not inconsistent with the principles of *Sharia*.⁹⁶

Ershad's 11-point proposal in the Fourth Summit:

The President and Chief Martial Law Administrator Lieutenant General H. M. Ershad put forward before the Fourth Islamic Summit held at Casablanca in Morocco between 16 and 19 January 1984, the 11-point proposal for safeguarding and promoting the political and economic security of the Islamic countries. It included a comprehensive programme of action on Palestine; establishment of a conciliation commission to deal with disputes and conflicts between Islamic countries and formation of a political standing committee of the OIC which could be convened at short notice in the event of the emergency or threat facing the Islamic world or any Muslim country; undertaking a special action programme for the least development Islamic countries to assist them in the face of global economic upheaval; establishment of an Islamic Common Market; increasing investment in the Islamic world both in the public and the private sectors; preparation and publication of country profile of the Islamic countries containing basic socio-economic indicators identifying specific areas of cooperation among them and its prospects and opportunities; initiating an intensified technical cooperation programme among Islamic countries and centres; establishing diplomatic missions in each other's countries to strengthen relations, opening Islamic universities, centres and institutes of research and according most favoured status to nationals from Islamic countries in those countries where employment of expatriates was necessary.

Expressing serious concern at the situation in Lebanon, Bangladesh urged the Summit to extend its full moral and material support to the people of Lebanon to achieve

national reconciliation and preserve their sovereignty and territorial integrity. Bangladesh was totally committed to the just cause of the Palestinian people and to do everything possible within its means to help in the struggle for a homeland in Palestine for the Palestinians with Jerusalem as its capital. On Iran-Iraq War, Bangladesh called upon both the parties to exercise restraint and urged the Summit to adopt concrete measures to bring this fratricidal war to an end in a just and honourable way. Bangladesh expressed full sympathy to the plight of the Afghans and extended full support to their valiant struggle for exercising their right of self-determination and preservation of their sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this connection Bangladesh appreciated the commendable efforts of the UN Secretary-General and his representatives for promoting a just settlement of the Afghan problem. President Ershad reiterated Bangladesh's support to each and every move in all international forums in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. He also supported the Namibian struggle against the racist regime of South Africa. Bangladesh also strongly supported the efforts of the Turkish Cypriots for a constructive and meaningful dialogue with the representatives of the Greek Cypriot community with a view to establishing a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation in Cyprus where the legitimate hopes and aspirations of the Turkish Cypriot community would be fully respected and protected.

In the Summit, Bangladesh supported the re-entry of Egypt to the OIC and the Summit acclaimed it. Bangladesh's view points on the issues like the Middle East, Palestine, al-Quds Al-Sharif, Afghanistan, Iran-Iraq War, Cyprus and Namibia were praised by the Summit. It made an appeal to the Muslim countries to extend necessary financial support to expedite the establishment of the Islamic University in Bangladesh. Bangladesh President urged the Summit to adopt the Dhaka Declaration which had been recommended by the 14th ICFM held in Dakar, one month before the Summit. The Summit adopted the historic 'Dhaka Declaration' on human rights in Islam after a marathon discussion session lasting over seven hours. The Declaration had significance in various aspects. This was for the first time that some Third World countries (as the OIC member states belong to the Third World) emphasized human rights by themselves without the partnership of the developed countries. The Declaration was reminder to the established fact that the concept of human rights is

not merely a western contribution to human thought, Islam also emphasizes in human rights both in belief and action.

The Summit took into consideration the appeal by the President of Bangladesh H M Ershad, in his address inaugurating the Fourteenth ICFM, which called for cessation of hostilities, bringing bloodshed to an end, and settling the dispute between the two countries.⁹⁷ It expressed its thanks and appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for its voluntary contributions to the project of the University of Niger.⁹⁸ On Islamic University in Bangladesh, it commended the great efforts made by the Government of Bangladesh, as a first step, towards the establishment of this University; requested the Islamic Solidarity Fund and all specialized OIC institutions to provide the Government of Bangladesh with material and moral assistance so that it may carry out this project; urged all member states to grant technical assistance and voluntary donations so that the university might attain the lofty objectives for which it would be established.⁹⁹

Bangladesh proposal for Islamic Reinsurance in the Fifteenth ICFM:

Bangladesh proposal seeking approval for the early establishment of an Islamic Reinsurance Corporation with its headquarters in Dhaka was discussed in the economic committee of the OIC in the Fifteenth ICFM held in Sana, between 18 and 22 December 1984. Most of the delegations deeply acknowledged the need for an early setting up of the Islamic Reinsurance Corporation and supported the proposal. Most of the countries including Turkey, Egypt, Gambia, Uganda, Niger and Sudan supported the Bangladesh proposal to host the Islamic Reinsurance Corporation in Dhaka. The Economic Committee decided after a lengthy discussion to refer the matter to the Fiqh Academy for a clear-cut verdict on the matter from the *Sharia* point of view.¹⁰⁰

Bangladesh delegation leader Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury, Adviser for Foreign Affairs, addressed some issues facing the Islamic world in the Fifteenth ICFM.¹⁰¹ On the food security programme, the economic committee recommended the completion of the studies assigned to various countries including Bangladesh. Bangladesh strongly pleaded for following up the suggestion made in the fourteenth ICFM to improve the economic situation of the least developed Islamic countries.¹⁰² The

Cultural and Islamic Affairs Committee in its recommendations incorporated a Bangladesh proposal for continuation of financial contribution by the Islamic Solidarity Fund from its annual budget for completion of the Islamic University project in Bangladesh.¹⁰³ The Conference also decided to renew the membership of Bangladesh in the Permanent Council of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for another two year term. The Conference urged the OIC Secretariat to take certain measures to complete the Islamic University projects in Bangladesh, Niger, Malaysia and Uganda.

The Conference also chose Humayun Rasheed Choudhury as Rapporteur General.¹⁰⁴ The Conference expressed its appreciation to Bangladesh, for its role in reaching agreement with regard to election of the new Secretary-General.¹⁰⁵ The Committee for Political and Information Affairs elected the representative of Bangladesh as Rapporteur.¹⁰⁶ Taking note of the report of the General Secretariat on its participation as observer in the meetings of the International Jute Council held in Dhaka, in January and September, 1984, urged all member states concerned to accede to the international agreement on jute and jute products.¹⁰⁷ It welcomed the generous offer of Bangladesh to host the sixth meeting of Governors of Central Banks and Monetary Authorities and requested the member states to participate in the meeting to be held in Dhaka in February, 1985.¹⁰⁸ A.B.M. Abdel Matin, Representative of Bangladesh inaugurated the first session of this Cultural and Islamic Affairs Committee on 19 December 1984 as his country chaired the Fourteenth ICFM.¹⁰⁹ On the Islamic University in Bangladesh it requested the Islamic Solidarity Fund and all specialized OIC institutions and agencies to provide Bangladesh with all adequate material and technical assistance to enable it to carry out this project in the shortest possible time and expressed its appreciation and gratitude to Iraq, Kuwait and Tunisia for the aid they offered for the University project.¹¹⁰ It expressed its thanks to Bangladesh for its contribution to IFSTAD (Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development).¹¹¹ The Administrative and Financial Committee was opened by Mohiuddin Ahmed as member of the delegation of Bangladesh and elected him a Rapporteur.¹¹² It created an Expert Committee to review the financial regulations and the staff regulations of the OIC General Secretariat and Bangladesh was elected as one of its member.¹¹³

Bangladesh proposal for seven-point programme in the Sixteenth ICFM:

In the Sixteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers held in Fez on January 6-10, 1986, Bangladesh proposed seven-point programme to safeguard and promote economic security of Islamic countries.¹¹⁴ The programme included a special action programme for the Islamic LDC's hard hit by the recession investing in the food and agriculture sectors in member countries on priority; special action plan for natural disaster hit people in OIC countries, acceleration of the arrangements of the SNPA (Substantial New Programme of Action) for the LDC's and full implementation of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board Resolutions- 165 (S-IX); rolling back of the protectionism, removal of trade barriers and strengthening the world trading system through the UN GATT and other international bodies for convening of an international conference on monetary and financial issues to consider appropriate reforms aimed at providing greater stability and momentum for development.

Recalling the resolution of the Fifteenth ICFM on jute and jute products, the Conference again urged all member states concerned to accede to the international agreement on jute and jute products and requested the General Secretariat to follow-up the implementation of the resolution on this subject.¹¹⁵ On the activities of the ICVTR it urged the member states to make regular contributions to the budget of the Centre, to settle arrears, at the earliest, to make generous donations to facilitate construction of the remaining buildings of the Centre and development of its workshop, laboratory and library without further delay so that training courses in the remaining technologies and vocational subjects could be offered by the Centre. It also requested the member states to provide relevant information to the Centre in respect of their training needs, and to expedite nomination of personnel and experts required by the Centre to implement its programme of activities and curriculum.¹¹⁶ On the Islamic University of Bangladesh it authorized the General Secretariat to seek technical aid from Arab and Islamic Universities through provision of Professors, books and scholarships and expressed its appreciation and gratitude to those member states and Islamic institutions which had extended assistance to the University project.¹¹⁷ On the activities of the International Association of Islamic Banks, it noted with satisfaction that the Governors of Central Banks and Monetary Authorities deliberated on the subject at their Sixth Meeting held in Dhaka, on February 4-5, 1985. It also noted with appreciation in organizing seminars and workshops during

the year, including the seminars held in Dhaka, in March 1985, on ‘Concept and Practices of Islamic Banking’.¹¹⁸

Ershad’s positive role in the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference at Kuwait:

Bangladesh President Husain Muhammad Ershad made positive role in the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference held in Kuwait from 26 to 29 January 1987. He made positive propositions as urgent means to end the fratricidal war between Iran and Iraq. His formula on the issue was highly appreciated as it was considered to be the concerning time factor steps to stop the war. He expressed his great concern at the escalation of hostilities in the protracted Gulf War. He appealed to Iraq and Iran to open a dialogue through the good offices of the IPC to end the tragic war between the two brotherly countries. President Ershad condemned illegal occupation of Arab and Palestinian territory by the Zionist regime of Israel and reiterated Bangladesh stand for enabling the Palestinians to exercise their inalienable and legitimate rights to return to their homeland and of self-determination and to establish a sovereign independent state under the leadership of their sole and legitimate representative, the PLO.¹¹⁹ He referred that it was the sacred duty of every Muslim to help create a situation to compel the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan within time frame enabling the Afghan people to determine their own form of government without outside intervention and interference. He called the world pressure on Pretoria’s racist regime in South Africa to see reason and establish a democratic multi-racial society based on the principle of one-man one-vote of self-determination, national independence and basic human dignity by a foreign occupation force. He also addressed on the Muslim minorities issue, economic situation and poverty facing the Muslim world. His deliberations again proved Bangladesh’s active participation in the OIC activities. The OIC also adopted resolutions on these issues specially the Iraq-Iran War and Afghanistan issue.

The Summit decided to form a Committee consisting of Mali, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Senegal, Egypt, Palestine, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Bangladesh and Tunisia to examine the situation of the International Islamic News Agency and submit its findings to the Chairman of the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs and the Seventeenth ICFM.¹²⁰ It requested the Islamic Solidarity

Fund, other specialized OIC institutions and agencies and member states to provide the Government of Bangladesh with adequate material and technical assistance so that the project of the Islamic University in Bangladesh may be completed in the shortest possible time. It also entrusted the General Secretariat to seek technical aid from Arab and Islamic universities in the provision of professors, books and scholarships.¹²¹

Seventeenth ICFM and Bangladesh:

Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury led the Bangladesh delegation in the Seventeenth ICFM held at Amman, Jordan, from 19 to 26 March 1988. Bangladesh made a forceful plea for an immediate cessation of the Gulf War and greater cohesion of the Muslim world.

The Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh, on behalf of the member states from Asia addressed the Conference and expressed gratitude for the warm and brotherly hospitality provided to all the delegations by Jordan.¹²² The Conference reiterated the importance of the Islamic University in Bangladesh in the propagation of Islamic culture and teachings as well as general education. It called upon member states to provide financial assistance as well as teachers, scholarships, books and curricula etc., in order to enable it to achieve its objectives.¹²³ The Conference expressed its appreciation to those member states and Islamic institutions which had extended assistance to the University project; urged them to provide adequate technical assistance and donations to the University to achieve its targeted objectives; requested the General Secretariat to pursue its contacts with Bangladesh and follow-up the implementation of the project.¹²⁴ On ICTVTR it urged the member states to make regular mandatory contributions to the budget of the Centre, and pay the arrears and fully participate in the academic and training programmes offered by the Centre and to provide relevant information as required.¹²⁵ With regard to the item concerning the project for the establishment of an Islamic Centre for Advanced Medical Training and Research submitted by Bangladesh, the Cultural and Social Affairs Committee stressed the importance of that project and its great usefulness to the health sector in Islamic states. The Committee entrusted the General Secretariat with the task of

pursuing its contacts with member states, in order to elicit their views and comments on the relevant note circulated to them.¹²⁶

Eighteenth ICFM and Bangladesh:

In the Eighteenth ICFM held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 13 to 16 March 1989, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh on behalf of the member states from Asia expressed his profound gratitude and profuse thanks to King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz al Saud (1982-2005) for patronizing the Conference by his presence and for the noble thoughts contained in his inspiring address.¹²⁷ The Conference elected Bangladesh in the Permanent Council of the Islamic Solidarity Fund.¹²⁸ The Conference expressed satisfaction at the solidarity shown by some member states and the Islamic Development Bank in assisting Bangladesh in overcoming the havoc wrought by floods. It appealed to the member states to continue to provide generous emergency assistance to Bangladesh.¹²⁹ The representative of Bangladesh to the Cultural Affairs Committee expressed the appreciation to the Committee members, and to the Chairman of the Committee for the wisdom, high competence and skill with which he conducted the proceedings.¹³⁰ It adopted a resolution on the Islamic University of Bangladesh appreciating the steps taken by Bangladesh to establish the University.¹³¹

Nineteenth ICFM and Bangladesh:

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud called for joint Islamic action for achieving the fundamental objectives by the Islamic nations in the Nineteenth ICFM held in Cairo, Egypt, from 1 to 5 August 1990. Regarding the Gulf War, Bangladesh fully supported the call of the UN Security Council, the Arab League and the OIC for immediate withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. Bangladesh made clear its stance in this context that it consistently opposed the use of force in resolving disputes between sovereign nations. Bangladesh expressed its concern over the Kashmir issue. Bangladesh also addressed on the rights of the Palestinians and strengthening mutual cooperation and assistance and welfare of all Muslims everywhere.

The Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, on behalf of the Asian Member States expressed his profound gratitude and sincere thanks to President Muhammad Hosni Mubarak for patronizing the Conference by his presence and the highly inspiring guidelines contained in his inaugural address. He also thanked the Government of Egypt for the

excellent arrangements it had made for the Conference and for the generous hospitality extended by it to all delegations.¹³² The Conference expressed satisfaction at the solidarity shown by some member states and the Islamic Development Bank in assisting Bangladesh against floods and appealed to the member states to continue to provide generous emergency assistance to Bangladesh.¹³³ It considered the project of the establishment of an Advanced Center for Medical Research and Medicine in Bangladesh.¹³⁴ Reiterating the importance of setting up the Center it requested the General Secretariat to arrange an evaluation report on the proposed project and to submit in the Twentieth ICFM.¹³⁵ Bangladesh became a member of the Drafting Committee of the Economic Affairs Committee.¹³⁶ It appreciated the outcome of the Ministerial level meeting of the Least Developed Countries held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 10-12 February 1990 and emphasized the need for following up the implementation of the provisions of the 'Dhaka Declaration, the Dhaka Document and the Plan of Action' as adopted by that meeting and also appreciated the visit to developed countries in this connection by a Least Developed Countries Ministerial level delegation, headed by the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh.¹³⁷

Twentieth ICFM and Bangladesh

Foreign Secretary Abul Ahsan led five-member Bangladesh delegation in the Twentieth ICFM held in Istanbul from 4 to 8 August 1991.¹³⁸ Expressing deep regret about the severe cyclone which hit Bangladesh recently resulting in heavy losses in lives and property, it appreciated the member states, international agencies, NGO's, IDB and other organs for their relief assistance to victims of the cyclone in Bangladesh. It also appreciated the kind gesture of King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz to provide immediate financial assistance to the victims of the cyclone and tidal waves in Bangladesh. It appealed to all member states, specialized and affiliated institutions to continue to extend generous assistance to the Government of Bangladesh for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas. It also requested the Secretary General to convene a Task Force consisting of Experts to study and recommend permanent measures aimed at preventing and minimizing the effect of the widespread damages and destruction caused by such recurring natural disasters in Bangladesh.¹³⁹ The Conference again considered the project of the establishment of an Advanced Center for Medical Research and Training, in Bangladesh and requested the Secretary

General to continue exploring the views and observations of member states on this project.¹⁴⁰

The Sixth Islamic Summit Conference at Dakar adopted five proposals of Bangladesh:

The Sixth Islamic Summit Conference held in Dakar, capital of Senegal, from 9 to 11 December 1991, adopted five proposals placed by Bangladesh. These proposals included an active plan on the children for their security and sound future; to involve the women in the Islamic countries more effectively in the socio-economic development activities; to assist the natural disaster prone Muslim countries in the hour of their distress; setting up of an Islamic Common Market like that in Europe. The Summit accordingly adopted a resolution on a pledge to promote the role of women, notably through the education of girls which was described as a landmark achievement of the Summit.¹⁴¹ The Summit also called for a conference of ministers and a symposium of experts to develop a proper mechanism for ensuring active participation of women in the fields of social development. Bangladesh as a member of the Preparatory Ministerial Meeting of the Summit made positive contributions to its programme of work.¹⁴² The plenary meeting of the Ministerial level conference adopted Bangladesh proposal on assistance of member states afflicted by drought and natural disasters.¹⁴³ The Conference appealed to all Member States, specialized and affiliated institutions to continue to extend generous assistance to the countries affected by natural disasters particularly the Government of Bangladesh for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of their socio-economic infrastructure.¹⁴⁴

First woman address a Summit:

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia became the first Muslim woman leader to address a summit of the OIC. She set an outstanding impression on the OIC through her presence and her speech in the Sixth Summit which were covered by various news agencies.¹⁴⁵ Specially, her proposals were responded favourably by the OIC and its members. Her proposal urging concerted Islamic action to enhance the role and status of women and their education in mainstream of development was adopted with a great appreciation. She urged the rich nations within the Islamic world to lessen the debt burden of the poor member states. Saudi Arabia accordingly,

announced at the meeting its government's decision to write off the debt of the Least Development Islamic countries and to give 10 million dollars to overcome the financial problems. Khaleda Zia expressed commitment of Bangladesh to the cause of Islamic *Ummah* and to prove its own modest contribution to common objectives. She talked about the Gulf War (Iraq-Kuwait War) describing it as cruel invasion and occupation by Iraq and hoped that Iraq would return to the path of reason and legality in full compliance with the resolutions of the UN Security Council. She also discussed about the Middle East Talks in Madrid, Lebanon and Afghan problems and greater economic cooperation.¹⁴⁶ Her meetings with the leaders of various Muslim countries during the Summit undoubtedly kept furtherance of Dhaka's ties with these nations in addition to strengthening the Islamic *Ummah*.¹⁴⁷

Bangladesh's unequivocal position on Bosnia issue in the Sixth Extraordinary ICFM:

Bangladesh reiterated its firm and unequivocal position on the Bosnia issue in the Sixth Extraordinary ICFM held in Jeddah in December 1992. Bangladesh strongly condemned the Serbian aggressors for the genocide and the abhorrent policy of so-called ethnic cleansing against the people of Bosnia. Bangladesh called upon the UN Security Council to arrange immediate cessation of the hostilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and put an end to the killing of innocent civilians through whatever measures necessary. It also called upon the UN to set up a tribunal to try individuals for committing inhumane atrocities in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bangladesh foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Raman, who led a three-member delegation, called for ensuring adequate emergency relief to the Bosnian people. Dhaka supported to the effort by international forums including the OIC, the NAM and the EC for a political settlement of the problem. Despite resources constraints Bangladesh sent relief materials worth Taka 2 million to Bosnia-Herzegovina through the UNHCR. Bangladesh also called upon all the countries of the Balkan region to exercise an open door policy in admitting Bosnian refugees into their respective countries as a humanitarian gesture. In this context Bangladesh expressed its readiness to receive refugees from Bosnia. Bangladesh was one of the first countries to recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina and cosponsored by UNGA (United Nations General Assembly) Resolution for the admission of that country to the UN.

Twenty- First ICFM and Bangladesh:

In the Twenty- first ICFM held in Karachi on April 25-29, 1993, Bangladesh Foreign Minister F M Mostafizur Raman underscored the need for strengthening the *Ummah*.¹⁴⁸ The financial problems of the ICTVTR were brought to the attention of the Conference. It decided to adopt new statutes of the Centre.¹⁴⁹ Some other proposals relating to the interest of Bangladesh were also raised at the Conference. Bangladesh Foreign Minister called upon the foreign investors in the sideline of the Conference referring in various facilities and incentives provided by the government of Begum Khaleda Zia to invest Bangladesh.¹⁵⁰

Foreign Minister of Bangladesh on behalf of the Asian member states expressed profound gratitude and sincere thanks to Mir Balakh Sher Mazari for patronizing the Conference by his presence and the highly inspiring guidelines contained in his inaugural address. He also thanked Pakistan for the excellent arrangements it had made to ensure the success of the Conference and for the generous hospitality extended by it to all delegations.¹⁵¹ The Conference designated Bangladesh as one of the Assistant Secretaries General.¹⁵² It decided to renew the membership of Bangladesh in the Permanent Council of the Islamic Solidarity Fund.¹⁵³ It adopted various measures aimed at preventing and alleviating the effects of natural disasters in Bangladesh.¹⁵⁴ It urged all member states, the IDB, the ISF, the World Muslim League and other Islamic financial institutions to provide adequate academic and financial assistance to the Islamic University of Bangladesh to enable it to achieve its objectives.¹⁵⁵ On the project of establishing of an Islamic Centre for Advanced Medical Training and Research in Bangladesh, it requested the General Secretariat to submit a report on the subject to the Twenty-Second ICFM.¹⁵⁶

Twenty-Second ICFM and Bangladesh:

In the Twenty-second ICFM held in Casablanca, Morocco from 10 - 12 December 1994, Bangladesh had the role in the formulation and adoption of resolutions on poverty alleviation of LDC's, special assistance to disaster affected countries, greater economic cooperation among OIC countries with a view to building an Islamic Common Market, food security among the OIC member states and adoption of ICTVTR into an Islamic Institute of Technology. Convinced of the need to rename the ICTVTR appropriately with a view to properly reflecting the activities of the

Centre and facilitating the international recognition of the 'Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates' offered by the Centre, approved the recommendation to rename the Centre as 'Islamic Institute of Technology'.¹⁵⁷ The Conference took some measures preventing and alleviating the effects of natural disasters in Bangladesh.¹⁵⁸ It called upon the General Secretariat in collaboration with ISESCO to provide academic assistance to the Islamic University in Bangladesh.¹⁵⁹ Recognizing the need for the Islamic Ummah to have an Advanced Medical Training and Research Centre, it requested the General Secretariat to intensify its on-going contacts with member states in order to obtain their views and comments on the subject and to conduct more research on the technical and financial requirements of this project.¹⁶⁰

Bangladesh's significant role in the Seventh Summit Conference in Casablanca:

Bangladesh played a very significant role in the Seventh Summit Conference held in Casablanca from December 13 to 15, 1994. Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia stressed the importance of carefully identifying the contemporary challenges and threats against Islam and to explore ways to forge true unity and solidarity to confront the challenges. She urged the Islamic world to come out of the vicious cycle of poverty, internal squabbles and mistrust and make collective efforts to restore the glorious image of Islam. Bangladesh in the Summit expressed its full support to the Bosnian people and consistently asked for a negotiable settlement of the issue on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. As part of the UN Peace Keeping Force Bangladesh troops carried out their mandated role in Bihac region under the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).¹⁶¹ Bangladesh also called for restoration of Arab sovereignty over the occupied lands and recognition of inalienable national rights of the Palestinians including a state of their own. It also urged the Summit to make a fresh call to the Afghan leadership for immediate and unconditional ceasefire and resolution of their conflicts based on the principle of respect for the internationally recognized border and territorial integrity of each state. The Conference elected Begum Khaleda Zia, as Vice-Chairman for a three year term.¹⁶² She was the Vice-Chairman of the Asian Group at the inaugural session of the Summit. During the Summit Begum Khaleda Zia's meeting with some Islamic leaders specially those of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, on the sideline of the Summit enhanced commercial linkages with their countries.¹⁶³

Twenty-third ICFM and Bangladesh:

The Twenty-third ICFM held in Conakry from 9 to 12 December 1995 elected Bangladesh as a member to the Financial Control Organ (FCO) for a period of two years.¹⁶⁴ FCO is an important body of the OIC responsible for efficient financial management and its membership also enabled Bangladesh to be a member of the OIC audit team for two years. Bangladesh's unanimous election as a member of this important organ reflected the esteemed position Bangladesh enjoyed in the Muslim Ummah. It adopted some other resolutions relating to the interest of Bangladesh. It adopted resolution on natural disasters and Islamic University of Bangladesh.¹⁶⁵

Twenty-Fourth ICFM and Bangladesh:

Bangladesh as a member of the Ministerial Committee played an important role to find a political, just, comprehensive, honourable and final solution to the problem of Muslims in Southern Philippines and the Twenty-Fourth ICFM held in Jakarta, from 9 to 13 December 1996 commended the fulfillment of the mandate entrusted to the Committee.¹⁶⁶ It requested the General Secretariat, the IDB and the International Islamic Relief Agency to convene a meeting in coordination with some international organizations with a view to organizing a meeting of experts entrusted with examining and recommending appropriate measures aimed at preventing and alleviating the effects of natural disasters in Bangladesh and other member states affected and threatened by natural disasters.¹⁶⁷ On Islamic University of Bangladesh it adopted some decisions including that the ISESCO would represent on the Governing Board of the University.¹⁶⁸ On the Advanced Medical Training and Research Centre in Bangladesh it further requested the Secretary General to follow-up the implementation of the resolution on the matter and submit a report thereon to the next Session of the ICFM.¹⁶⁹

Sheikh Hasina placed the seven-point plan of action in the First Extraordinary Summit:

In the first Special Summit Conference of OIC held on March 23rd, 1997, in Pakistan's capital Islamabad, Bangladesh placed a special plan for meaningful cooperation among the OIC member states. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina placed the seven-point plan of action for implementation while she was addressing the Summit in Bengali. The plan comprised the following points:-

1. Ensuring early implementation of the various resolutions and action plan for strengthening economic and commercial cooperation among the member countries.
2. Establishment of a regime of trade preferences among the OIC countries as prelude to the ultimate goal of establishing a common market.
3. Establishment of mechanism to ensure free flow of development funds, manpower and technology from resource-surplus to resource-scarce countries.
4. Devising practical ways and means of coordinating actions and harmonizing positions on relevant political issues at international level affecting the *Ummah*.
5. Setting up of appropriate permanent mediation arbitration mechanism with a view to reducing tensions and resolving disputes among the member countries.
6. Elaborating appropriate modalities for preventing promoting causes of tension and disputes between Islamic countries. and
7. Strengthening and invigorating the Secretary General of the OIC to make it an effective and efficient vehicle of implementing the objectives of the *Ummah* in 21st century.¹⁷⁰

Sheikh Hasina's seven-point plan of action was acclaimed as very much related with the one-point agendum of the Summit 'Challenges of the 21st century confronting the Muslim world'. She called upon the OIC nations who have surplus resources to invest those within the Islamic world for meaningful cooperation among the member states. She emphasized on helping each other with their enormous manpower resources, expertise and technical skill in all spheres. She also emphasized on the collective effort to preserve Islamic values and promote greater understanding and brotherhood among themselves. She stressed on the importance of unity and solidarity of the *Ummah* for the welfare of the Muslim people. Sheikh Hasina said, "Terrorism, fundamentalism and intolerance are alien to Islam and there is no place of parochialism and bigotry in our faith". Her willingness to work closely with the newly Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif bore much of importance in BD-Pak relations.

Sheikh Hasina addressed in the Eighth Summit Conference in Tehran:

Sheikh Hasina, the only lady Prime Minister and executive head of Bangladesh within the 55-OIC nations at that time played a significant role in the Eighth Summit Conference held in Tehran from December 9th to 15th, 1997.¹⁷¹ As she appeared to be well settled within her own country through democratic process, she was bound to play an increasingly important role in the international arena.¹⁷² This was reflected in her speech at the Summit session where she made some valuable suggestions regarding resolving disputes among the *Ummah*, empowerment of women and countering anti-Islamic propaganda. She proposed of setting up an appropriate permanent mediation mechanism to resolve disputes among member-states, and suggested the enhancement of the role and status of women and their induction into the mainstream of life. She made an appeal for strategy to counter the malicious anti-Islamic propaganda. At the same time she expressed her dismay as the Islamic world continued to be victims of malevolent designs of vicious foreign forces. Bangladesh Prime Minister in this context referred to the conditions of Palestinians, Arabs, Bosnian, Afghan, Azeris, Somalians and other Muslim minorities in the world.¹⁷³ In reply to the Chairman's speech, Sheikh Hasina took the floor on behalf of the Asian group to express her sincere thanks and profound gratitude to the leader of Iran, to the President and people of Iran for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to all the delegations.¹⁷⁴

Bangladesh stressed on micro-credit for LDC's and Islamic Common Market in the Twenty-Fifth ICFM:

Bangladesh called for early establishment of Islamic Common Market to revive the fragile economics of the Least Developed Countries within the OIC in the 25th Islamic CFM held in Qatar's capital Doha on March 15-17, 1998.¹⁷⁵ Bangladesh stressed on preferential trade arrangements and movement of labour in an Islamic Common Market would surely help revive the fragile economics of the 19 LDC's and provide an opportunity of shaping a decent and dignified life for their people. Bangladesh also stressed on providing small loan or micro-credit to poor people in rural areas of the 19 LDC's to alleviate poverty. Bangladesh suggested that due consideration be accorded to this innovative micro-credit concept and fund be made available through an OIC mechanism for encouraging and promoting micro-credit

ventures in poverty-stricken areas of OIC member states. Referring to the Middle East peace process, Bangladesh reiterated its wholehearted support to the inalienable rights of Palestinians in having a homeland of their own with Jerusalem as its capital. About longstanding dispute over Jammu and Kashmir Bangladesh welcomed dialogue between India and Pakistan. Bangladesh is in fact, always in favour of all initiatives aimed at resolving the volatile issue over Jammu and Kashmir and believes that the dialogue is the only means to solve issues that threatened peace and security in South Asia. The Conference unanimously elected the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh as Vice-Chairman.¹⁷⁶ It welcomed the organization of an International Seminar on ‘Human Resources Development for Sustained Economic Growth and Poverty Alleviation in the Member States of the OIC’ by the Islamic Institute of Technology (IIT) in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh in September 1998 in Dhaka.¹⁷⁷

Twenty-Sixth ICFM and Bangladesh:

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad addressed the 26th ICFM held in Burkina Faso from 28 June to 01 July 1999 and stressed on the Palestinian issue, Kosovo crisis, Kashmir problem, rights of women etc. He reiterated Bangladesh’s total support to the Palestinian peoples’ struggle for self-determination and called for the early resumption of the Middle East Peace Process on all tracks. He condemned the Serbian regime for its policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Kosovar Muslims and demanded their repatriation under the purview of the Security Council Resolutions. The Conference noted with appreciation that an International Seminar on “Human Resources Development for Sustained Economic Growth and Poverty Alleviation in the Member States of the OIC” was organized by the IIT in collaboration with SESRTCIC, ICDT, ICCI, IDB and the Government of Bangladesh in Dhaka from 11-13 April 1999.¹⁷⁸

Dhaka and Asia loses in bid to OIC SG race in the Twenty-Seventh ICFM:

The Twenty-seventh ICFM held in Kuala Lumpur, from 27 to 30 June 2000 chose another Moroccan Abdelouhed Belkeziz as the Secretary General of the OIC replacing another Moroccan Ezeddine Laraki as his term expired in December 2000. Bangladesh candidate Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Speaker of its Parliament, also

vied for the post. There were private protests on the matter that it was Asia's turn for the job. It endorsed the election by the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs, of Bangladesh as the Governing Board of Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC), Ankara.¹⁷⁹ On Islamic University of Bangladesh and an Advanced Medical Training and Research it requested the Secretary General to follow-up these matters and submit reports thereon to the Twenty-eighth ICFM.¹⁸⁰ It called upon the OIC member states to support the candidacy of Bangladesh for membership in the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women-CEDAW, at the election to be held on August 31, 2000 in New York.¹⁸¹

Sheikh Hasina stressed on Palestine cause and LDC's in the Ninth Summit:

In the Ninth Summit Conference held in Doha from November 12 to 14, 2000, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called for unity and solidarity of the Muslim *Ummah*. She called upon the Islamic *Ummah* to take united stand on the question on Palestine and its rightful cause and expressed unequivocal support to the struggle of Palestinians for gaining an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.¹⁸² She reiterated Bangladesh's firm commitment to working with other members of the OIC and the rest of the Muslim *Ummah* to unite behind the Palestine and Arab brothers. She also called for setting up an Islamic Common Market and preferential market access facilities to least developed members of the OIC to increase their export to other member states. The Bangladesh delegation chief stressed on safeguarding special interest and needs of the least developed Islamic countries as 40 per cent of the OIC member states belonged to LDC's. She stressed the need for micro-credits for financing small enterprises and health support to the poorest section of population. She was the only woman head of government in the Summit, called for concerted Islamic action for enhancing the role and status of all Muslim women. She at the same time expressed her regret for the financial hardship of the IIT.

The Summit called upon the General Secretariat to pursue its contacts with Bangladesh to ensure continued financial and moral support to the Islamic University. It commended the steps taken by Bangladesh for the development of the University, bearing its operational costs and the building of the new University Campus so as to accommodate a larger number of students. It also decided that ISESCO be a member

of the Board of Trustees of the University.¹⁸³ It adopted a resolution on the establishment of liaison between the OIC and D8 of which Bangladesh was a member.¹⁸⁴ It recognized the need for the Muslim *Ummah* to have an Advanced Medical Training and Research Centre in Bangladesh and requested General Secretariat and the OIC member states to take necessary steps for the establishment of the centre.¹⁸⁵

Twenty-Eighth ICFM and Bangladesh:

The 28th ICFM held in Bamako on June 25-27, 2001, expressed its deep appreciation for the decisions by the Government of Bangladesh to contribute a large contingent of troops to UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone.¹⁸⁶ It was also noted that the ICCI is in contact with the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry to organise a meeting of the Task Force along with a seminar on SMEs in September 2001.¹⁸⁷

Bangladesh strongly condemned Israeli aggression in the Expanded Extraordinary ICFM:

Bangladesh condemned the escalation of violence in Palestine by Israel in an Expanded Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Kuala Lumpur from 1-3 April 2002.¹⁸⁸ Dacca considered Israeli action as ill-bred intention to foil the peace process and undermine the legitimate rights of Palestinians. Bangladesh extended full support to the statement by the OIC Foreign Ministers on the situation of Palestine which was unanimously adopted by the meeting. On the issue of terrorism Bangladesh underscored the need to sensitize the international community about the potential danger of identifying terrorism on religious grounds. It called for identifying the root cause of terrorism rather than only the symptoms of this phenomenon. Bangladesh urged for promoting dialogue and communications among different faiths, cultures and civilizations with a view to achieving peace, understanding and harmony. It also called the OIC to coordinate its strategy and policy with the process of the UN.

Bangladesh called for an action group in the Twenty-Ninth ICFM:

Bangladesh called for creation of a small core group like a cabinet or an action group in the Twenty-ninth ICFM convened in Khartoum on 25-27 June 2002, to ensure

speedy consideration of the work confronting the OIC. Bangladesh Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan put forward the suggestion while addressing the plenary of the Conference. The Conference unanimously elected Bangladesh as one of the Vice-Chairmen.¹⁸⁹ Bangladesh Foreign Minister as the Vice Chairman chaired a session, focused on major issues confronting the Islamic *Ummah*, including illegal occupation and continued military aggression of Israelis. Bangladesh in the Conference put forward some suggestion to make the OIC effective. Bangladesh suggested establishment of a regime of trade preferences among OIC member countries to create an Islamic Common Market and mechanisms to ensure free flow of development funds, manpower and technology from resources surplus to resources scarce OIC countries. Bangladesh stressing the importance of creating a common investment fund to help the member countries, called for early implementation of the plan of action for strengthening economic and commercial cooperation among the member countries.

The Conference expressed its deep appreciation for the decision by the Government of Bangladesh to contribute a large contingent of troops to United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in Sierra Leone.¹⁹⁰ It adopted a proposal for the establishment of an Islamic Centre for Advanced Medical Training and Research in Bangladesh.¹⁹¹ It commended the role of Dhaka in IUT for human resources development in the field of engineering and technology and Technical and vocational education and adopted some other measures on it.¹⁹² It also commended the steps taken by Bangladesh for the development of the Islamic University, bearing its operational costs and the building of the new University campus so as to accommodate a larger number of students.¹⁹³

Thirtieth ICFM and Bangladesh:

The 30th ICFM held in Tehran, from 28 to 30 May 2003 adopted several resolutions related to Bangladesh. The Conference welcomed the august presence of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the 16th convocation ceremony of the IUT and expresses thanks and gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh for extending continuous support to the University in order to fulfill its mandated tasks.¹⁹⁴ On an Advanced Medical Training and Research Centre in Bangladesh the Conference was not able to reach consensus on the proposed Centre.¹⁹⁵ It appreciated the effort of the ICCI in organising, in cooperation with the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of

Commerce, a meeting of the Task Force along with a seminar on SMEs which was held on 27-29 January 2002 in Dhaka.¹⁹⁶

Begum Khaleda Zia addressed the 10th Summit:

For the second time as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia addressed on various issues of the *Ummah* in the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Putrajaya, Malaysia from 16 to 17 October 2003.¹⁹⁷ She called for forging unity of Muslim *Ummah*. She upheld Bangladesh's support to all peace initiatives for an independent Palestine state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital and the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. She supported Iraqi people to choose their own government reflecting the opinion of all segments of the population and ensuring sovereignty and territorial integrity. She called for aggressive investment in human resources and future generation through advanced education in science and technology to face the new global challenges. The Prime Minister requested the wealthier members of the OIC to invest and set up joint ventures in the OIC countries that offer cheaper labour. The Bangladesh delegation chief stressed on liberalization of trade and easier access of goods and services into the markets of the member countries. She expressed her dismay for the irregular contribution from the OIC member countries to the IUT that seriously restraining its capacity to fulfill its task.

The Prime Minister formally announced the name of Bangladesh's candidate Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury for the post of the OIC Secretary General and sought support of the OIC countries for him referring his reputation.¹⁹⁸ In fact, Bangladesh felt confident about securing the post until the election result was announced, as many Islamic countries extended their support to Bangladesh.¹⁹⁹ Prime Minister's called on in the Summit session and her bilateral meetings with the leaders of the Islamic states on the sidelines of the Summit further strengthened Bangladesh ties to OIC and Islamic countries.²⁰⁰ The Summit expressed its deep appreciation for the decision by the government of Bangladesh to contribute a large contingent of troops to UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone.²⁰¹ On Islamic University in Bangladesh it urged all member states and Islamic financial institutions to provide adequate academic and financial assistance and decided ISESCO be a member of the Board of Trustees of University and some other initiatives.²⁰² It adopted resolutions on the activities of the IUT and the progress for an Advanced Medical Training and Research Center in

Bangladesh.²⁰³ It welcomed Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia for her the august presence during the 17th convocation ceremony of the IUT and expressed thanks and gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh for extending continuous support to the University in order to fulfill its mandated tasks.

Thirty-First ICFM and Bangladesh:

The 31st ICFM held in Istanbul, from 14 to 16 June 2004, adopted some resolutions specially on the Islamic University of Bangladesh and IUT. The Conference urged the Islamic University in Bangladesh to strengthen bilateral cooperation with renowned universities and institutions of higher education in member states with a view to enabling its students and professors to pursue their higher studies and research in institutions of their choice.²⁰⁴ It welcomed the august presence of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the 18th Convocation ceremony of the IUT and expressed thanks and gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh for extending continuous support to the University in order to fulfill its mandated tasks. It also urged the University to intensify its endeavor to offer courses in the fields of emerging and frontier technologies to equip the youth of the *Ummah* to face the challenges of the 21st Century matching the needs and demands of the job markets of the Member countries.²⁰⁵

Thirty-Second ICFM and Bangladesh:

In the Thirty-Second Session of the CFM held in Sana, on 28-30 June 2005, Dhaka stressed transforming the OIC into a functional and result-oriented forum, particularly through enhanced trade among the member states.²⁰⁶ Bangladesh also stressed on the necessity of economic and commercial cooperation among the member countries and to empower women human resources of the Islamic world through their development to make the OIC viable. Bangladesh also called on the wealthy member states to open their markets duty free of products from the least developed Islamic countries.

Third Extraordinary Summit and Bangladesh:

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia took part in the concluding session of the Third Extraordinary Summit Conference held in Makkah on 7-8 December 2005 and addressed the Summit. She called upon the OIC member states for forging unity of

the Muslim world by rejecting violence and extremism and taking the path of moderation and tolerance. Her bilateral meetings with Muslim leaders on the sidelines of the Summit further enhanced bilateral ties between Bangladesh and their countries.²⁰⁷ The Summit had special value Call upon the Member States to extend enhanced support to the Islamic University of Technology in Bangladesh in order to enable it to contribute more towards capacity building of the OIC member states through human resources development.²⁰⁸

Thirty-Third ICFM and Bangladesh:

The Thirty-Third ICFM held in Baku, on 19-21 June 2006 also took some resolution regarding Bangladesh. The Conference called upon the Member States to extend enhanced support to the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) in Bangladesh in order for it to contribute more towards capacity building of the OIC Member States through human resources development.²⁰⁹ It decided to support the candidacy of Ferdous Ara Begum of Bangladesh for membership of the Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).²¹⁰ It expressed deep gratitude to Begum Khaleda Zia, for attending the 19th Convocation of IUT, inaugurating the 31st meeting of the governing board and took note of the patronage advice and support of Bangladesh enabling the University to help develop the human resources of the member States. It also urged the University for continuing and enhancing its efforts through offering education and training of international standard playing a catalytic role in the development of human resources of the Member Countries.²¹¹ It welcomed Capacity Building for the Development of Fisheries Sector in Bangladesh.²¹²

Thirty-Fourth ICFM and Bangladesh:

Bangladesh not only took part in all OIC summits and conferences but also criticized constructively sometimes on its drawbacks and put some suggestions to make it a viable organization. After the completion of the 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Islamabad from 15-17 May 2007, Foreign Adviser of Bangladesh Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury on 20 May, 2007, criticized the OIC at a press briefing in Islamabad prior to his returning home. He said that OIC was limited to political platitudes and was becoming moribund in the absence of effective reforms to make it operational. He thus stressed upon to modernize OIC so as to make

it enable to respond to the present day requirements; to make it development centric to acquire the most benefit from it. The Conference urged all member states, IDB, ISF, the Muslim World League (MWL), and other Islamic financial institutions to provide adequate academic and financial assistance to the Islamic University in Bangladesh (IUB) so that it can achieve its objectives. It also called upon the General Secretariat to continue cooperation with ISESCO, to provide academic assistance to the Islamic University in Bangladesh, from member states universities, by sending lecturers there to teach and by providing scholarships, and the preparation of curricula and textbooks.²¹³ On IUT, it commended the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement between the IUT; the Islamic University of Niger (IUN); the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) and the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) in Kuwait City on 20 November 2006 to further strengthen their cooperation and collaboration to improve and reform their respective curricula; expressed deep gratitude to Begum Khaleda Zia for attending the 20th Convocation of IUT; urged the University for continuing and enhancing its efforts through offering education and training of international standard and a catalytic role in the development of human resources for the member states; urged the University to intensify its endeavour to offer courses in the fields of emerging and frontier technologies to equip the youth of the *Ummah* to face the challenges of the globalization and digital divide matching that of the member states; appreciated the role of IUT in the fields of engineering, Technology and Technical Education; appreciated the IDB for its decision to provide scholarships to the Muslim minority students to study in the IUT.²¹⁴

Fakhruddin Ahmed led Bangladesh delegation in the Eleventh Summit:

The Chief Advisor of the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh Dr. Fakruddin Ahmed (2007-08) addressed the general discussion of the Eleventh Summit Conference, convened in Dakar, from 13 to 14 March 2008.²¹⁵ He rightly focused on the contemporary burning issues in the Muslim world. He underlined the need for revamping, regenerating and reforming the OIC to deal with the issues of the 21st century. He called for erasing Islamophobia by giving scientific and rational explanations to the world of the positive values of Islam. He stressed demonstrating commitments of Islamic *Ummah* towards good governance, the rule of law, freedom of expression, human rights, transparency in governance, compassion for the poor, equality of women and justice and equality for all. The chief advisor of the Caretaker

Government of Bangladesh called for using the vast resources of the Muslim countries to assist the Muslim *Ummah* and satisfy its various needs. He stressed the need for examining in greater depths the possibilities of the Islamic Common Market in order to increase intra-OIC trade. He expressed Bangladesh's support to the cause of the Palestinians. The Bangladesh delegation chief also articulated Bangladesh's support to President Karzai for his laudable efforts to lift the Afghan people out of the morose of strife and turmoil. The historic outcome of the Summit, the Ten-Year Programme of Action, which according to him proved to be the lifeline of the OIC, assisting its forward movement. He on behalf of the Asian leaders extended heartiest congratulations to Senegalese President Wade on his assumption of the chairmanship of the forum.²¹⁶ The chief advisor thus represented Bangladesh in the Summit properly through his speech and activities.

The Conference welcomed the signing of the Protocol on the Preferential Tariffs Scheme (PRETAS) by eleven Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) member states, namely Bangladesh, Cameroon, Egypt, Guinea, Jordan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates, and welcomed its ratification by Jordan, Malaysia, and Pakistan.²¹⁷ It welcomed the offer of the IUT to organize the Seminar on Development of E-Tourism Technology in Islamic Countries, scheduled to be held at the IUT headquarters in Dhaka, on 1-3 April 2008, and thanked IDB for contributing to the financing of this Seminar.²¹⁸ It underlined the role played by the IDB in facilitating the implementation of the Capacity Building Program for Poverty Alleviation in the OIC member states with four pilot projects including the Capacity Building for the Development of Fisheries Sector in Bangladesh.²¹⁹ The Summit decided to support the candidacy of Dr. Toufik of Bangladesh for the position of Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organisation at the election to be held during the General Assembly of WIPO in Geneva from 13-14 May 2008.²²⁰

Bangladesh signs OIC revised charter in the Thirty-Fifth CFM:

Bangladesh signed the revised OIC charter that was adopted at the 11th Summit in Dakar, in the 35th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held in Kampala, from 18-20 June 2008. Bangladesh along with Saudi Arabia, Turkey Malaysia, Indonesia and four more member states signed the charter. Foreign Secretary M Touhid Hossain signed the charter in presence of the representatives of 57 member

countries attending the ICFM. The Conference thanked the IUT for organizing the Seminar on Development of E-Tourism Technology in Islamic Countries, in cooperation with the Republic of Azerbaijan, as a current Chairman of the 5th ICTM, held at the IUT headquarters in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 1-3 April 2008, and appreciated IDB for contributing to the financing of this Seminar.²²¹ It commended the initiative of the IRCICA to organize the Second Congress on Islamic Civilization in South Asia planned to be held in Dhaka on 16-18 November 2008 in cooperation with the universities of Bangladesh.²²² On IUT, it expressed deep gratitude to the Chief Adviser Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed for attending the 21st Convocation of the IUT as chief guest; thanked Prof. Dr. Fazli Elahi for his successful completion of tenure as Vice Chancellor of the IUT and congratulated Prof. Dr. M. Imtiaz Hossain on being appointed as the new Vice Chancellor of the University; requested the University to prepare strategy and action plan to implement the decision of the OIC University Ranking.²²³

Thirty-Sixth CFM and Bangladesh:

At the 36th CFM held in Damascus, from 23 to 25 May 2009, Bangladesh was represented by the Foreign Minister Dipu Moni. She called on the OIC Secretary General Professor Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu and sought cooperation from the OIC to help Bangladesh attaining Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). She also apprised the OIC Secretary General of the recent political and socio-economic developments in Bangladesh. Dipu Moni congratulated the Secretary General on his re-election to his post. Bangladesh Foreign Minister informed the Secretary General of the establishment of an independent Human Rights Commission in Bangladesh and extended her support to him for establishing a similar Commission in OIC. The OIC commended the initiative of the Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) and the cooperation of the Government of Bangladesh for successfully organizing the Second Congress on Islamic Civilization in South Asia held in Dhaka on 16-18 November 2008 in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh and the University of Dhaka especially the Department of Islamic History and Culture of the University.²²⁴ It also approved the election of the nine members to the Board of Governors of IUT for the term 2009-2011; i.e. Bangladesh, Egypt, Libya, Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Pakistan and Turkey.²²⁵

Thirty-seventh CFM and Bangladesh:

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni led Bangladesh delegation to the 37th CFM held in Dushanbe, from 18-20 May 2010.²²⁶ Bangladesh in the Conference expressed that deepening the bond among brotherly Muslim countries was a cornerstone of Bangladesh foreign policy. Bangladesh raised the issues concerning poverty alleviation, economic cooperation and collaboration in the field of science and technology in the session. It supported the peaceful uses of nuclear energy referring to the agreement between Iran, Turkey and Brazil on the nuclear fuel swap. Bangladesh supported establishment of a Human Right Commission in Jeddah with reference to Cairo Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1990. The session noted with concern the grave consequences of climate change on global environment, particularly the impact of the rise of the sea level posing a serious threat to some OIC member states, including Bangladesh and called upon the member states to highlight these concerns in the international forum for appropriate preventive action.²²⁷ It expressed deep gratitude to Sheikh Hasina, for gracing the 23rd Convocation of IUT as the Chief Guest and congratulated the Secretary General of the OIC on being conferred the Honorary Doctorate Degree by IUT in the 23rd Convocation. It also Appreciated the catalytic role the University had been playing by training the youth of the *Ummah* in the fields of Engineering, Technology and Technical Education.²²⁸ It decided to support the candidacy of Bangladesh for membership of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) at the elections to be held in October 2010 in Mexico and nomination of Ambassador Ismat Jihane of Bangladesh for membership of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) during the elections to be held in New York on 28 November 2010.²²⁹

Thirty-eighth CFM and Bangladesh:

The Thirty-eighth CFM of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (formerly Organization of the Islamic Conference) was held on 28-30 June 2011 in Astana.²³⁰ The Conference commended the selection of International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research (ICDDR) in Dhaka as one of the first five (5) OIC Centers of Excellence.²³¹ It welcomed the preparation of action plan of the OIC-IDB-USG Mother and Child Health care project in Dhaka on 8 – 10 February 2011 and requested the Government of Bangladesh to cooperate with the OIC General Secretariat, the IDB and the USAID to implement activities under the joint projects on

Mother and Child Health Care in the country.²³² It took note of the ‘Concept paper on Climate Change: Collaboration among OIC Member States’, proposed by Bangladesh and welcomed the holding of the open-ended meeting of experts from OIC Member States held at OIC headquarters in Jeddah on 7-8 May 2011 to discuss the Paper submitted by the Government of Bangladesh.²³³ The Conference took note on different matters regarding IUT.²³⁴ It decided to support the candidacy of Bangladesh for a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council for the period 2016-2017, of the non-permanent seats allocated to the Asian, at the elections to be held in New York in 2015, during the Seventieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.²³⁵

President Zillur Raman and the Fourth Extraordinary Summit:

President Zillur Raman led Bangladesh delegation of the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Makkah from 14 to 15 August 2012. In the Conference the President urged the OIC member states to persuade the Myanmar government with political and economic support to ensure dignified living of their Muslim minority Rohingyas.²³⁶ He expressed his grave concern over the conditions of Muslim minorities in different parts of the world. He expressed that it was not an issue of safeguarding Muslims and their faith, but also a matter of universal human rights. He also supported the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people. Actually, the President’s speech and views clarified Bangladesh’s stance to its deep connection with the Islamic solidarity and Muslim *Ummah*.

Thirty-ninth CFM and Bangladesh:

In the 39th CFM held in Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti, from 15-17 November 2012, Bangladesh made its position clear to the OIC about its stance on the Rohingya issue.²³⁷ Bangladesh as one of the three representatives geographic groups; i.e. Arab, African and Asian, thanked the Republic of Djibouti as the representative of the Asian Group for hosting the Conference and for its generous hospitality. Bangladesh also pledged the full cooperation of the Asian group for the success of its chairmanship. The Conference reiterated to support its candidacy of Bangladesh for a nonpermanent seat at the United Nations Security Council for the period 2016-2017, of the non-permanent seats allocated to the Asian, at the elections to be held in New York in 2015, during the Seventieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations

which elections would be held during the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly in New York in 2018.²³⁸ It welcomed the entry into force of TPS-OIC Rules of Origin as of August 9th, 2011, with the ratification of Bangladesh as the 10th country.²³⁹ It also welcomed the ratification of the submission of concession list by Bangladesh under TPS-OIC Agreement.²⁴⁰ It requested the IUT to organize a seminar on ship building in Bangladesh in 2012 with participation of public and private sector representatives of the OIC member states and report on the outcome of the seminar to the 28th Session of the COMCEC.²⁴¹ It welcomed the organization of the Seminar and Fair on Shipbuilding Industry in the OIC Member States, held on 31 August- 1 September 2012 in Dhaka.²⁴² It expressed profound gratitude to the Governments of Bangladesh for the continued support for the OIC universities.²⁴³ It welcomed the partnership between OIC-IDB-US and the Government of Bangladesh to reduce mortality rate of mothers during delivery and infants as well as involvement of the Islamic Fiqh Academy in advocacy activities.²⁴⁴ It requested the OIC General Secretariat and IDB to continue their coordination with USAID for the implementation of activities under the joint projects on Mother and Child Health Care in Bangladesh.²⁴⁵ It commended Bangladesh the actions made by ISESCO through its specialized educational centres and delegations and its advanced specialized teaching aids in some Islamic countries including Bangladesh.²⁴⁶

Twelfth Summit and Bangladesh:

In the twelfth session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Cairo, Egypt, on 6 and 7 February 2013, Bangladesh reiterated unequivocal support for a fully sovereign Palestine state within its pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital and urged all the OIC member states to extend their support for the state in a more useful and constructive manner.²⁴⁷ Bangladesh called for greater solidarity in the Muslim Ummah for addressing challenges and utilizing opportunities of the Muslim world. Bangladesh also articulated on possible ways and means to enhance cooperation among the OIC member states in various areas, particularly in trade, human development and women empowerment. The twelfth session of the Islamic Summit Conference welcomed the convening of the 19th International Conference of Islamic World Academy of Sciences to be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 06-09 May 2013 with a view to forging greater cooperation among the scientists for socio-economic development of member states.²⁴⁸ The Summit invited the member states and

financial institutions to assist in the efforts of the OIC universities including the IUT, for the development of quality education, human resources and physical infrastructure, including appropriate facility for female students.²⁴⁹ It called upon all member states to continue their efforts for quality education that promotes creativity, innovation and research and development, and in this regard promote collaboration, academic interaction and exchange of knowledge between their academic institutions.

The Summit welcomed the convening of the 19th International Conference of Islamic World Academy of Sciences to be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 06-09 May 2013 with a view to forging greater cooperation among the scientists for socio-economic development of Member States.²⁵⁰ It invited the member states and financial institutions to assist in the efforts of the IUT for the development of quality education, human resources and physical infrastructure, including appropriate facility for female students. It underscored the importance of non-discrimination between members of the native academic staff and those from other member states in the University.²⁵¹

Bangladesh in the Annual Coordination Meetings of Ministers of Foreign

Affairs:

Bangladesh has been actively participating the Annual Coordination Meetings (ACM) of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, hold regularly in the sidelines during the UN sessions. The meetings also took different resolutions regarding Bangladesh in different years. The ACM of 2003 underlined the importance of dialogue, understanding and mutual respect among religions and cultures and stressed the need for a long term strategy which should aim at creating and promoting a culture of peace based on harmony and understanding across religious and cultural identities. In this regard, the Meeting recalled the initiative of Bangladesh for the 'International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010'.²⁵² The ACM of 2005 welcomed the initiative of Malaysia to establish a Capacity-Building Programme aimed at poverty alleviation in less-developed and low income countries and welcomed the launching of the Programme on 29 March 2005 in Kuala Lumpur by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, with three pilot projects having been identified for implementation in the first place, one each in Bangladesh, Mauritania and Sierra Leone.²⁵³ In the ACM of 2 October, 2007, Bangladesh Foreign Advisor Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury stressed on

strengthening cooperation among member states to prevent conflicts, achieving of independent Palestine, safeguarding the rights of the Muslim minorities and preventing unilateral actions against Muslim states. The ACM of 2007 expressed its profound appreciation for the active and constructive participation of the OIC member states that were members of the United Nations Peace Building Commission (PBC), namely Bangladesh, Egypt, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Nigeria and Pakistan.²⁵⁴ It also expressed its appreciation for the active participation of Bangladesh with some other Muslim states in decision-making and institutional building process of the United Nations Human Rights Council and valuable efforts of the OIC Group in Geneva in taking a common position within the Council on matters of special interest to the OIC member states.²⁵⁵ The ACM of 2013 decided further to lend support to the candidature of Bangladesh for non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for the term of 2016-17.²⁵⁶

Islamic Conference of Information Ministers (ICIM) and Bangladesh:

Bangladesh played the dominant role in the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers (ICIM) as Bangladesh was elected several times as its Vice-Chairman. In the First ICIM held in Jeddah on 11-12 October 1988, Bangladesh Information Minister Mahbubur Raman led five-member delegation, called for the establishment of a new Islamic information order compatible with the Western world and communication order. Bangladesh pledged for free flow of information among the Islamic countries and suggested balanced and simultaneous modernization of the media facilities in all member countries of the OIC. Bangladesh stressed on new arrangement for reactivating the Islamic International News agency (IINA) with the help of news agencies of member countries for developing the IINA and assured full cooperation from the Bangladesh national news agencies, that is Bangladesh Sangbad Sangtha (BSS).

The Second ICIM held in Cairo, 15-16 January, 1992, elected Bangladesh as one of the Vice-Chairmen of its Bureau.²⁵⁷ Bangladesh was also reelected in the same post in the Fourth ICIM, held in Dakar 29-30 November 1997.²⁵⁸ Information Minister of Bangladesh, Abu Sayeed, as Vice-Chairman delivered statement on behalf Asian member states in which he expressed the gratitude of the attending delegations for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to them by Senegal.²⁵⁹ He also

delivered statement, expressing his appreciation and thanks for the warm reception, welcome and hospitality extended to the delegations by Iran in the Fifth ICIM, held in Tehran, 1-2 December, 1999.²⁶⁰ He and two other Vice-Chairmen delivered speeches which included a set of ideas concerning the progress of Islamic information, and advancing it to better standards which would allow counteracting the challenges that face the Islamic Ummah and defend its basic and core issues. The statements included also practical proposals to update the mechanisms of the information strategy and derive the priorities of the information plan and provide it with the momentum it deserved, specially that the need of the day for Islamic information was a lot of support in order to achieve a distinctive presence in cyberspace. In their interventions, the heads of delegations dealt with the issue of activating the role of Islamic Information in informing about the cause of Palestine and defending Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the Islamic belief.²⁶¹ Bangladesh Information Minister continued the job of Vice-Chairman in the Seventh ICIM, held in Jeddah, 13-14 September, 2006, expressing thanks and appreciation to King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to the participating delegations. Bangladesh and the other Vice-Chairmen also expressed their thanks to the OIC Secretary General, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu for the efforts he exerted for the advancement of joint Islamic information action of OIC Member States.²⁶²

In the Eighth ICIM held in Rabat, 27-28 January, 2009, Bangladesh and other states stressed on mobilizing Islamic and international world public opinion to defend the cause of Palestine against criminal aggression of Israel in the Gaza. They also addressed the importance of coordination among the media circles in member states for the purpose of projecting the true image of Islam and confronting the media attacks against the symbols and sanctities of the magnanimous Islamic religion. Concerning the upgrading of the information tools of the OIC, they commended the restructuring process of the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU), the information arm of the OIC for becoming useful and affective in serving the causes of the Muslim world.²⁶³ The Ninth Session of the ICIM reelected Bangladesh again as the Vice-Chairman to play due role as before.²⁶⁴

ICTM and Bangladesh:

Bangladesh has the instance of active participation in the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) as the other organs of the OIC. The Sixth ICTM, held from 9 June – 2 July, 2008 in Damascus, thanked the IUT for organizing the Seminar on Development of E-Tourism Technology in Islamic Countries, in cooperation with the Republic of Azerbaijan, as Chairman of the 5th ICTM, held at the IUT headquarters in Dhaka, on 22-24 April 2008. It also called on the IDB group to extend financial assistance for a comprehensive feasibility study on reviewing Bangladesh's performance in tourism development as a LDC over previous fifteen years with an aim of ultimately formulating a strategic marketing plan under the aegis of the OIC Framework for Development and Cooperation in the Domain of Tourism between OIC Member States.²⁶⁵

An analysis of all the above-mentioned activities which took place in the different summits, conferences and meetings vividly show that Bangladesh has played significant role in the entire gamut of the OIC activities right after gaining membership to this inter-governmental body of the Islamic *Ummah*. Despite the dilemma of some Arab and Muslim states on question of her independence and some internal and external issues, Bangladesh became successful in recuperating her image in the *Ummah* within a few years removing nagging misconceptions. Bangladesh in quest of her national interest and the interest for the entire *Ummah* has been participating in the summits, Foreign Ministers conferences, ACM, ICIM, ICTM and other conferences on regular basis. OIC in its reciprocal gesture played very imperative role in enhancing bilateral and multilateral relations of Bangladesh with the Muslim states. Bangladesh formulated the everlasting ties with the Islamic world not only through the activities of Bangladesh and OIC during sessions of different conferences but also the bilateral and multilateral sideline talks, meetings and discussion during these sessions with the Muslim leaders of Muslim nations and different Islamic forums within the OIC and the Muslim world. At the same time, OIC has become an important via medium in boosting Bangladesh's connectivity with the regional and international organizations.

Notes and References

1. Zafar Imam, *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Continuity & Change and India*, ABC Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000, p. 24
2. Noor Ahmed Baba, *Organization of Islamic Conference: Theory and Practice of Pan-Islamic Cooperation*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1994, p. 78
3. King Faisal in his inaugural speech said, "It was most unfortunate for the Muslims of Pakistan to have fallen a prey to the machination of the enemies of Islam." He added that the happenings in Pakistan had hurt him deeply. See *The Pakistan Times*, March 1, 1972, and *Dawn*, March 1, 1972
4. The Pakistan delegation was headed by Mairaj Khalid. He, in order to please the Muslim leaders and more specifically the Arab leaders and grow sympathy in their minds marking India as their common enemy as Israel, tried to make out that there was a conspiracy between India and Israel to weaken Pakistan. At the same time, he wanted to make an anti-Indian sentiment among the Arabs by charging India that it could not support the Arab cause.
5. The Secretary-General of the OIC, Tunku Abdul Rahman in his report, referred to the break-up of Pakistan as an established fact and described Bangladesh as a newly created country. It reflected the view of his country of origin, Malaysia which had already recognized Bangladesh. Tunku's remarks displeased Pakistan and evoked a sharp reaction from the Pakistani delegation. The Pakistani press also criticized his remarks. See 'Tunku Plays Indian Game', *The Pakistan Times*, March 2, 1972
6. The resolution urged both India and Pakistan to withdraw their troops to positions behind their frontiers and the ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution No. 2793 of December 7, 1971 and the Security Council Resolution No. 307 of December 21, 1971. It also called upon both the governments to stop all hostilities and take necessary steps for repatriation of all the prisoners -of-war and detained civilians in accordance with the Geneva Convention. See *The Final Declaration of the Third ICFM*, 'The Situation in Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent', Section 18 (I-V)
7. Zafar Imam, *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Continuity & Change and India*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 24
8. The aim of this delegation was to bring about agreement, conciliation and brotherhood between the two elected leaders Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in Islamabad, and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in Dacca, in an atmosphere of Islamic brotherhood, freedom and dignity, as well as to study ways and means of assisting both leaders to solve the problems they were facing. This delegation for reconciliation would inform the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of member states of the Conference of the results obtained by them and of their

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- recommendations for further conciliatory efforts in this regard. See *Joint Communiqué of the Third ICFM*, Section 18, Paragraph IV and Resolution No. 9/3
9. Prior to departure for Lahore a formal invitation on behalf of the OIC was extended to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by Sheikh Sabah Al-ahmed Al-Jaber, Foreign Minister of Kuwait. The 12-member Bangladesh team headed by Bangabandhu left for Lahore by a plane sent to Dacca by President Boumedienne of Algeria. Foreign Minister Dr. Kamal Hossain, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Taheruddin Thakur and Prime Minister's Political Secretary Tofael Ahmed were also members of the entourage. Bangabandhu received a warm reception by the delegates of other participating countries when he arrived at the conference hall at Lahore on 23 February, 1974 and the announcement of his participation by Bhutto, was greeted by loud clapping. See Appendix-IX
 10. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, declared in his address, "Big countries have advised us to recognize Bangladesh, But I never bow to the pressure from the Super Powers or from India. But at this important time, when Muslim countries are meeting, we cannot say we are under pressure. It is not our opponents who advised us to take this decision but our friends and brothers." For full text of the speech, see *Report on Islamic Summit 1974*, Lahore, February 22-24, 1974
 11. In fact, Bangabandhu, as a man of peace, hoped for the normalization of relations and restoration of peace in the subcontinent. He made a clarification in this respect and said, "I want peace and neighbourly relations in the subcontinent and that is exactly why I stand for good relations among the countries concerned." See *The Bangladesh Observer*, 23 February, 1994, Dhaka.
 12. Houari Boumedienne (23 August 1932 – 27 December 1978) also known as Mohammed Ben Brahim Boukharouba served as Algeria's Chairman of the Revolutionary Council from 19 June 1965 until 12 December 1976, and from then on as the second President of Algeria to his death on 27 December 1978. He sought to build a powerful third world bloc through the Non-Aligned Movement, in which he became a prominent figure. He tried to identify the economic problems of Muslim states and under-developed Third World countries. He called to the oil rich countries to invest their capital and surplus 'within an African and Asian context' or 'within the context of the non-aligned'. Algeria submitted the resolution based on Boumedienne's proposal and endorsed by Guinea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates along with Bangladesh. The Resolution asked member states to consolidate cooperation in the economic field. See *Declaration of Lahore*, Section IV

13. The Nuclear issue was raised by Pakistan in the conference following the nuclear test by India. Dr. Kamal Hossain in this respect drew the attention of Pakistani delegate to repeated assurances given by the Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh that the result of the test would be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. He said that Pakistan was concerned about India's nuclear explosion not because of its own security but because the explosion could lead to spread of nuclear weapons throughout the world. See *The Bangladesh Observer*, June 24, 1974; See also, Resolution No. 12/5-P
14. See Resolution No. 12/5-P
15. The aim of the Committee was to go into the question of providing short time economic assistance to the member countries for meeting their immediate needs. See Resolution No. 5/5-E
16. Dr. Kamal Hossain remarked, "It is in overriding interest of the countries of our region in South and South-East Asia to work together to promote peace and stability."
17. Resolution No. 17/6-P
18. Major-General Ziaur Rahman, Chief of Army Staff and Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator of Bangladesh, led the ten-member delegation.
19. During the Conference Major General Ziaur Rahman met Turkish Prime Minister Soleyman Demirel, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Ali Khalatbary, Malaysian Foreign Minister Tenku Ahmed Rihauden and many others. He also visited Saudi Arabia and Iran after the Conference was over. These visits solidly contributed in strengthening the existing relations between Bangladesh and these countries.
20. See *Final Declaration of the seventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Paragraph 29
21. See *Final Declaration of the seventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Paragraph 39
22. See Resolution No. 10/8-E
23. For details about IUT, see Chapter-V.
24. See *Final Declaration of the Eighth Islamic Conference of Foreign Minister*, Section 6
25. *The Bangladesh Observer*, 23 May, 1994, Dacca.
26. *Final Declaration of the Eighth Islamic Conference of Foreign Minister*, Section 9
27. See *Final Declaration of the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*, Section 6
28. The 9th ICFM approved the establishment of an Advisory Science Council consisting of 14 scientists from Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, together with a representative of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALESCO) and a representative of a fourteenth country to be chosen by the Council on the recommendation of the

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- Secretary General. The 14-member body was constituted from countries representing various geographical regions. The Advisory Council dealt among other things drafting a charter for the Islamic Science Foundation. See Resolution No. 3/9-C
29. See *Declaration of the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*, Section 9
 30. *Ibid.* Political Sphere Section
 31. *Ibid.*
 32. *Ibid.* Economic Sphere Section
 33. Resolution No. 5/9-E
 34. Resolution No. 13/9-C
 35. *Ibid.* Cultural and Islamic Sphere section
 36. See Resolution No. 1/10-E, Section 10
 37. See *Final Declaration of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Minister*, Section 10
 38. *Ibid.* Section 12
 39. Resolution No. 11/10-E
 40. See *The Final Communiqué of the First Extraordinary Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*, Section 1
 41. The delegation included three other ambassadors namely Mr. Humayun Rashid Choudhury (posted in Saudi Arabia), Nazrul Islam (posted in Pakistan), Mr Humayun Kabir (posted in Iran); and Director General in Foreign Office Mr. Farooq Sobhan
 42. According to the RESOLUTION No. 1/EOS, the OIC condemned the Soviet Military aggression against the Afghani people and demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Soviet troops stationed on Afghani territories; suspended the membership of Afghanistan in the Organization of the Islamic Conference; invited the member states to withhold recognition to the illegal regime in Afghanistan and severed diplomatic relations with that country until the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan; called upon all member states to stop all aids and all forms of assistance given to the regime of Afghanistan; urged all states and people throughout the world to support the Afghani people; recommended to all member states to affirm their solidarity with the Afghan people; solemnly declared its complete solidarity with the Islamic countries neighboring Afghanistan against any threat to their security; called upon member states to envisage through appropriate bodies not participating in Olympic Games being held in Moscow in July 1980 unless the Soviet Union in compliance with the call of the UN General Assembly and the Islamic Conference withdrew all its troops forthwith from Afghanistan.
 43. Dr. Habib-el-Chatty made his four day visit (31 January- 3 February, 1980), as the part of his tour around the Islamic world following the extraordinary session of the ICFM. During the visit, he called on President Raman Raman, Professor Shamsul Huq, Foreign Minister

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- of Bangladesh, and had discussion with others. He expressed appreciation for the active role played by Bangladesh in the activities of the OIC. He said that he found President Raman Raman eager to see Islamic solidarity a concrete achievement. He found Bangladesh rich in natural resources and manpower and stressed investment to use the resources making Bangladesh a prosperous country.
44. The Chairman of the 11th ICFM Aga Shahi on behalf of the Conference expressed deep appreciation for the thoughtful and inspiring message sent by President Raman Raman and requested Foreign Minister Professor Shamsul Huq to convey to President Raman Raman the gratitude of the Conference. The message was also followed by that of the UN Secretary General Dr. Kurt Waldheim. In the message, President Raman Raman emphasized the importance of collective wisdom; regretted for the unhappy situation in the Middle East and Afghanistan, expressed his concern over the Palestine issue; urged the Islamic fraternity to close their ranks, strengthen their unity and fortify their resolve to stand up to the challenges which threatened their survival. See *The Final Declaration of the 11th Islamic Conference of Foreign Minister*, Section 27
 45. *Ibid.* Section 48
 46. Resolution No. 11/11-E
 47. Resolution No. 18/11-E
 48. Resolution No. 17/11-C
 49. For details see Chapter V
 50. See Resolution No. 33/10-P
 51. For details see Chapter V
 52. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury led the Bangladesh delegation. The delegation also included Farooq Sobhan, Director General of the Foreign Ministry.
 53. See *The Final Declaration of the Third Extraordinary Session of Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*
 54. The Bureau was created for the first time. Its function was to review the progress of the implementation of the resolutions of the summit conference. The Bureau would meet periodically. King Khaled of Saudi Arabia was the President of the Bureau.
 55. The Peace Committee was set up on September 26, 1980, after the declaration of war. President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan was the Chairman and OIC Secretary General, Habib Chatty and Yasser Arafat, the PLO Chief, were the members of the committee. The enlarged form of the Peace Committee was to be composed of Bangladesh, Gambia, Pakistan, Guinea, Turkey, the PLO Chief and OIC Secretary General. See Resolution No. 6/3-E (IS). For details about Bangladesh's role in Iraq-Iran War, see Chapter V.

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56. One of the important decisions of the Conference was the adoption of the report of the Al-Quds Committee. The report contained a comprehensive strategy of action for liberation of Al-Quds Al-Shariff and the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories with restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians.
57. See Resolution No. 5/3-E(IS)
58. Resolution No. 7/3-C(IS)
59. For details, see Chapter V
60. Prominent among the Islamic leaders expressing deep grief were the Foreign Ministers from Turkey, Kuwait, Iraq and Malaysia and Law Minister of Pakistan. The Iraqi Foreign Minister Dr Sadoun Hammadi personally expressed his deep sorrow to the Bangladesh Ambassador.
61. The Secretary General said in a statement following the assassination of President Raman Raman that the Islamic Peace Mission had lost one of its leading members. He paid glowing tribute to him for his contribution to Islamic solidarity. He in a message to Acting President Abdus Sattar said that the Islamic world had lost a worthy son. In his written speech he described him as a great man of the Islamic world and eulogized his qualities of head and heart. In an emotion choked voice he said that President Zia was a patriotic leader and a flag of the Islamic congress. The Secretary General read out the message of condolences sent to Bangladesh Government. He said that President Zia's ceaseless efforts were directed towards the attainment of stability of his country and fulfillment of the ambition of his people. He recalled President Raman Raman's dynamic efforts to forge unity among Muslim nations and made particular reference to his untiring efforts to patch the differences between Iran and Iraq and bring to an end the bloody war between two brothers.
62. See *The Final Communiqué of the Twelfth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, section 6
63. President Saddam Husain in his inaugural speech also said that President Raman Raman worked hard to solve Iraq-Iran conflict peacefully. He conveyed his personal and Iraqi people condolences to the family of President Raman Raman and the people of Bangladesh. He prayed to the Almighty Allah to bless the soul of the late President Raman Raman and expressed sympathy for the government, the people of Bangladesh and the late President's family.
64. The Conference regarded the late President as one of the eminent Islamic personalities who had devoted his life and consecrated his efforts to the progress and unity of the people of Bangladesh and to Islamic solidarity. It recalled his immense contribution to the Islamic *Ummah*, his untiring efforts till his martyrdom to further the cause of peace and security of

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- the Muslim countries in particular and of the world in general. It considered him as an outstanding Islamic personality who during his lifetime had dedicated his entire energy to the upliftment of the people of Bangladesh by providing them a sense of direction and unity of purpose, and to further strengthening of Islamic solidarity. It paid special tribute to the unflagging and generous efforts exerted by him to contribute positively to the work of Al-Quds Committee, and his sincere service to the Palestinian question in general and Al-Quds Al-Sharif in particular See *The Final Communiqué of the 12th Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, section 8; Resolution No. 1/12-ORG; Resolution No. 3/12-P, and Resolution No. 21/12-P
65. Ahmed Sekou urged the members of the mission and the governments of Iraq and Iran to support this proposal in a telegram addressed to the Secretary General of the OIC. Accordingly, the Secretary General made necessary contracts with Bangladesh government to hold a meeting of the IPC in Dacca in the middle of June 1981.
 66. Bangladesh also attended the meeting of the 14 members Jerusalem Committee and the three members Summit Committee on Jerusalem held in Rabat in April 23, 1981 as members of both committees.
 67. Resolution No. 12/12-E
 68. Resolution No. 13/12-E
 69. Resolution No. 18/12-E
 70. Resolution No. 3/12-C
 71. See *The Final Declaration of the Thirteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Minister*, Section 31; and Resolution No. 23/13-E
 72. *Ibid.* Section 12
 73. See *Report of the Economic Affairs Committee of the Thirteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Minister*, Section 2
 74. Resolution No. 5/13-E
 75. See Resolution No. 5/13-E
 76. Resolution No. 8/13-E
 77. Resolution No. 7/13-E
 78. The leaders were the Foreign Ministers and heads of delegation of Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Mali Morocco, and Niger. Particularly, Niger President Colonel Seyni Kountche paid rich tribute to General Ershad personally and lauded Bangladesh's role in balanced relationship with the countries of South Asia, her prominent, sincere and consistent position in the OIC and NAM, during his meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Minister.

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79. *Brief on the visit of Mr. A. R. Shams-ud Doha, Foreign Minister to the Organization of Islamic Conference*, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, 1983, p. 8
80. The National and Sub-committees made necessary arrangements to organize the Conference. Budgets of various Sub-committees had been approved by the National Committee. Renovation work of the venue, the Sangsad Bhaban, with the vehicles facilities was accomplished satisfactorily. Office equipments and other essential gadgets were also procured as per instruction of OIC manual and orders. Telecommunication network among the member countries of the OIC was also procured. A massive programme to beautify Dhaka city was undertaken . A three member OIC delegation led by Hamza Roubana visited Dhaka (April 8-11, 1983) to see preparatory work and to consult with the organizers of the 14th ICFM. The delegation had series of meetings with concerned officials, visited the venue and expressed their satisfaction on the progress of preparatory work. The final schedule of dates was approved earlier by the Secretary General of the OIC during the NAM meeting in New Delhi in March 1983. For details, see *Short note on the preparatory of the 14th ICFM to be incorporated in the official brief for a visit of Foreign Minister to Jeddah*, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, 1983
81. See *The Final Declaration of the Fourteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Minister*, Section 10
82. Makarios was the President of Cyprus (1960–1977) and the central figure in the Greek Cypriot community. Rauf Raif Denktaş was the President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus or TRNC (1983-2005) and the chief negotiator of Turkish Cypriots. On February 12, 1977, the two men met and agreed on four guidelines. The first was that Cyprus would be an independent, nonaligned, bicomunal federal republic. Second, the territory under the administration of each community was to be discussed in light of economic viability, productivity, and property rights. Third, questions of principle such as freedom of movement and settlement, rights of ownership, and certain special matters were to be open for discussion, taking into consideration the fundamental decision for a bicomunal federal system and certain practical difficulties. Finally, the powers and functions of a central government would be such as to safeguard the unity of the country.
83. Namibia was a region of South West Africa. South Africa had administered South West Africa since it captured the German territory during World War I and subsequently received a League of Nations mandate to administer the territory. In 1966 the United Nations General Assembly, revoked South Africa's mandate to govern South-West African territory and declared that it was under direct UN administration. South Africa refused to

recognize this resolution and continued to administer the territory de facto. On 26 August 1966, nationalist South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) guerilla forces launched an attack against the South African Defence Force at Omugulugwombashe. It was the first armed battle in the Namibian struggle for independence. In commemoration of the day, 26 August is a public holiday in Namibia. It is recognized by the United Nations as *Namibia Day* but Namibians refer to it as *Heroes' Day*. The Namibian War of Independence, which lasted from 1966 to 1988, was a guerrilla war which the SWAPO and others fought against the apartheid government of South Africa. The war ended with the New York Accords signed on 22 December 1988. Independence came to Namibia on 21 March 1990 following elections which saw SWAPO win 55 of 72 seats in the National Assembly of Namibia, enabling them to form a national government.

84. See *The Final Declaration of the Fourteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Minister*, Section 6
85. *Ibid.* Section 7
86. *Ibid.* Section 137
87. *Ibid.* Section 27
88. *Ibid.* Section 100
89. *Ibid.* Section 102
90. *Ibid.* Section 108
91. See *Report and Resolutions on the Political and Information Affairs of the Fourteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Minister*
92. See *Report of the Economic Affairs Committee of the Fourteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Minister*
93. See *Report of the Administrative and Financial Committee of the Fourteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*
94. See *Report of the Cultural and Social Affairs Committee of the Fourteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*
95. Resolution No 10/14-C
96. Resolution No 12/14-E
97. Resolution No. 8/4-P (IS)
98. Resolution No. 8/4-C (IS).
99. Resolution No. 11/4-C (IS)
100. See *Report and Resolutions on Economic Affairs*, Section 13
101. The Adviser called upon the OIC countries to forge a greater unity to play a well calibrated, concerted, constructive and positive role in the world arena in the true spirit of Islam. Referring to the situation in the Middle East he said that any comprehensive

and lasting solution to the problems there must be based on a just and fair settlement and total withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied Arab lands including Jerusalem and restoration of the rights of the Palestinians to have their independent homeland. On Iraq-Iran War he said that Bangladesh supported the efforts of the IPC to persuade both the countries to accept an honourable and negotiated settlement of the conflict. He underscored the urgent necessity for a political solution to the Afghanistan problem through the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghan soil. He reiterated Bangladesh's overwhelming and strong support to the liberation struggle of the peoples of Namibia and other countries.

102. Accordingly, the OIC called for providing due attention to the problems of the least developed Islamic countries and to closely following up the implementation of the resolution on the LDC's adopted by the UN Conference in 1981.
103. See *The Final Communiqué of the Fifteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Minister*, Section: The Cultural and Islamic affairs and the Islamic Solidarity Fund
104. *Ibid.* Section 8
105. *Ibid.* Section 26
106. Resolution No 30/15-AP
107. Resolution No. 13/15-E
108. Resolution No. 25/15-E
109. See *Report and Resolutions on Cultural and Social Affairs of the Fifteen Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*
110. Resolution No. 4/15-C
111. Resolution No. 30/15-C
112. See *Report of the Administrative and Financial Committee of the Fifteen Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*
113. Resolution No. 4/15-AF
114. Bangladesh Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury led Bangladesh delegation in the Sixteenth ICFM. He made a strong plea for strengthening the 45-member OIC to make it more effective in tackling problems facing the Islamic world. He made a strong plea for removal of the factors affecting the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world safeguarding and promoting the economic security of the OIC countries and to solve the Middle East Problems demonstrating enduring force and validity of the Islamic *Ummah*.
115. Resolution No. 10/16-E
116. Resolution No. 14/16-E
117. Resolution No. 4/16-C
118. Resolution No. 17/16-E

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119. In this context, he referred that Israeli policy of expansion and aggression against the neighbouring countries was a flagrant violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and in defiance of the relevant resolutions of the UN and world public opinion. He said that in the fundamental interest of international peace and security, Israel must be compelled to withdraw from all Palestinian and Arab territories it had occupied since 1967, including the holy city of Jerusalem.
120. Resolution No. 1/5-C(IS)
121. Resolution No. 2/5-C(IS)
122. See *The Final Communiqué of the Seventeenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Section 9
123. *Ibid.* Section 32: Cultural Issues
124. Resolution No. 4/17-C
125. Resolution No. 17/17-E
126. See *Report of the Committee of Cultural and Social Affairs of the Seventeenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*
127. See *The Final Communiqué of the Eighteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Section 4
128. *Ibid.* Section 21
129. *Ibid.* Section 59
130. See *Report and Resolutions of the Cultural Affairs Committee of the Eighteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*
131. Resolution No.4/18-C
132. See *The Final Communiqué of the Nineteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Section 4
133. *Ibid.* Section 72; and Resolution No. 9/19-E
134. *Ibid.* Section 83
135. Resolution No. 23/19-C
136. See *Report and resolutions on the Economic Affairs Committee of the Nineteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*, Section 5
137. Resolution No. 3/19-E
138. The Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mostafizur Raman did not attend the Conference due to the current session of Parliament dealing with several important issues.
139. Resolution No. 8/20-E
140. See *The Final Communiqué of the Nineteenth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Section 72

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141. Djibril Diallo, an observer from the UNICEF, described the resolution as a landmark achievement adding that women were responsible for 80 % of total food production in Africa.
 142. Bangladesh Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman led Bangladesh delegation in Political Committee of the meeting. A paper on situation of children in Islamic world was also introduced by Bangladesh in Cultural Committee.
 143. The proposal appealed to all member countries, specialized and affiliated institutions to continue to extend generous assistance to the countries affected by natural disasters as well as to the government of Bangladesh for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the socio-economic infrastructure. The meeting requested the OIC Secretary General, in view of the recurring natural disasters, particularly in Bangladesh, to cooperate and coordinate with the IDB, UNDR0 and the Islamic Relief agency to recommend effective means, both technical and financial, to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters on a long-term basis.
 144. *The Final Communiqué of the 6th Summit Conference*, Section 48
 145. The Secretary General of the OIC, while talking with Bangladesh Prime Minister, congratulated her for delivering the speech in the plenary session and said that it was well taken by the House. He said the presence of Begum Khaleda Zia created a good impact and it was covered by various news agencies.
 146. In the economic context, she urged the leaders of the Islamic countries to buy more commodities from Bangladesh and proposed to them for setting up joint ventures industries and import more manpower from Bangladesh.
 147. Begum Khaleda Zia called on Turkish President Torgut Ozal, Guinean President General Lansana Conte, Tunisian Prime Minister Dr. Hamed Karoui, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, President of Indonesia, Amir of Kuwait and Secretary General of the OIC Dr Hamid Algabid. She discussed with them the matters of common, international and foreign concern.
 148. F M Mostafizur Raman also led a six-member delegation in the Conference.
 149. Resolution No. 3/21-ORG
 150. The Foreign Minister called upon the investors while he was speaking to a group of industrialists at a luncheon arranged jointly by two local banks of Pakistan in his honour on 30 June during the Conference. Members of prominent industrial houses and bankers specially dealing with textile, jute and tea were present in the lunch. He explained to them the facilities and incentives given to the foreign investors and mentioned any other tax holiday, progressive duty reduction bank loan and professional treatment. He also mentioned that Bangladesh had hard working and cheap labour force to sustain a

continuous industrial growth. He stated that the new industrial policy of the government of Begum Khaleda Zia created a very congenial atmosphere for foreign investment in Bangladesh. The government enacted all necessary legal frameworks for protection and safeguard of foreign investment as well as remittance of profit earned by foreign investors.

151. See *The Final Communiqué of the Twenty-First Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Section 6
152. *Ibid.* Section 25
153. Resolution No. 5/21-ORG
154. Resolution No. 6/21-E
155. Resolution No. 4/21-C
156. Resolution No. 13/21-C
157. Resolution No. 27/22-E
158. Resolution No. 7/22-E
159. Resolution No. 7/22-C
160. Resolution No. 14/22-C
161. The United Nations Protection Force UNPROFOR, was the first United Nations peacekeeping force in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Yugoslav wars. The force was formed in February 1992 and its mandate ended in March 1995, with the peacekeeping mission. The UNPROFOR was deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina until its replacement by NATO and EU missions in December, 1995.
162. See *Casablanca Declaration*, Section 10
163. For example, the Prime Minister made a courtesy call on with Ameer of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Alsabah and Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz. She urged the Ameer to take more Bangladeshi manpower. She and the Crown Prince underscored the need for enhancing commercial linkages between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia.
164. See *The Final Communiqué of the Twenty-Third Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Section 24
165. Resolution No. 8/23-E and 4/23-C
166. Resolution No. 39/24-P
167. Resolution No. 8/24-E
168. Resolution No 4/24-C
169. Resolution No 21/24-C
170. *The Daily Star*, Dhaka, March 24, 1997,

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171. Sheikh Hasina addressed the inaugural session of the Eighth Summit and proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of the member countries of Asia.
 172. Arshad-uz-Zaman, OIC Summit in Tehran, *The Daily Star*, 21 December 1997, Dhaka
 173. She said, “Palestinians and Arabs remain victims of flaming Zionist hatred , Bosnian Muslims under threat of Serbian attacks, Afghan embroiled in intolerant fraternal strife, Azeris faced with American aggression, and Somalians steeped in poverty, hunger and disease.” She added, “The Muslim minorities in many non-Muslim countries continue to suffer from ignominious treatment, persecution and violence.”
 174. See *The Final Communiqué of the Eighth Summit*, Section 10
 175. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad led Bangladesh delegation in the 25th CFM.
 176. See *The Final Communiqué of the Twenty-Fifth Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Section 12
 177. Resolution No. 77/25-E, Paragraph 16
 178. Resolution No. 28/26-E, Paragraph 19
 179. Resolution No. 38/27-E
 180. Resolution No. 4/27-C and 22/27-C
 181. Resolution No. 6/27-ORG
 182. Sheikh Hasina made the call while participating in the Special Session of the Summit on Palestinian situation on the inaugural day.
 183. Resolution No. 4/9-C (I
 184. Resolution No. 4/9-ORG (IS)
 185. Resolution No. 22/9-C (IS)
 186. Resolution No. 17/28-P
 187. Resolution No. 5/28-E, Paragraph 11
 188. Bangladesh State Minister for Foreign Affairs Reaz Raman addressed the 10th Extraordinary ICFM.
 189. See *Final Communiqué of The Twenty-Ninth Session of The Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers*
 190. See Resolution No. 16/29-P
 191. See Resolution No. 12/29-S&T
 192. See Resolution No. 9/29-S&T
 193. See Resolution No.18/29-C
 194. Resolution No. 9/30- S&T
 195. Resolution No. 12/30-S&T
 196. Resolution No. 12/30-E, Paragraph 11
 197. See Appendix-IX

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198. Begum Khaleda Zia said, “He is fully aware of the issues that face the Ummah. I have total confidence in his commitment and ability to head our Organization.”
199. Bangladesh felt confident for being elected to the post on the basis of the support of leading Islamic countries. Particularly, Pakistan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Indonesia, Algeria and Kuwait reiterated their support to Bangladesh candidature while Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had bilateral meeting with the leaders of those countries on the sidelines of the Summit. Bangladesh seemed to be more confident on the matter when the Foreign Secretary Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury told reporters on 20 November, 2003, immediately after concluding the 10th Summit and said’ “We have every reason to feel confident to get the job. More than 25 countries have already given their written or categorical verbal assurance of backing Bangladesh in run for the next Secretary General.”
200. The Prime Minister met with Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf , Moroccan King Mohammed VI, Saudi Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, Iranian President Syed Mohammad Khatami, Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnaputri, Turkish President Ahmed Necdet Sezer, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and Kuwait Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed Al-Jaber al-Sabah on the sidelines of the Summit.
201. Resolution No. 9/10-P (IS)
202. See *Report and Resolutions on Cultural and Social affairs adopted by the Tenth Summit*, Section: Islamic University in Bangladesh
203. See Resolution No. 9/10-S&T (IS) and Resolution No. 12/10-S&T (IS)
204. *The Final Communiqué of the Thirty-First Session of Islamic Foreign Minister conference*, section 128
205. Resolution No. 9/31-S&T
206. Bangladesh Foreign Minister M Morsed Khan made the suggestion when he along with the heads of delegation, called on Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh at the Presidential palace in Sana’a following the inaugural session of the 32th ICFM meeting.
207. Prime Minister met Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, Sultan of Brunei Hassan al Bolkhia, Iranian President Mohammad Ahamadinejad, Palestine Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei and President of Maldives Mamun Abdul Gayoom. She and her counterparts stressed on the need for strengthening the OIC and properly utilizing the human resources of the OIC member states for the benefit of their peoples. They also expressed bilateral ties with them.
208. See ‘Ten Year Programme of Action to meet the challenges of the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century’, *Third Extra Ordinary Summit*, Section 5, Paragraph 8

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209. *The Final Communiqué of the Thirty-Third Session of Islamic Foreign Minister Conference*, Paragraph 117
 210. Resolution No. 2/33-ORG, Paragraph 18
 211. Resolution No. 3/33-S&T
 212. Resolution No. 25/33-E
 213. Resolution No. 4/34-C, Section-D
 214. Resolution No. 5/34-S&T
 215. See Appendix-IX
 216. See *The Final Communiqué of the Eleventh Summit*, section 7
 217. *Ibid.* Section 128
 218. Resolution No. 3/11-E (IS), Section 29
 219. Resolution No. 4/11-E (IS), Section 38
 220. Resolution No. 1/11-ORG (IS), Paragraph 41
 221. Resolution No. 4/35-E
 222. Resolution No. 7/35-C
 223. Resolution No. 11/35-S&T
 224. Resolution No. 6/36-S&T
 225. Resolution No. 6/36-C
 226. See Appendix-IX
 227. Resolution No. 4/37-S&T
 228. Resolution No. 6/37-S&T
 229. Resolution No. 3/37-ORG
 230. See Appendix-IX
 231. The other selected OIC Centers of Excellence are; International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (T-IEJ Research Institute of Chemistry), Karachi, Pakistan; Department of Physics, Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey; Institute of Advanced Studies in Basic Sciences, Zanjan, Islamic Republic of Iran and National Institute of Agronomy Research (INRA), Rabat, Morocco. See Resolution No 1/38-S&T
 232. Resolution No. 3/38-S&T
 233. Considering the report of the Open-ended meeting of experts thereon received from OIC Member States and institutions, the Conference stressed the need for urgent action and international cooperation to address climate change in accordance with the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; took into consideration the special vulnerabilities of the LDCs and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS); stressed the need for early operationalization of the Green Climate Fund

(GCF); stressed the need to accord particular attention to adaptation to climate change and adaptation to response measures as well as transfer of technology and capacity building; requested the Secretariat to facilitate coordination among OIC countries on climate change related issues; stresses the need to work within the OIC framework on practical cooperation in the areas of climate change and environment protection with COMSTECH, the Islamic Executive Bureau for Environment and relevant OIC institutions, including the IDB, ISESCO and SESRIC; called upon member states and the relevant OIC institutions to focus on programmes for the capacity building of member states, and so on. See also, Resolution No. 4/38-S&T

234. Regarding IUT, it expressed profound gratitude to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, for her continued patronage of the University and kindly gracing the 24th convocation of the university as the chief guest; noted the report of the activities submitted by the Vice-Chancellor of the IUT; appreciated the successful completion of the 24th academic year, smooth launching of 25th academic year with students from 22 member states; commended the progressive role being played by the IUT for the development of the human resources of the *Ummah* in the fields of engineering, technology and technical education; urged the university to devote more attention to research in fields relevant to the needs of the member states and disseminated research findings to the potential beneficiaries; invited the university to design short courses, especially in the fields of cutting edge and emerging technologies, for the professional working personnel suiting the requirements of the member states; took note of the efforts for internationalizing the teaching faculty by including staff from different member states; called upon the university to pursue meaningful cooperation under memorandums of understanding signed between IUT and other reputed Institutions; took note of the steps taken by the university for launching an endowment fund to diversify the sources of income; appealed to the member states to donate generously to the university for further development of its infrastructure, especially for the construction of a female dormitory; requested the Secretary General to take appropriate steps for the implementation of these recommendations and submit a report thereon to the Thirty-ninth ICFM. Resolution No. 6/38-S &T

235. Resolution No. 3/38-ORG

236. The President addressed the closing ceremony of the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the Summit regarding Islamic solidarity and said, “We must take a pro-active role towards lasting solution to this long standing problem both bilaterally and multilaterally.”

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237. In the recent visit of Secretary General of OIC Iyad Ameen Madani called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 9 March 2014, also to take initiatives for the repatriation of Myanmar refugees from Bangladesh. See Appendix-IX
238. Resolution No. 1/39-Organ
239. Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the OIC (TPS-OIC) is one of the most important projects of the COMCEC to foster intra-OIC trade. This system is based on three agreements, namely the Framework Agreement, the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme (PRETAS) and the Rules of Origin. The Framework Agreement, which sets out the general rules and principles for the negotiations towards the establishment of the TPS-OIC, entered into force in 2002. The PRETAS, which complements the Framework Agreement by laying out the concrete reduction rates in tariffs in accordance with a time-table for implementation, entered into force in February 2010. The Rules of Origin, which applies for the identification of the origin of products eligible for preferential concessions under the TPS-OIC, entered into force in August 2011.
240. *Resolutions on Economic Issues of the Thirty-Ninth ICFM*, ‘Annex Resolutions of the Twenty-Seventh and Twenty-Eighth Session of COMCEC’
241. *Ibid.*
242. *Ibid.*
243. Resolution No. 7/39-S&T
244. Resolution No. 3/39-S&T
245. *Ibid.*
246. Resolution No. 7/39-C
247. Foreign Minister Dipu Moni led the Bangladesh delegation to the 12th Summit. She spoke in the inaugural session of the ministerial meeting in preparation of the 12th summit. She also spoke in the special session of the Summit on Palestine titled ‘Israeli Settlements on Occupied Palestinian Land’. See Appendix-IX, Figure 11
248. See Cairo Final Communiqué of the Twelfth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference ‘The Muslim World: New Challenges & Expanding Opportunities’ OIC/SUM-12/F.C./FINAL 25
249. *Ibid.*
250. See *The Cairo Final Communiqué of the Twelfth session of Islamic Summit Conference*, Paragraph 147
251. *Ibid.* Paragraph 149
252. See *The Final Communiqué of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs New York - United Nation 30 September 2003*, Paragraph 3

253. See The Final Communiqué of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs New York - United Nation 23 September 2005 , Paragraph 5
254. See *The Final Communiqué of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs New York United Nation 2 October 2007, Paragraph 121*
255. *Ibid.* Paragraph 126
256. See *The Final Communiqué of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OIC Member States United Nations Headquarters, New York, 27 September 2013, Paragraph 125*
257. *The Final Communiqué of the Second ICIM, Paragraph 15*
258. *The Final Communiqué of the Fourth ICIM, Paragraph 14*
259. *Ibid.* Paragraph 11
260. *The Final Communiqué of the Fifth ICIM, Paragraph 11*
261. *Ibid.* Paragraph 18
262. *The Final Communiqué of the Seventh ICIM, Paragraph 13*
263. *The Final Communiqué of the Eighth ICIM, Paragraph 11*
264. *The Final Communiqué of the Ninth ICIM, Paragraph IX*
265. Resolution No. 1, Paragraph 40 and 54

In the previous chapter the overall activities of Bangladesh in major OIC summits and conferences of OIC have been discussed. The present chapter will deal with some specific issues and activities of OIC in which the role of Bangladesh has been predominant. Bangladesh since the last forty years of its entry into the OIC has been engaging itself in more and more activities of the OIC and issues facing the Muslim *Ummah*. Bangladesh despite the limitations in some respects has made positive contributions in some activities and issues under the umbrella of OIC. It has played vital role in confronting challenges of the Muslim *Ummah* of the Twenty-First Century. The OIC-Bangladesh ties and in other word ties between Bangladesh and the Muslim world has strengthened in course of time due to dealing of all these issues and activities by Bangladesh and OIC simultaneously.

Role of Bangladesh and OIC in the Islamic University of Technology:

The depth of Bangladesh-OIC relations have been visibly demonstrated by the establishment of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), located at Board Bazar, Gazipur, previously known as ICTVTR and IIT. In the Eighth ICFM held in Tripoli, on May 16-21, 1977, the Presidential Adviser Professor Shamsul Huq proposed to set up Islamic Centre for Vocational and Technical Training and Research (ICTVTR) in Dacca. Bangladesh proposed the Centre to impart medium level technical and vocational training and to meet the rapidly rising demand within the Islamic world for trained manpower of various types and levels. The Economic Committee of the ICFM approved in principle to set up the Centre in Bangladesh under the aegis of the OIC. Later on, an expert group of the Islamic countries met in Dacca in March 1978 and finalized the scheme for setting up the Centre at Dacca. The Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs also recommended the project. In the 9th ICFM held in Dakar, on 24-28 April 1978 Turkey and Iran strongly supported the proposed Centre to be set up at Dacca. The Economic and Social Committee of the OIC unanimously approved the Centre. The establishment of the Centre in Dhaka, Bangladesh was then approved by the then foreign ministers. The OIC called upon the General Secretariat to take all the necessary steps, administrative and financial, to render the Centre operational in 1978-79 and urged all member states to support the establishment of the Centre with financial contributions, and all other administrative measures. All the members of the OIC agreed to cooperate for the implementation of

the project. Accordingly, the ICTVTR came into existence with its Headquarters in Dacca.¹

Bangladesh donated 30 acres of land for the permanent site of the Centre and the arrangements made for its temporary accommodation. The Secretary General of the OIC nominated its Director and the Board of Directors was also formed and called upon the Director of the Centre to take all necessary steps to make the Centre operational at an early date. The OIC also requested the member states to identify their requirements of technical manpower in different fields and forward them to the Centre so that it can formulate its program of action. The budget of the Centre was approved with the contributions of some member states, specially donation of 1 million US Dollar from Saudi Arabia.² Later on IDB, ISF, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other states and institutions donated substantially for its building project. Its budget came mainly from two sources: from mandatory contributions of member states and from voluntary contributions and donations by member states and financial institutions. The implementation of the establishment commenced with the holding of the first meeting of the Board of Governors in June, 1979. Foundation stone of ICTVTR was laid by the late President Ziaur Rahman on March 27, 1981 in the presence of Yasser Arafat, the then Chairman of the PLO, and Habib Chatty, the then Secretary General of OIC. ICTVTR was formally inaugurated by President Hussain Muhammad Ershad on July 14, 1988.

With the establishment of the Centre in Dhaka, the Muslim countries could translate into action by implementing joint ventures on bigger scales to the benefit of the Islamic world as a whole. The 22nd ICFM held in Casablanca, Morocco on 10-11 December 1994 decided to rename the ICTVTR as 'Islamic Institute of Technology' (IIT) on the recommendations of the Governing Board and Second Joint General Assembly of ICTVTR as well as the Eighteenth Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs with a view to properly reflecting the activities of the Centre and facilitating the international recognition of the 'degrees, diplomas and certificates' offered by the Centre.³ IIT was formally inaugurated by Begum Khaleda Zia, the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh, on 21 September 1995. The IIT held an International Seminar on 'Human Resources Development for Sustained Economic Growth and Poverty Alleviation in the Member States of the

OIC' in collaboration with SESRTCIC, ICDT, ICCI. IDB and the Government of Bangladesh in Dhaka from 11-13 April 1999.⁴ The OIC highly appreciated the seminar's theme, and considering it as paramount interest and importance to the member states.⁵ The 27th ICFM, 2000, elected Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Malaysia, Nigeria, United Arab Emirates, Iran, Pakistan and Egypt as the Member of the Board of Directors of the IIT.

The 28th ICFM held in Bamako, 2001, commended the efforts of IIT and decided to rename the IIT as Islamic University of Technology (IUT). IUT was formally inaugurated by the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on November 29, 2001. The University has advanced much in a short time by availing the financing under loan from Islamic Development Bank (IDB) with guarantee provided by the Government of Bangladesh. It signed of the Memorandum of Agreement with the other three OIC universities, namely Islamic University of Niger (IUN), the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) and the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) in Kuwait City in November 2006, for further improvement and reforms of the education quality. The IDB provides scholarships to the Muslim minority students to study in the IUT. It organized a Seminar on 'Development of E-Tourism Technology in Islamic Countries', in cooperation with the Republic of Azerbaijan, as a Chairman of the 5th ICTM, held at the IUT headquarters in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 1-3 April 2008. The IDB financing contributed to the Seminar. The OIC welcomed and appreciated the IUT for organizing the Seminar.⁶

The Centre commenced its skill and knowledge upgrading training programmes in 1985. It started offering long regular courses from December 1986. Regular 3-Year Technology Courses and 1-Year Instructors Training Courses were included with the courses. IUT holds regular convocation. The 26th Convocation was held on 16 October 2012 while Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was the Chief Guest in the Ceremony, Prof. Dr. M. Imtiaz Hossain, Vice-Chancellor of IUT presided over the function and Dr. Razley Bin Mohd Nordin, Director General, Science and Technology, OIC, was present on behalf of the Secretary General of the OIC. It also conferred of honorary doctorate to Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the OIC and Nobel Laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus. The educational activities of the University are increasing and flourishing day by day.

The Islamic University of Technology is basically an educational and research institution. The OIC recognized the University as the subsidiary organ of the OIC realizing its significance with a view to attaining of the objective of converting the vast manpower resources of the *Ummah* into productive human capital through imparting the required technical and vocational training. It is an internationally recognized educational and research institution in Bangladesh run and funded by OIC. It is regarded as one of the top-notch prestigious institutions for engineering and technical education in Bangladesh. The main objective of the university is to help generally in human resources development in member states of the OIC, particularly in the fields of engineering, technology and technical education. IUT receives direct endowment from OIC member countries and offers scholarships to its students in the form of free tuition, boarding, lodging and medicare. The aesthetic campus was designed by Turkish architect Pamir Mehmet, an MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) graduate.

IUT has been granted membership of International Association of the Universities (IAU), Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW), Association of the Universities of the Asia Pacific (AUAP) and the graduates are offered memberships by the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB). UGC (University Grants Commission, Bangladesh) has listed it as the only International University.

The Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs consisting of all member states of the OIC acts as the Joint General Assembly of the University.⁷ IUT has a Governing Board composed of nine members including a member from the host country who is selected by the Joint General Assembly.⁸ There is an Executive Committee which is an organ of the Governing Board.⁹ There is also an Academic Council dealt with academic matters. The departments of IUT are Mechanical & Chemical Engineering (MCE), Electrical & Electronic Engineering (EEE), Computer Science & Engineering (CSE), Civil & Environmental Engineering (CEE), Technical and Vocational Education (TVE). The research centres are Department of Research, Extension and Advisory Services and Publication (REASP) and Energy and Environment Centre (EEC). Besides, it has a Computer centre, a Library and Documentation Centre, two five-storied academic buildings, two residential halls (North and South Hall with 240 rooms), two self-service cafeterias (Central and

North), a fully air-conditioned multi-purpose auditorium etc. It also provides co-curricular activities by forming some societies, branches and arranging games facilities.

The IUT is performing its activities in various fields according to the directives of OIC Ten Years Plan of Actions.¹⁰ It has been playing a vital role initiating some steps in addition to its existing long regular programmes, including designing short courses, training programs, plans of cooperation providing instruction in engineering, technology and technical and vocational education and in such branches of learning as per requirement of the member states; conducting, promoting and guiding research in engineering, in industrial and technological fields and in technical and vocational education to the benefits of the member states of the OIC; holding examination and grant and confer certificates, degrees, diplomas as per academic rules of IUT; promoting technical cooperation, exchange technical know-how and disseminate basic information in the field of human resource development through regular, short and special courses, seminars, workshops and publications; offering courses in the fields of emerging and frontier technologies to equip the youth of the *Ummah* to face the challenges of the globalization and digital divide matching of the member countries; ensuring coordination between the objective of the University with other national and regional institutions of the Islamic Countries as well as with international institutions; undertaking advisory and consultancy services for government, international bodies and foundations or allied organizations; participating in the meetings of commissions and committees established by the conference with appropriate background and technical papers; cooperating and collaborating with the General Secretariat and with other subsidiary and affiliated organs of OIC; designing a short course on “Computer Network Server Administration in LINUX Environment”, from 12–16 November 2006; upgrading the curriculum in the field of Advanced Manufacturing and Design; joining hands with the Universities of UK, France, China, Malta and Pakistan under the umbrella of Asia Link Programme, initiated by the European Union and under their patronage; launching programmes on Medical Electronics for Health Care, Training the Trainers in the Technical Education Field, Design of Jigs, Fixture for Computer Integrated Manufacturing; adopting plans involving (i) Staff Development for the proposed Al-Aqsa University (ii) Pedagogical Training for Religious Teachers at the Secondary Level, (iii) Helping and Advising

SME sectors in OIC countries (iv) Cooperation among OIC countries in the field of Science and Technology and (v) Women Education. The IUT activities, hence, played the major role in making lasting ties between OIC and Bangladesh.

Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) and Bangladesh:

Bangladesh had the remarkable contribution in holding periodical international games amongst the member states of the OIC. Bangladesh made the proposal for the establishment of the Islamic Games in the Fifth Meeting of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs held in Conakry in January 1980 with the objective to strengthen Islamic brotherhood and solidarity among youth in member states and promote Islamic identity in the fields of sports.¹¹ The 11th ICFM (May 1980) approved the Bangladesh proposal for arranging international games among Islamic countries on a regular basis. By virtue of Resolution No.17/11-C of the Eleventh ICFM held in Islamabad, Pakistan, in May 1980 and Resolution No.7/3-C of the Third Islamic Summit held in Mecca/Taif in January 1981 of the Third Islamic Summit Conference, it was decided to establish the “Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation” (ISSF). The Tenth Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs held in Jeddah in October, 1983 recommended the General Secretariat of the OIC to pursue with the appropriate authorities of the most country, Saudi Arabia, with a view to accelerating the establishment of the Sports Federation and to convene its constituent conference as soon as possible. The 14th ICFM requested member states to give financial and moral support and to participate in the conference of the Sports Federation of the Islamic Solidarity Games. It was formally established on 6 May 1985. The Conference recommended the holding of the Solidarity Games for every four years from 1985. The Headquarters of the Federation is in Prince Faisal Bin Fahd Olympic Complex in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) is the Organization that is responsible for the direction and control of the Islamic Solidarity Games. The First Event was held in 2005 in Saudi Arabia. Non-Muslim citizens in the member countries are also allowed to take part in the Games. A second event, originally scheduled to take place in October 2009 in Iran, and later re-scheduled for April 2010, was canceled after a dispute arose between Iran and the Arab World over the use of the term ‘Persian Gulf’ in logos for the Games, as some countries in the Arab world use the term ‘Arabian Gulf’ to refer to the Persian Gulf. Dispute over the name has

been a recurring source of disharmony between Arab states and Iran. The 3rd ISSF Games was held in Indonesia in June 2013. The fourth edition is scheduled to be held in Baku in 2017.

Bangladesh's proposal for a Ministerial Standing Committee:

Bangladesh proposed for a Ministerial level Standing Committee to deal with emergency situation which initially evoked overwhelming support.¹² Later on, the draft resolution adopted by Bangladesh on the matter was examined by an enlarged Expert Group which met at Dhaka from 27 to 29 January 1982.¹³ The Expert Group made a report recalling the necessity for the setting up of a Standing Committee of Foreign Ministers. The experts specified its sphere of duties as being that of a 'follow up and consultation' body entrusted specially with recommending measures that would enable member states of the OIC to take appropriate action vis-a-vis any external threat aimed at any member states. At the same time, the experts opined that the setting up of such a Committee could have legal implications on the provisions of the Charter of the OIC. Therefore, the Expert Group suggested that the matter be examined by a group of legal experts. According to this recommendation, the secretary General of the OIC convened a meeting of legal experts who meet in Jeddah on 12-13 June 1982 and after examining the matter thoroughly came to the conclusion that the setting up of a Standing Committee of Foreign Ministers will be contrary to the charter of the OIC and will lead to the removal of functions from one principal organ to another which would necessitate the amendment of the OIC charter. In reality, that was a very good proposal in order to make OIC an action-oriented organization by assuming the immediate and emergency action on the happenings in the *Ummah*. The OIC upheld the idea and it was materialized by establishing an Executive Committee based upon the decision taken by the 3rd Extraordinary Summit held in Makkah, on 7-8 December 2005. The Committee became operational by convening of the First Ministerial Meeting of the Executive Committee in Jeddah on 15 March 2006. The Executive Committee follows up the adopted resolutions and considers urgent matters which warrant attention between OIC inter-sessional meetings.

Bangladesh's role to Food Security and Agricultural Development in OIC countries:

Bangladesh played an active part in the process of studies and research for food security in Islamic countries. In the 8th ICFM, 1977, Bangladesh proposed establishment of an Islamic Food Bank to pool and allocate financial, technological and skilled sources among the member countries to augment food production so that the Islamic world should attain self-sufficiency in basic food item. Bangladesh also urged the Conference to consider the possibility of creating a buffer stock of food grains through internal and external procurement to meet emergencies in every part of the Islamic world. The Ninth ICFM in Dakar approved a proposal to hold a high level meeting to discuss cooperation to achieve food security in Islamic countries. A sub-group was set up to review the food situation in the Islamic world. The group was assigned to make reports and recommendations on the matter. The sub-group held two meetings in Ankara on November 20-23, 1978 and November 20-22, 1979. The group placed some recommendations in the areas of economic cooperation among the member states to strengthen their food security. Subsequently, a Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development in the Islamic Countries held in Ankara during October 20-22, 1981, recommended in-depth studies on 11 major areas and each study was assigned to one particular country. Bangladesh was assigned three studies out of eleven. These are as follows:-

1. Measures to control flood,
2. Coordination and collaboration in research and training and transfer of technology, exchange of information and data among member states, and
3. Feasibilities and modalities of undertaking a Food Entitlement Programme in the Islamic countries to effectively reduce hunger and malnutrition through a specially directed food distribution programme for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable section of the peoples, suitably combined with programmes to stimulate production increases.

Bangladesh sincerely worked for the three studies. The Ministry of Agriculture for the purpose constituted two committees: one under the Chairmanship of Member (Planning), Water Development Board to undertake the first study and the other with the Executive Vice-Chairman, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council as Chairman for undertaking the second study. The Ministry of Food undertook the third

study in cooperation with the World Food Council. In the Fifteenth ICFM held in Sana, 1984, the economic committee recommended the completion of the studies on the food security programme, assigned to various countries including Bangladesh. In the Sixteenth ICFM held in Fez, 1986, Bangladesh proposed for a special action programme for the Islamic LDC's hard hit by the recession investing in the food and agriculture sectors in member countries on priority. In the Twenty-second ICFM held in Casablanca, 1994, Bangladesh reiterated the need for food security among the OIC member states.

In pursuance of the proposal, the Fourth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development (MFSAD) held in Tehran, 14-16 January 1995, adopted resolution on OIC Food Security Reserve.¹⁴ The global food price crisis in 2008 and the following financial crisis in 2009 had driven the OIC to intensify its efforts in the area of agriculture and food security, which it has long neglected. This neglect could be seen from the fact that OIC could hold its Fifth MFSAD in 2010 after 15 years interval since the Fourth Conference. The Fifth OIC MFSAD adopted another resolution on the matter. The Sixth MFSAD held in Istanbul, on 3-6 October 2011, adopted the resolution on Promoting Food Security and Agricultural Development in OIC Member States.

In response to the consequence of 2008 crises, which severely affected the OIC countries too, the COMCEC in 2009 established a Task Force on Agriculture, Rural development and Food Security and the 5th MFSAD strongly supported the activities of the Task Force. The 27th Session of the COMCEC held in Istanbul, on 17-20 October 2011, also adopted resolution for the establishment of OIC Food Security institution in Kazakhstan. The 39th CFM recognized the importance of regional collective self-reliance with respect to food security as a means of addressing the adverse effect of global food crisis on the OIC member states. It also recognized further that the establishment of an OIC Food Security institution is based on the principle of collective self-reliance as well as solidarity and mutual cooperation to ensure food security of the OIC member states. The Conference decided to establish an OIC Food Security institution in Astana, Kazakhstan. It also requested the Secretary General to convene in consultation with member states an Inter-governmental Expert Group Meetings to finalize the constituent instrument of the

OIC Food Security Institution and welcomed the offer of the Djibouti to host a Center for OIC Food Security Reserve for East, Central and Southern Africa and Horn of Africa in Djibouti. The 12th summit welcomed the expanding intra-OIC cooperation in agriculture and food security with other economic sectors and commended the initiative of the Emir of Kuwait to establish a Decent Life Fund with US\$100 million, from which several member states benefitted to support their food security programme.

Islamic Common Market (ICM):

At the third Islamic Summit Conference held in Taif, 1981, President Ziaur Rahman proposed to the OIC, the concept of an Islamic Common Market. From the economic point of view and world economic perspective during the last thirty years, the proposal of Bangladesh can be considered a monumental recommendation. Since the Summit, Bangladesh has been frequently calling for an Islamic Common Market as part of economic development of the OIC countries particularly in order to increase intra-OIC trade. The concept of Islamic common market was incorporated in principle in the historic Makkah Declaration which envisaged an Islamic Economic Community for the *Ummah*. In the Twelfth ICFM held at Baghdad on June 1-5, 1981, Bangladesh presented a study entitled; “Towards an Islamic Common Market”. The Conference decided that the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for the Islamic Countries (SESRIC) in Ankara should undertake a further study based on this document, to be referred to the General Secretariat for further action.¹⁵ The Ankara Centre then presented a brief report on the Islamic Common Market to the OIC. Unfortunately, the report rejected the immediate formation of Islamic Common Market. The dissimilar and lack of complementarities among the OIC member countries was taken into consideration by the Centre. The SESRIC suggested that the starting point towards the Islamic Common Market should be multitude of economic cooperation schemes, comprising trade preferences joint ventures, coordination and harmonization of various sets of economic policies, regional schemes of monetary and financial cooperation.

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry at the 3rd General Assembly of the Islamic Chamber and Commerce, held in Kuwait in 1981, presented a draft proposal recommending to member states the formation of a Commission for

the establishment of the Islamic Common Market which was subsequently unanimously adopted at the 4th General Assembly of the Islamic Chamber held in Jakarta in 1983. The first meeting of the Standing Committee on Commercial and Economic Cooperation (COMCEC) held in Istanbul, 1984 was a milestone along the road for establishing an ICM. The Conference focused on standardization, coordination between import-export needs and capabilities of member states, and promotion of trade fairs in the Islamic World. The first meeting of the Trade Promotion Organisations of OIC Member States, organized by the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT) Casablanca, held in October 1985 in Istanbul adopted a unanimous resolution moved by Bangladesh recommending the establishment of 'Sectoral Common Markets' by the formation of Islamic Unions in Basic Commodities among OIC Member States. The meeting reaffirmed the necessity to work towards the establishment of an Islamic Common Market. In this respect it was recommended to the member states to adopt a progressive approach by the establishment of Sectoral Common Markets of Basic Commodities. Considering the importance of the Bangladesh proposal, the meeting urged the ICDT to carry an in-depth study on this issue.

The ICM is a progressive approach to OIC economic integration. But an over-all Islamic common market is actually long-run process as the other regional economic groups in the world evolved in stages, passing through phases of free trade areas, customs union and finally a common market.¹⁶ Another variation of this approach is to develop Sectoral Common Markets gradually for different sectors of the economy on a selective basis. Although Islamic Common Market is the long-term objective of the OIC, this goal may be approached by initially forming regional and sub-regional groupings of Islamic countries in different geographical areas. The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) realized that the Islamic Common Market could be achieved only in phases. Therefore, Bangladesh delegation at the 9th General Assembly of Islamic Chamber in Karachi on the 5th June, 1991, mooted the proposal on the Islamic Common Market. The Bangladesh proposal focused on the realization of the Islamic Common Market by the year 2000 which was the ultimate goal of OIC. It set four phases so that the formation of an Islamic Common Market can be achieved by the year 2000. The phases are as follows:-

- i) Regional and Sub-Regional Cooperation Arrangements between OIC Member States (SEACO) (1994-95)
- ii) Preferential Trading Arrangements by the establishment of Islamic Unions in Basic Commodities (Sectoral Common Market) (1995-97)
- iii) An Islamic Free Trade Area (IFTA) (1997-99)
- iv) An Islamic Common Market (ICM) (2000-)¹⁷

The 18th Executive Committee of the Islamic Chamber held in November, 1991, appreciated in principle the Bangladesh approach toward setting of an Islamic Common Market and recommended 20 percent reduction in the custom duties by all the Islamic countries, as a preliminary step towards setting up an Islamic Common Market and urged the attending member countries in the Chamber to approach their respective governments to support the proposal of setting up an Islamic Common Market and the reduction of custom duties.

In pursuance of this important decision the Prime Minister of Bangladesh at the 6th Islamic Summit (Dakar, Dec ember 9-12, 1991) renewed the call for the creation of an Islamic Common Market like that in Europe. On the ICM, the Dakar Declaration of the Sixth Summit stressed on development of intra-Islamic trade, reduction at all levels tariff, promoting all forms of economic integration between member states both at the regional and sub-regional levels leading to the setting up of an ICM. The Summit in a resolution urged the member states to continue to pursue their efforts for the implementation of the Plan of Action to strengthen economic cooperation among member states. the Summit asked for strengthening contacts between firms, companies, banks, and other economic institutions of members states, and requested the COMCEC to study ways and means for the promotion of inter-regional cooperation and progressive economic integration leading to the setting up of an ICM, taking due account of the existing regional integration groupings.

Bangladesh in the OIC summits, conferences and forums, has been repeatedly stressing on greater economic cooperation among OIC countries with a view to building an ICM. Bangladesh in the 25th CFM, 1998, called for early establishment of ICM to revive the fragile economics of the Least Developed Countries within the OIC and stressed on preferential trade arrangements and movement of labour in an ICM in

order to provide an opportunity of shaping a descent and dignified life for the people of LDCs. In the Ninth Summit, 2000, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also called for setting up an ICM and preferential market access facilities to least developed members of the OIC to increase their export to other member states. Bangladesh in the Twenty-Ninth CFM, 2002, suggested establishment of a regime of trade preferences among OIC member countries to create an ICM and mechanisms to ensure free flow of development funds, manpower and technology from resources surplus to resources scare OIC countries. Bangladesh stressing the importance of creating a common investment fund to help the member countries, called for early implementation of the plan of action for strengthening economic and commercial cooperation among the member countries. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the Tenth Summit, 2003, stressed on liberalization of trade and easier access of goods and services into the markets of the member countries. The chief Advisor Dr. Fakruddin Ahmed in the Eleventh Summit, 2008, stressed the need for examining in greater depths the possibilities of the ICM in order to increase intra-OIC trade.

The OIC though took into account that the formation of ICM was a long-run process and required comprehensive studies, undertook a number of progressive measures over the years to enhance economic cooperation among Muslim countries to achieve an ICM. The OIC emphasized the importance of implementing the Plan of Action to strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation Among Member States; the Agreement on Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investments among Member States; the General Agreement on Economic, Technical and Commercial Cooperation among Member States; the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System among Member States; the Agreement on the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investment and Export Credit, and the Agreement on the Islamic Corporation for the Development of Private Sector for the purpose of strengthening economic and commercial cooperation among member states with a view to achieving the ultimate objective, the establishment of an ICM. It also emphasized the need to reinforce economic cooperation establishing free trade zones and common markets among the member states through their regional groupings as a positive stage towards establishing a free trade zone among the OIC member states with the ultimate aim of creating an ICM. The efforts undertaken by the COMCEC for the establishment of the TPS-OIC as of January 1st, 2009, was a very concrete and important step for the

liberalization of trade among the OIC member countries as well as the ultimate goal of the ICM. In 2005, the 'OIC Ten Year Action Plan to meet the challenges facing the Islamic *Ummah* in the 21st Century' was adopted to enhance overall trade by the year 2015, hence exploring the possibility of establishing an OIC Free Trade Area.

Although, ICM is not a new concept and the movement in this direction has been very slow but it is also true that the areas identified for economic cooperation among the Muslim states are the right ones. Several measures have been taken for the aim including TPS and Ten Year Action, a number of institutions and organs are working for the ICM, but it is difficult to guess when it would be implemented fully or whether it could be implemented at all. Seriousness and will of every concerning country is more important with the combined initiatives of OIC countries. To establish an ICM, the Islamic states should have to-

- i) create an atmosphere to fully make people aware the need of an ICM to strengthen the ties between Muslim countries.
- ii) establish a Shari'ah based trading and commerce system.
- iii) materialize the economic unity of Muslim *Ummah* through economic integration.
- iv) provide the perfect banking, finance, marketing, trading and other economic related systems.
- v) clarify their visions and its methodology.
- vi) achieve self-sufficiency in a number of essential food items by making adjustment in their trade patterns.
- vii) promote unity, mutual and meaningful cooperation, respect and understanding.¹⁸

As Bangladesh was the chief initiator of ICM, she has to play the leading role in future as she played before. Bangladesh as it belongs to the LDCs and has some special sectors of marketing, that are. labours, ready-mate garments et cetera, it would be undoubtedly one of the key beneficiaries among OIC countries of Islamic Common Market.

Bangladesh's advocacy for LDCs:

Bangladesh had the strong advocacy in OIC in favour of the Least Developed Islamic Countries (LDIC) for safeguarding their special interests and needs. Around 40 percent of OIC states belong to LDCs facing with increased marginalization due to

the in adequate resources in the wave of globalization that presents new opportunities as well as challenges. As the coordinator of the least developed Countries (LDC) at the UN and the Group of 77, Bangladesh played a pioneering role in those organizations for special assistance to the LDCs. This also facilitated Bangladesh to do the same in OIC. Bangladesh's proposal for the formation of an Islamic Common Market for the greater trade and economic activities among Muslim countries is also induced mainly for the cause of the least developed Islamic countries to revive their fragile economy. The 10th ICFM (1979) accepted the suggestion of Bangladesh regarding the interest of least developed countries. According to the suggestion the OIC adopted a resolution urging the Manila Conference of UNCTAD-V to endorse the Arusha Declaration adopting special measures for least developed countries. It also instructed the respective delegations of the OIC states in Manila to hold consultations for evolving common positions on LDCs in light of the resolutions of the Conference.¹⁹ The Third Summit (1981) adopted the Bangladesh proposal formulating a special programme for the least developed Islamic countries. The decision envisaged special assistance to the least developed Islamic member states a special relief to overcome the crisis created by the international upheaval.²⁰

Bangladesh always stresses on a self-reliant Islamic community and the need for narrowing gap in the economic field between the developed and developing nations. The self-reliance philosophy was fully demonstrated by a six-point concrete suggestion proposed by Bangladesh in the 11th ICFM (1980) which comprised resources sharing, diversification of investment, special energy crisis fund, Islamic international banking system, training facilities and equalization of educational opportunities.²¹ Bangladesh proposed in the Sixteenth ICFM for acceleration of the arrangements of the SNPA (Substantial New Programme of Action) of UN for the LDCs and full implementation of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board Resolutions- 165 (S-IX).²² The Conference accordingly, adopted resolution on the matter.²³ Bangladesh hosted a Ministerial level meeting of the Least Developed Countries held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 10-12 February 1990. The OIC appreciated the outcome of the meeting and emphasizes the need for following up the implementation of the provisions of the 'Dhaka Declaration, the Dhaka Document and the Plan of Action' as adopted by that meeting and also appreciated the visit to developed countries in this connection by a least developed countries Ministerial level

delegation, headed by the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh.²⁴ Bangladesh in the Sixth Summit (1991), urged the rich nations within the Islamic world to lessen debt burden of the poor member states. It gained positive response from some rich Islamic countries. Saudi Arabia, accordingly, announced at the Summit meeting its government's decision to write off the debt of the Least Development Islamic countries and to give 10 million dollars to overcome the financial problems.²⁵ Subsequently, Qatar also followed Saudi Arabia.

Bangladesh had the role in the formulation and adoption of the resolution on poverty alleviation of LDCs.²⁶ It stressed on human development with massive investment in primary, mass and non-formal education, the need for micro-credits to poor people in rural areas of the LDCs for financing small enterprises and health support to the poorest section of population for the alleviation of poverty. Bangladesh called for preferential market access facilities to least developed members of the OIC to increase their export to other member states. Bangladesh also called on the wealthy member states to open their markets duty free of products from the least developed Islamic countries.

Other economic dealings between OIC and Bangladesh:

The OIC has shown its more success in economic and financial activities than any other field. In actuality, the establishment of an Islamic Common Market, for which Bangladesh has repeatedly pleaded, can be the comprehensive economic solution of the OIC countries. But the establishment of an Islamic common market is a matter of time and has some pre-conditions to be put into operation earlier. Several attempts have been taken and several financial organs and agencies have been created by OIC to improve the economic condition of the OIC member states. Bangladesh is a founding member of IDB which executed the bulk of the economic activities of the OIC. The establishment of IDB was an outstanding measure of the OIC and still the success of the OIC much more depends on the performances of the Bank. Bangladesh received currency support, short term trade financing, disaster relief, grants and loans from the Bank. It also provides scholarship for students of Bangladesh. In the food security and agricultural development Bangladesh had the remarkable contribution in OIC. Bangladesh in the early years of its membership to OIC had the strong support to OIC resolution for shortage of food measures to meet the food shortage. In the

Third Summit (1981), Bangladesh presented the 11-point programmes which pointed out concrete economic guidelines for the OIC.²⁷

Bangladesh always stresses on the safeguarding of the economic security of the OIC countries for the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world. The 7-point programme proposed by Bangladesh in the 16th ICFM (1986), articulated the economic security of the Islamic countries.²⁸ Bangladesh during the OIC sessions and sideline talks articulated the possible ways and means to enhance cooperation among the OIC member states in trade, human development, free flow of raw materials and capital. It always suggests making for exchange of capital and human resources between member countries and stresses on utilizing properly the human resources of the OIC countries for the benefit of their peoples. It also suggested the Islamic countries rich in capital resources to increase semi processed goods from their import of processed and other member countries for the development of trade.²⁹ The OIC also encouraged member states the transfer of capital and investments in order to promote the socio-economic development of all Islamic countries.³⁰ Bangladesh representatives also urged the leaders of the Islamic countries to buy more commodities and import more manpower from Bangladesh.³¹ Bangladesh proposed for the establishment of a joint shipping line to handle trade between OIC countries. It also suggested to work out a joint insurance and reinsurance arrangements. The OIC as part of its Capacity Building Programme adopted projects for the development of fisheries sector in Bangladesh.³²

The OIC adopted various measures in various times aimed at preventing and alleviating the effects of natural disasters in Bangladesh. It also granted financial and material assistance to Bangladesh affected and threatened by natural disasters to enable this country to carry out its short, middle and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction programme. Bangladesh's proposal to assist the natural disaster prone Muslim countries in the hour of their disaster was accepted by the OIC.³³ According to another Bangladesh's proposal the OIC decided to establish a high-level task force comprising climate change experts from the member states to prepare OIC's collective vision in connection with the upcoming Climate Change Conference to be held in Mexico in November-December 2010.³⁴

Bangladesh's proposal for Islamic Centre for Advanced Medical Training and Research halted:

Bangladesh submitted a project for the establishment of an Islamic Centre for Advanced Medical Training and Research in the Seventeenth ICFM held at Amman, from 19 to 26 March 1988. The OIC specially the Cultural and Social Affairs Committee stressed the importance of that project and its great usefulness to the health sector in Islamic states. The Committee entrusted the General Secretariat to take necessary steps for the establishment of the centre. It became a regular agenda of the OIC conferences since the 17th ICFM. The Secretary Generals pursued contacts with the member states, in order to obtain their views and comments on the subject. The Secretary General getting less enthusiasm from Muslim states suggested the OIC to conduct more research on the technical and financial requirements of this project. The 30th ICFM held in Tehran, from 28 to 30 May 2003 having considered the report submitted by the Secretary General on this subject could not reach consensus on the proposed Centre.³⁵ The proposed Centre, hence, could not be proceeded on later. The proposal was undoubtedly a demand of time for the *Ummah* to be befitted with the modern medical science in world perspective. But, unfortunately, the technical supports, financial requirements and above all the approach of donor states to the proposed project did not act favourably which ultimately halted the project.

Empowerment of women: Role of Bangladesh in OIC:

Bangladesh's contribution to the empowerment of women in the Islamic countries in the socio-economic development is highly laudable. Bangladesh first emphatically moved up the proposal by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia in the sixth Summit (1991), urging concerted Islamic action to enhance the role and status of women and their education in mainstream of development . As she was the first woman to address a summit of the OIC, she properly noticed the matter to the Summit leaders. The Summit adopted the proposal with a great appreciation in order to involve the women in the Islamic countries more effectively in the socio-economic development.³⁶ The Summit also adopted a resolution on a pledge to promote the role of women, notably through the education of girls. It also called for a conference of ministers and a symposium of experts to develop a proper mechanism for ensuring active participation of women in the fields of social development. Since 1991,

Bangladesh has been made strong advocacy in favour of women in their development in socio-economic field.

In the Eighth Summit held in Tehran in 1997, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina suggested the enhancement of the role and status of women and their induction into the mainstream of life. The Summit, thus, requested member states to take appropriate steps to organize women's activities at the national and international levels in all fields.³⁷ The summit also emphasized on their full respect for the dignity and the rights of Muslim women and enhancement of their role in all aspect of social life in accordance with Islamic principles, and called on the General Secretariat to encourage and coordinate participation of women in the relevant activities of the OIC.³⁸ Bangladesh addressed the rights of women in the 26th ICFM in 1999 and the matter was adequately replicated in the Conference resolution.³⁹ Bangladesh's role for the empowerment of women reached at such a position that the OIC decided to support Bangladesh for membership in the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for a number of periods.⁴⁰ Dhaka again stressed to empower women human resources of the Islamic world through their development in the Thirty-Second ICFM (2005). The chief Advisor Dr. Fakruddin Ahmed in the Eleventh Summit (2008) rightly focused on equality of women and justice and equality for all. Bangladesh also reiterated the call for women empowerment in the 12th Summit (2013). In fact, internally, Bangladesh has achieved tremendous success in the empowerment of women in the recent years and believes in equality of women worldwide by eliminating all sort of gender discrimination in society. Bangladesh, thus, made the strong advocacy for the women in the international organizations, i.e. UN, OIC.

Bangladesh candidature as OIC Secretary General:

Bangladesh since the entry in the OIC had been becoming more and more involved in the OIC activities and making the fruitful contribution to the OIC that promoted Bangladesh to secure important posts and offices of the OIC and specially to announce her candidacy of the OIC Secretary General four times so far. Bangladesh sought to secure the position of the Secretary General four times namely in 1979, 1983, 2000 and in 2004. Bangladesh had to withdraw candidature every time on

political consideration. Some internal and external factors were also accounted for taking away from OIC top most race.

In 1979, Bangladesh nominated former President retired Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury for the post of the Secretary General of the OIC. Bangladesh announced its candidature because the post was to be held by a South Asian OIC Member Country. It was a great opportunity for Bangladesh to attain the post. But, it could not be realized due to Pakistan's stand. Pakistan had the strong reservation about the person because he played a key role in obtaining support from the Western countries for Bangladesh during the War of Independence against Pakistan in 1971. When, it looked certain that he would be elected, Pakistan put up its own candidate at the last minute, in order to frustrate and kill Bangladeshi candidature, announced Ghulam Ishaq Khan, a senior bureaucrat (Finance Minister) of Pakistan.⁴¹ Since a consensus decision on the election of the Secretary General is required, a contact group was formed to resolve the issue. A deadlock caused and the name of a third candidate from Tunisia, Habib Chatty was announced. Bangladesh withdrew her candidature in favour of the Tunisian candidate in a spirit of brotherly accommodation. Pakistan followed Bangladesh whose intention was only to sabotage the Bangladeshi candidate, and Habib Chatty was elected unanimously.

Bangladesh announced the name of A. R. Shams-ud Doha former Foreign Minister, as the candidate for the post of Secretary General in 1982. Bangladesh geared up all her efforts to win the election. Initially, Bangladesh received favourable reactions from friendly OIC member states to the candidature.⁴² Pakistan appeared as rival to Bangladesh as it was in 1979 and announced her candidacy following Bangladesh's announcement of her candidature. Pakistan announced the name of Sharif Uddin Pirzada, Law Minister and Attorney General of Pakistan as its candidate for the post of OIC Secretary General. Bangladesh had to withdraw candidature that time also on political consideration and the OIC finally elected Sharif Uddin Pirzada as the next Secretary General.

Bangladesh candidate Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, former Foreign Minister and former Speaker of Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad (National Assembly/Parliament), vied for the post of Secretary General of the OIC in the Twenty-seventh ICFM held in

Kuala Lumpur, from 27 to 30 June 2000. Although the office was to have gone to an Asian, it went to an Arab, Morocco's Abdelouahed Belkeziz, because, both the Asian candidates, Humayun Rasheed Choudhury and Turkey's Yasar Yakist Rvere regarded as too secular.⁴³

Bangladesh lost the OIC top post race for the fourth time also in 2004. Bangladesh came first on the scene proposing its candidate in 2004 as none of the country was willing to withdraw its candidates. The name of Bangladesh's candidate Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, former Political Adviser to the Prime Minister and Member of Parliament, was formally announced for the post of the OIC Secretary General during the Putrajaya Summit in 2003 by the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. She sought support of the OIC countries for him referring his reputation that he was fully aware of the issues that facing the *Ummah* and had the ability to head the OIC. Bangladesh felt confident about securing the post until the election result was announced, as many Islamic countries extended their support to Bangladesh. The leading Islamic countries like Pakistan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Indonesia, Algeria and Kuwait reiterated their support to Bangladesh candidature while Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had bilateral meeting with the leaders of those countries on the sidelines of the Tenth Summit. Bangladesh expected to win the OIC top most race that time. The expectation was reasonable and justified as more than 30 countries assured their support either in writing or verbally. Some of them promised more than once.⁴⁴ But, Bangladesh was saddened at the result.

Bangladesh lost to Turkey in a triangular fight that felt Malaysia equally. Turkey secured 32 votes while Bangladesh and Malaysia got 12 each in the first ever balloting for the Secretary General of the 57-member OIC. Guinea-Bissau abstained from voting. While the Turkish candidate did not receive the required two-thirds majority to be elected, Bangladesh and Malaysia withdrew infavour of Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (61-year old) before the second ballot.

The defeat in OIC race in 2004 was totally unexpected to Bangladesh. Some internal and external factors were counted behind the defeat of Bangladesh candidate:-

1. Bangladesh was not in a superior position among the Muslim world in the economic, political, diplomatic, geographical and other respects so that it

could certainly deserve the post of OIC Secretary General. Bangladesh cannot ignore its inherent limitations. It is neither an economic nor a military power. Only population is not the criterion of getting leadership in OIC's top most post.

2. In the past, Bangladesh candidates failed to get elected to the top position in the other international organizations. For example, Bangladesh put up its candidates for the top job of the UN Common Fund, FAO (Food & Agriculture Organisation) and the Commonwealth, but the candidates were unsuccessful. It was not that Bangladesh candidates were not competent. As for example, Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury's deliberations at the ICFM were praised.⁴⁵ But when voting took place, it was the overall country's standing and the regional or global environment that played an important role during voting. The voting pattern for Secretary General drew a clear polarization between Turkey on one side and Bangladesh and Malaysia on the other. Bangladesh could not secure the top position of the OIC three times earlier, although it was keen to obtain the position. This being the case, Bangladesh naturally knew that it was placed in a difficult position to secure the post given the contestants from Turkey and Malaysia.
3. Concerted campaign and negative propaganda against Bangladesh candidate launched by certain quarters at home and abroad counted for not getting the assumed votes. Some former diplomats specially raised their fingers to former Assistant Secretary General of OIC Ambassador Arshaduzzaman, who was married to a Turkish lady and whose daughter ran a story from an international news agency, for the negative propaganda and damaging prospect of winning at the last moment.⁴⁶ Some countries which assured to vote for Bangladesh deviated from their promised assurance at the last moment because of the serious anti-campaign launched by some Bangladeshis specially like someone who served OIC previously.⁴⁷
4. Turkish foreign policy had more strength in getting acceptability from the power quarter than Bangladesh's. On the other hand, Bangladesh had the limitations in foreign policy with respect of popular opinion as Bangladesh's foreign policy is guided by popular opinion.
5. Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, as the Chairman of the Thirty First ICFM, played a major role in promoting his country's candidate. Turkey as the

host country of the Conference where the election was held, were in the advantageous position in promoting its candidate, propagating and making diplomatic contacts.

6. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu's personal qualification and his pre-dominance in OIC also contributed behind his victory. In the past, he was involved in the activities of the OIC. He served as the Director General of the Istanbul-based Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), a wing of the OIC, in 1980. He was also a prominent historian. He also served as the Secretary of the International Commission for the Preservation of Islamic Cultural Heritage (ICPICH), Istanbul, for seven years (1983-2000). He received many honours including medals from Egypt, Jordan, Senegal, and Iran for his contribution to Islamic history and heritage. He spoke fluently in four foreign languages: Arabic, Persian, French, and English.
7. Geographical rotation of an international post plays a significant part in election. In the past, candidates from Africa, Arab countries, South Asia, and South East Asia occupied the post. In the OIC, Malaysia (South East Asia), Egypt, Senegal, Tunisia, Niger, Morocco (Africa) and Pakistan (South Asia), held the post of the Secretary General from 1970 until that date. Turkey was left out. Turkey canvassed that its candidate was well placed in the context of geographical rotation.⁴⁸
8. Turkey's strategic location also helped it to win votes. Turkey is a bridge between the Middle East and Europe. It is an active member of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation). Turkey maintained good diplomatic and strategic relations with Israel. Egypt and Jordan also had diplomatic relations with Israel. It helped Turkey to convince the pro-Israeli or pro-American Muslim states. On the other hand, many members of the OIC envisaged that Turkey, a neighbour of Iraq, Syria, and Iran, would be able to play a meaningful role for the OIC with respect to Middle East issues specially in reconciling the disputes between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The OIC member states thus took the geo-political advantage of Turkey into consideration.
9. Saudi Arabia, the most influential member in OIC, had given support to Bangladesh candidate. But unfortunately, the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia himself could not attend the Conference.

10. Commitment to a candidate by a country is often illusory in diplomacy. A country's stand changes with the changing situation in the regional and global world. Secret ballot often offers an escape to alter a country's position at the last minute. Diplomatic experience demonstrates that a commitment, even written, cannot be fully relied upon. In the polite but wily diplomatic world, it is not uncommon that a country may change its position at the time of its voting, despite its previous commitment.⁴⁹

It would be misleading to say that the election result demonstrated a sharp polarization between pro-Islamic and secular or pro-NATO blocs (Turkey is the only OIC country in NATO), or to say lack of diplomatic maneuvering and even to say machinations of pro-Israeli camp.⁵⁰ The changing global circumstances might have influenced some blocs to switch side at last minute.⁵¹

The defeat of Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury roused a sharp reaction from the main opposition party condemning the government for wrong selection of the candidate.⁵² Awami League considered the defeat as the shame for the nation. There was also counter statement from the government party.⁵³ Nevertheless, there were some positive achievements for Bangladesh and OIC through the election. Bangladesh contested the election against the two economic giants in the Islamic world. That is a great achievement of foreign policy of Bangladesh. Bangladesh attached more importance to establishment of election process than the shocking defeat of Bangladesh. This was the first-ever secret balloting in electing the Secretary General in the history of OIC. Impediments to choosing a Secretary General of OIC were removed. Bangladesh initiated the process of democratization and transparency in electing the Secretary General instead of selection.⁵⁴

Palestine Crisis, Al-Quds Committee and Bangladesh:

The idea of the OIC was born out of the Jerusalem issue at Rabat Summit in 1969, convened following the desecration of the holy Al-Aqsa mosque in August of that year by the Zionist forces. In the entire gamut of the OIC activities Jerusalem and Palestine problem still continues to remain at the centre of its attention.⁵⁵ Palestine crisis is a common agendum in almost all summits and other Conferences and meetings. Resolutions on the issue are endorsed on a regular basis. Probably, the OIC

has taken the most resolutions on the crisis. The people of Bangladesh had the grave concern over the Palestine issue during the last phase of the British rule and the Pakistan period. After the independence, Bangladesh took a firm stand on the core issue of Palestine and Jerusalem and extended its full moral support to the Arab people in their just struggle against foreign aggression and colonial domination. Bangladesh after its joining in the OIC regularly held the position in favour of the Palestinians to their inalienable rights in all the summits, conferences, meetings, different organs, agencies, institutions and standing committees within the OIC.

Bangladesh role in the Palestine crisis was fully demonstrated when it was included as the member of Al-Quds Committee or Jerusalem Committee.⁵⁶ Bangladesh as a member of the Al-Quds Committee played an active role both at home and abroad for the implementation of the decisions of the OIC on the Palestine issue. Bangladesh instructed her Ambassadors abroad to take initiative for the formation of a council of Ambassadors from Islamic countries with a view to concerting their action in the implementation of the decision of the First Session of Jerusalem Committee, at Foreign Ministers' level, held in Fez from 2-3 July, 1979.⁵⁷ Initiatives of Bangladesh envoys specially in New Delhi, Peking, Bonn, Brasilia were widely appreciated.⁵⁸ The Second Session of the Jerusalem Committee at Foreign Ministers' level, held in Marrakesh, Morocco, in March 11-12, 1980, accepted the Bangladesh proposal for small Ministerial Contact Groups' visits to selected non-Islamic countries. Another meeting of the Jerusalem Committee was held just before the 11th ICFM in Islamabad in May 1980, at the request of Bangladesh. The Third Session of the Committee decided among other things to set up a 3-member Committee (Tripartite Committee) of heads of states consisting of Ahmed Sekou Toure, President of Guinea and Ziaur Rahman, President of Bangladesh, in order to work in conjunction with the King Hassan II of Morocco, President of the Jerusalem committee to evolve a new strategy to liberate Al Quds Al Sharif and to restore the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians.⁵⁹ In fact, President Ziaur Rahman had all along taken a keen personal interest in the Palestine problem. In the First Tripartite Summit, held in Rabat on 7th November 1980, President Ziaur Rahman presented a concrete action-plan for the solution of this problem.⁶⁰ In the Fifth Session of the Jerusalem Committee (Second Tripartite Summit), held in Fez from 23-24 April, 1981, Bangladesh presented a 15-point action programme for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of Action

taken by the Committee. The Plan of action was well received by the OIC and proved to be fruitful in developing the future strategy on the matter.⁶¹ In fact, President Ziaur Rahman's untiring efforts for the establishment of a Palestinian state and the liberation of Jerusalem were highly appreciated by the OIC.⁶²

As a member of Al Quds Committee, Bangladesh availed to carry out strong advocacy in favour of the Palestinians in UNGA, UNSC, NAM, Commonwealth and other international organizations and agencies. Bangladesh's role on Palestine issue in the early 1980s attained in a high position that the 7th NAM Summit held in New Delhi, in March 1983, constituted a 8-member Peace Committee of West Asia in which Bangladesh was a member. Bangladesh expressed its emotion-loving solidarity with the Arab Palestinians of the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif by deciding to twin her capital Dhaka with Jerusalem.⁶³ At the 7th Session of the Committee, held in Morocco, from January 21-22, 1983, Bangladesh urged the Islamic countries to come forward with material and human assistance to recover Jerusalem from Israeli occupation declaring the issue of Al-Quds as the national concern of the entire Islamic *Ummah*. In fact, Bangladesh has been taking active part in the sessions of Al Quds Committee convened so far in formulating and implementing the resolutions and decisions of the al-Quds Committee.⁶⁴

Bangladesh delegation played positive and constructive role during the adoption of the resolutions on Palestine agenda in OIC summits and conferences. It has been speaking and supporting forcefully for the inalienable rights of Palestinians to a homeland of their own in the land of their successors. Bangladesh is unequivocally committed to the restoration of their sovereignty over the holy city of Jerusalem. Bangladesh from the beginning expressed the firm and sincere conviction that the lasting peace in the region could be secured only through complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories including the holy city of Jerusalem and restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians including their right to a state of their own. It pleaded for the need for creation of conditions in which all states including Palestine could live in peace and reciprocal respect for one another's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. In the Third Extraordinary ICFM, held in Fez, in September 1980, Bangladesh reiterated condemnation of the Israeli design to perpetrate her hold over the illegally occupied

Arab and Palestinian territory including the holy city of Jerusalem. Bangladesh described the Israeli move to make Jerusalem her capital under the cover of an illegal law as outrageous and preposterous and cautioned that the threat to al-Quds al-Sharif was a threat to the entire Islamic world. Bangladesh was determined to stand shoulder to shoulder with Palestinian brethren in regaining their lost lands including Jerusalem. President H. M. Ershad put forward before the Fourth Summit held at Casablanca in 1984, an 11-point proposal included a comprehensive programme of action on Palestine where he promised to do everything possible within its means to help in the struggle for a homeland in Palestine for the Palestinians with Jerusalem as its capital. Bangladesh supported all peace initiatives for an independent Palestine state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital and the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. It expressed its full support to the Middle East peace process in the 25th ICFM and reiterated its wholehearted support to the inalienable rights of Palestinians in having a homeland of their own with Jerusalem as its capital. In the Ninth Summit Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reiterated Bangladesh's firm commitment to working with other members of the OIC and the rest of the Muslim *Ummah* to unite behind the Palestine and Arab brothers. Bangladesh in the Expanded Extraordinary ICFM, held in April 2002, strongly condemned the escalation of violence in Palestine by Israel and considered Israeli action as ill-bred intention to foil the peace process and undermine the legitimate rights of Palestinians.

Addressing the emergency meeting of the executive committee of the OIC, in Putrajaya, in 2003, the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia stressed the need for UN-sponsored comprehensive Middle East Peace by ensuring formation of an independent and sovereign state of Palestine. She expressed her full support in the Middle East Peace Process to whatever course of action the OIC might decide. Bangladesh extended full support to the statement by the OIC Foreign Ministers on the situation of Palestine which was unanimously adopted by the meeting. In the 12th Summit, on 6-7 February 2013, Bangladesh reiterated its unequivocal support for a fully sovereign Palestine state within its pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital and urged all the OIC member states to extend their support for the state in a more useful and constructive manner. Regarding aggression in Gaza, Bangladesh stressed on mobilizing Islamic and international world public opinion to defend the cause of

Palestine against criminal aggression of Israel in the Gaza. The proposals and statements were mostly adopted by the OIC.

In actuality, Bangladesh elucidated its stand to the Muslim *Ummah* in the immediate post-independent era through its position on the Palestine issue which facilitated Bangladesh to be a Member of the OIC. During the last 40 years, the unique activities that Bangladesh executed in OIC specially in Al Quds Committee, has created a lasting image of Bangladesh in the *Ummah* which has the positive reflections in OIC-Bangladesh ties and at the same time the foreign relations of Bangladesh with the OIC-member states.

Bangladesh's stand on Indian Sub-Continent issues in OIC:

The OIC had the concern over some issues of the Indian subcontinent. Bangladesh also rightly placed the burning issues of the subcontinent to the OIC including the Farakka and Kashmir issues. Bangladesh immediately after independence emphasized on the peace of the subcontinent and made consistent effort to promote normalization of relations in the subcontinent. Though India was an important ally of Bangladesh during the Liberation War, it created a water crisis for Bangladesh by building Farakkah Barrage in 1975 on the Ganges. Bangladesh first could not settle the dispute with India and had to raise the matter in the UN and OIC in 1976. Bangladesh circulated among delegates of the Seventh ICFM, a paper stating adverse effects of Farakka on the economy of Bangladesh and the efforts taken by Bangladesh to solve the issue with India through negotiations. President Ziaur Rahman said in the Seventh ICFM that a fair and equitable allocation of the waters on a month wise basis covering the whole year was the only acceptable solution of the problem. He referred to the conference the adverse effects on the economy of Bangladesh by withdrawal of the Ganges waters building the Farakka Barrage. He also hoped that the Conference would continue to exercise its considerable influence in persuading the parties concerned to expeditiously and satisfactorily resolve the problem of equitable sharing of the Ganges waters for the greater interest of peace and stability in the region. He made it absolutely clear to the Conference that Bangladesh had always been ready and willing to discuss the problem in a spirit of cooperation for arriving at mutually satisfactory solution. The Islamic countries could understand the serious problem faced by Bangladesh resulting from withdrawal of waters of the international river

Ganges by India. The Conference called for immediate solution of the problem. The Conference expressed deep concern at the impediment to this process posed by the problem of sharing equitably the waters of the international river Gange resulting in the aggravation of economic hardships and the retardation of the process of national reconstruction in Bangladesh. It expressed the hope that this problem would be resolved expeditiously and satisfactorily through discussion among the countries concerned in the larger interest of peace and stability in the region.⁶⁵

Regarding territorial waters, Bangladesh made a depth-method proposal in the Eighth ICFM for delineation of baseline for the territorial waters. The Political Committee of the Conference took note of Bangladesh's stand on delineation of baseline for measuring territorial waters and the proposal was circulated as Conference document. Another important issue of the subcontinent is the Kashmir question in which Bangladesh has the grave concern and wants a peaceful solution of the crisis. In the Seventh Extraordinary ICFM, held in Islamabad, in 1994, Bangladesh reiterated its position on Jammu and Kashmir and renewed the call for peaceful resolution of the issue through dialogue between the two parties.

Afghanistan Crisis and the role of Bangladesh and OIC:

Bangladesh was very concerned with the Afghanistan crisis specially during the Soviet intervention, Mujahed Government and post Taliban American aggression. At the suggestion and request of Bangladesh the First Extraordinary Session of the Foreign Ministers Conference of Islamic States was convened at Islamabad, 1980. During the Soviet rule in Afghanistan (1979-89) Bangladesh adopted clear and unequivocal stand on the issue in the conferences and forums of the OIC. Bangladesh stand of Soviet aggression in Afghanistan can be referred as follows:-

1. Bangladesh expressed deep concern over the tragic happenings in Afghanistan. Bangladesh described the presence of foreign troops and their direct involvement in Afghanistan as a serious threat to peace and stability in the region and called for concerted and urgent action by Islamic countries for an immediate stoppage of further spilling of blood in that country.
2. Bangladesh called upon the Islamic countries to act in concert for complete withdrawal of all foreign troops and restoration of peaceful conditions to

enable Afghan brothers freely to decide their own destiny. It referred that it was the sacred duty of every Muslim to help create a situation to compel the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan with a time frame enabling the Afghan people to determine their own form of government without outside intervention and interference.

3. Bangladesh had always resolutely opposed external interferences in the affairs of another country in any form and on any pretext. Bangladesh considered the armed intervention in Afghanistan and continued presence of foreign troops as a violation of principles of the UN Charter well as NAM and also violation of independent sovereign status of a Muslim country.
4. Bangladesh upheld the sovereign and inalienable right of the people of Afghanistan to determine freely their own form of government and choose their own political, economic and social system without any external interference or military intervention.

In actuality, Bangladesh attached special importance to the resolution of the crisis and easing of tension in the region. Bangladesh pleaded for a political solution in Afghanistan with the withdrawal of foreign troops. The views of Bangladesh with other Islamic countries on the issue were effectively and considerably reflected in the subsequent OIC resolutions. The OIC also condemned the Soviet Military aggression in Afghanistan; demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Afghan territories; suspended the membership of Afghanistan in the OIC; invited the member states to withhold recognition to the illegal regime in Afghanistan and sever diplomatic relations; called upon member states to envisage through appropriate bodies not to participate in Olympic Games being held in Moscow in July 1980 unless the Soviet Union in compliance with the call of the UNGA and the OIC withdrew all its troops forthwith from Afghanistan; and so on.

Bangladesh saw the withdrawal of Soviet troops in early 1989 from Afghanistan as important positive development in solving long nine years relentless war against the occupied army that the valiant Afghans had been waging and prayed for the complete departure of Soviet soldiers.⁶⁶ Regarding the fratricidal war between Afghan Mujahed soldiers, Bangladesh urged the OIC to make a fresh call to the Afghan

leadership for immediate and unconditional ceasefire and resolution of their conflicts based on the principle of respect for the internationally recognized border and territorial integrity of each state. The OIC, hence, expressed its deep concern over the fratricidal conflict in Afghanistan and appealed to the Afghan leadership to spare no effort to bring the hostilities to an immediate end and emphasized the urgent need for a political consensus among the Afghan parties.⁶⁷ Bangladesh expressed its full support to any measure to bring the Afghans together on the road to peace.⁶⁸ On US-Afghan War, the OIC expressed its concern over the possible consequences of the fight against terrorism including the death of innocent civilians in Afghanistan, and underlined the necessity of ensuring the territorial integrity of Afghanistan and its Islamic identity. It rejected the targeting of any Islamic or Arab state under the pretext of fighting terrorism.⁶⁹ Bangladesh pursued the OIC resolution.⁷⁰ Bangladesh, thus, demonstrated the sense of Islamic solidarity by its role in OIC on Afghanistan issue.

Iran-Iraq War and role of Bangladesh in OIC:

Bangladesh played a very important role in the Iran-Iraq War. OIC started initiatives immediately after the War had started in September 1980.⁷¹ After the declaration of war, Islamic Foreign Ministers Meeting in an extraordinary session in New York on September 26, 1980, had set up a Peace Committee to negotiate a settlement between the two countries to bring the conflict to an end.⁷² The Peace Committee sent good will mission in Baghdad and Tehran twice in September and October respectively, but without tangible result. The Committee found itself helpless to do nothing due to the extreme and uncompromising positions taken by the two countries. In the Third Islamic Summit Conference held at Taif in Saudi Arabia from January 25 to 28, 1981, a Good-Offices Committee, an enlarged form of the previous three-member Peace Committee, was set up under the Chairmanship of President Sekou Toure of Guinea, to consult the two parties with a view to reaching a just and honourable settlement of the conflict. The Good-Offices Committee consisted of nine members namely- Bangladesh, Gambia, Pakistan, Guinea, Turkey, Senegal, Malaysia, the PLO Chief and OIC Secretary General.⁷³ The Committee visited Tehran and Baghdad from 26 February to 14 March 1981 and discussed with President Bani Sadr and President Saddam Hussain. The Committee submitted proposals for ceasefire from the mid-night of 12 March 1981 and the setting up of a Committee to discuss regulations for the Shatt-el -Arab Waterway. During the second visit to Iran and Iraq from March 29

to 2 April, the Committee revised peace plan which included a ceasefire to be followed by Iraqi withdrawal from occupied Iranian territory, negotiations on the navigational rights in the waterways, and the formation of an Islamic Court to find out who started the conflict. Later the Committee also proposed the formation of Commissions to find out the cause of the War and for the demarcation of boundaries. Initial Iranian favourable response was followed by President Bani Sadar's desire for a far more clear cut solution.

Bangladesh played an active and constructive role to end the conflict. Bangladesh used her good offices in an endeavour to moderate the stance of the two warring countries maintaining close contact with both the belligerent parties. As a member of the UN Security Council, Bangladesh took the earliest opportunity to draw the attention of the Security Council to the solid framework provide by the UN Charter for action in ending the conflict.⁷⁴

President Ziaur Rahman played unique role to end the conflict. As a member of the Peace Committee he placed a scheme before the Committee outlining a concrete plan of action to end this fratricidal War. The scheme was very well received by the Committee and the Committee decided on sending President Ziaur Rahman on a one-man mission to Baghdad and Tehran to explore the possibilities of the resolution of the conflict on the lines adumbrated in this tentative action plan. He accompanied by the OIC Secretary General Habib Shatty met President Saddam Hussain and President Bani Sadr in Baghdad and Tehran from 12-14 May 1981. The outcome of the mission was most encouraging. In their cautious but positive response they agreed to study the proposals of the Peace Committee.

President Ziaur Rahman as the Vice Chairman of the mission visited Baghdad on 12 May 1981 and was warmly received by President Saddam Hussain and other top leaders of the Iraq Government. The talks between the two Presidents were held in a very cordial atmosphere and lasted about four hours. While the President of Iraq continued to defend the position taken by Iraq at the commencement of the conflict, his attitude appeared to be softer and more conciliatory than observed during the visit of the Islamic Peace Committee (IPC) in February in 1981. He indicated that the IPC should continue its efforts for the resolution of the conflict and wished it all success.

He suggested that the Peace Committee should now start negotiating on subjective issues and agreed to the formation of the following three bodies and indicated the preference in the composition of these three bodies:

1. An Enquiry Committee to investigate the causes of the conflict, composed of Malaysia, PLO, Turkey, Guinea, Bangladesh, Senegal, Gambia, Niger and Mali;
2. A Ceasefire, Withdrawal and Demarcation Committee, composed of non-Arab Muslim countries (whether they were members of the IPC or not); and
3. An Observer Group and Peace-keeping Force consisting of Islamic forces for peace keeping composed of Gambia, Senegal, Bangladesh, Guinea, Malaysia and Turkey.

The one-man mission then visited Tehran on 13 May 1981. President Ziaur Rahman was also accorded a cordial welcome by the President Bani Sadr and leading members of the Iraq Government. The talks between the two Presidents held in a friendly atmosphere lasted for five hours. Iran's attitude also appeared to be more flexible and more conciliatory than observed during the visit of the IPC in February 1981. President Bani Sadr stressed that Iran wanted an honourable end to the conflict and he appeared to be very sincere in this regard during the talks. He desired the OIC Peace Committee to continue and wished it success in its efforts. He also agreed to the formation of three committees subject with some modifications:

1. The Enquiry Committee should be called a tribunal. It should not only investigate the causes of the conflict but also fix the responsibility of starting the conflict. The lists of countries and the names of persons to be chosen from those countries for the members of the Committee were agreed to be submitted within a week by Iran.
2. Ceasefire, Withdrawal and Demarcation Committee should be renamed as 'Ceasefire and Withdrawal Committee'. Guinea, Bangladesh, the PLO, Pakistan and Turkey were preferred in the composition of this Committee by the President Bani Sadr. He wished that this proposed Committee would start working immediately.

3. The third one should be known as only 'Observer Group' instead of 'Observer Group and Peace-keeping Force' consisting of military observers from Guinea, PLO, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Turkey. He did not think that a peace-keeping force would be needed.

The One-Member Peace Mission on behalf of the OIC Peace Committee attained preliminary success as both Presidents of Iran and Iraq agreed with the three committees with some modifications. This was the most significant step forward towards ending Iraq-Iran War.⁷⁵ Both the countries wanted the IPC to intensify its effort and wished its success in the immediate solution of the conflict. A report on the visit was forwarded by President Ziaur Rahman to President Sekou Toure, the Chairman of the Peace Committee. President Ziaur Rahman's efforts could bring an immediate solution of the conflict. It seemed the conflict to be solved within months. But unfortunately, the assassination of President Ziaur Rahman on 30 May 1981 by some misguided army officers set a debacle in reaching an ultimate solution of the conflict.

In the 12th ICFM President Sekou Toure, the Chairman of the Peace Committee proposed a meeting of the IPC to be held in Dacca (Dhaka) as tribute of the memory of the late President Ziaur Rahman. The decision highlighted the active role of President Ziaur Rahman in the OIC in general and in the Gulf War in particular and it recognized him as one of the influential leaders in the Muslim world. The proposed special meeting of IPC in Dhaka did not materialize due to the removal of President Bani Sadr and his exile in Paris. Nevertheless, the Secretary General of the OIC continued his peace efforts through his special representative Olaf Palme, former Swedish Premier, but to no avail and the third IPC meeting from 5-9 March 1982 fail to shed any light to end the conflict. In the fourth IPC meeting held on 5 June in Jeddah, Bangladesh was represented by Rear Admiral M. A. Khan, DCMLA and he proposed a two-phased objective; the immediate cessation of hostilities and the ultimate objective of reconciliation and mediation through an agreed framework to resolve outstanding issues between the two brotherly countries of Iran and Iraq.⁷⁶ Bangladesh Ambassador participated the fifth meeting of the IPC on October 22, 1982 in Jeddah and then visited Baghdad and Tehran on 23 October, 1983 as a member of IPC delegation, and presented a package Peace Plan.⁷⁷ Bangladesh

President General Hussain Muhammad Ershad in the 14th ICFM described the conflict as a “gaping wound” in the body-politic of Islam. He stressed the need for collective efforts to end the fratricidal conflict between Iran and Iraq.

Bosnia- Herzegovina issue and role of Bangladesh in OIC:

Bangladesh reiterated its firm and unequivocal position on the Bosnia issue in the OIC. Bangladesh had the role in the Fifth and Sixth Extraordinary ICFM held in Istanbul and Jeddah in June and December 1992 respectively on the issue. Bangladesh called for immediate cessation of Serbian armed aggression in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It expressed concern over the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina and wanted an early end to the ethnic violence as a believer in peace. It abided by the decisions of the Fifth Extraordinary ICFM in dealing with the situation. In the Sixth Extraordinary ICFM Bangladesh elucidated its stand on the issue that:

1. Bangladesh strongly condemned the Serbian aggressors for the genocide and the abhorrent policy of so-called ethnic cleansing against the people of Bosnia and their rightful struggle for preservation of the independence and territorial integrity. It called upon the UN to set up a tribunal to try individuals for committing inhumane atrocities in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It urged the OIC to call upon the EC countries to mount pressure for immediate withdrawal of the Yugoslav army from Bosnia-Herzegovina and disarm the Serbian irregulars.
2. Bangladesh had full support to the efforts by international forums including the OIC, the UN, the NAM and the EC for a political solution of the problem. It supported the resolutions adopted by the London Conference of the EC and by the meeting of Balkan-states in Istanbul to bring about a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Bosnia.
3. Bangladesh called upon the UN Security Council to arrange immediate cessation of the hostilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and put an end to the killing of innocent civilians through whatever measures necessary.
4. Bangladesh also called upon all the countries of the Balkan region to exercise an open door policy in admitting Bosnian refugees into their respective countries as a humanitarian gesture. In this context, Bangladesh expressed its readiness to receive refugees from Bosnia in spite of hosting more than 2.5 lac Rohingyas.

5. Bangladesh called for ensuring adequate emergency relief supplies to the Bosnian people and safe passage to the UN relief envoys. It can be noted that despite resources constraints, Bangladesh sent relief materials worth Taka 2 million to Bosnia-Herzegovina through the UNHCR.

Bangladesh was one of the first countries to recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina and co-sponsored by UNGA Resolution for the admission of that country to the UN. Bangladesh in the Seventh Extraordinary ICFM held in Islamabad, on 7-9 September, 1994, called for its settlement on the basis of independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It welcomed the framework agreement signed in Washington between the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Croats aimed at establishing peace in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bangladesh also hoped that the UNSC would take effective actions encompassing political, economic and other measures so that the Bosnian Serbs accept the peace agreement without any further delay. Bangladesh considered the case not a civil war but a systematic dismemberment of a sovereign country.⁷⁸

Bangladesh expressed solidarity with the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the context of their tragedy and sufferings and extended moral support to them. Bangladesh consistently asked for a negotiable settlement of the issue on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.⁷⁹ In practicality, Bangladesh troops carried out their mandated role in Bihac region in United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) as part of the UN Peace Keeping Force. The Seventh Summit adopted a special declaration where Bangladesh's views were reflected considerably.⁸⁰ The OIC in fact acted as a pressure group in achieving the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina (which was proclaimed in 1992, followed by the Bosnian War and lasting until late 1995) in which Bangladesh had the important role. Bangladesh committed her full support to war-ravaged Bosnian-Herzegovina in the process of law, justice and peace.⁸¹

Bangladesh's role in OIC combating Islamophobia:

Bangladesh in the OIC rightly focused on the contemporary burning issues in the Muslim world and called for addressing the challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* unitedly, urgently and effectively. The Islamophobia became one of the burning

phenomena in the 21st century and the Muslim *Ummah* appeared to fall victims to the alleged unjust propaganda of the West. Bangladesh underlined the needs for revamping, regenerating and reforming the OIC to deal with the issues of the 21st century including the Islamophobia. Bangladesh in the Eleventh Summit, Dakar, 2008, addressed the issue as a concept created by the West which was devoid of reason and unjust. Bangladesh also urged the Islamic countries to counter the apprehensions. It called for dissipating Islamophobia by giving explanations to the world of the positive values of Islam.⁸² The OIC prepared a report on Islamophobia and Bangladesh appreciated it. Bangladesh strongly believes that terrorism is not a monopoly of Islam and there is no place of terrorism and anarchy in Islam.⁸³ Bangladesh considered Islamophobia as one of the greatest threats to future peace and stability in the world. Bangladesh, therefore, called for united efforts in the political and legal domain to withstand this new version of xenophobia and discrimination.⁸⁴ In fact Bangladesh has taken a bold stand for fighting phobia against Islam which is essentially a utopia created by the West.

Bangladesh's advocacy in OIC for Muslim minorities and plights:

Bangladesh always expresses its concern about the Muslim minorities in different parts of the world. The plight of Muslims everywhere is also a matter of concern for the *Ummah* and the OIC. Bangladesh has been expressing heart-felt association with measures taken by OIC and other organizations to help Muslims in different parts of the world facing moral, mental and humanitarian difficulties.

Bangladesh expressed its support to the legitimate rights of the Turkish Cypriot Muslims since the 7th ICFM, in 1976. Bangladesh and the OIC from the very outset supported the Turkish Cypriot proposal for a federal solution in Cyprus. In the 8th ICFM, 1977, Bangladesh supported the OIC efforts for reaching a bi-communal settlement leading to an independent sovereign and federal republic of Cyprus. President Ershad in the 14th ICFM, called for the restoration of the rights of the Turkish Cypriot community in the framework of a bi-zonal federal state in accordance with the Makarios-Denktaş Agreement. In the 4th Summit, 1984, Bangladesh suggested the OIC for adopting measures to strongly support the efforts of the Turkish Cypriots for a constructive and meaningful dialogue with the representatives of the Greek Cypriot community with a view to establishing a bi-zonal, bi-communal

federation in Cyprus where the legitimate hopes and aspirations of the Turkish Cypriot community would be fully respected and protected. Bangladesh in the Fifth Summit, 1987, reaffirmed total commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus and prayed for the success of the UN Secretary General's effort for the establishment of a bi-communal and bi-zonal federated state of Cyprus.

Bangladesh also expressed concern about the crisis faced by Muslims in Southern Philippines and urged OIC to continue its efforts for bringing a just and peaceful settlement of their problems. It also urged the OIC to resolve the turmoil situation in Chad and the problems of the Western Sahara.

Bangladesh reiterated its support to each and every move in all international forums including OIC in the struggle against apartheid. In the 14th ICFM, 1983, President Ershad urged for an active role of the Islamic world for opposing interventions for the eradication of apartheid, for achieving Namibian independence. In 4th Summit, 1984, he assured the Namibian people that the people of Bangladesh share the indignation of the international community for the delay in the emancipation of the Security Council resolution and the violation of the UNGA decree by the racist regime of South Africa. In the 5th Summit, 1987, he also strongly criticized the abhorrent policies and heinous practice of apartheid by the racist regime in South Africa and the reign of terror on the majority black population of that country. He called for world pressure on Pretoria's racist regime to see reason and establish a democratic multi-racial society based on the principle of one-man one-vote of self determination, national independence and basic human dignity by a foreign occupation force. Bangladesh and OIC accused Bulgaria of escalating oppression against Turkish Muslim minority through its policy of forced assimilation.

The Rohingya issue remains an outstanding concern for Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been extremely sensitive and supportive to the humanitarian plight of Myanmar Muslim Rohingyas in Rakhine State. It has been hosting hundred of thousand of Rohingya refugees on its soil in cooperation with UNHCR. In recent times, the Rohingya problem has emerged as a burning issue and the OIC has the adequate concern over the issue and expects rapid solution of the issue. The OIC took some

serious steps on the matter in its Fourth Extraordinary Summit Conference held in Makkah from 14 to 15 August 2012. President Zillur Raman in the Summit urged the OIC member states to persuade the Myanmar government with political and economic support to ensure dignified living of Rohingyas. The Summit among other things established a Contact Group on Rohingya Muslim minority and mandated the OIC Secretary General to appoint a special envoy for this important issue.⁸⁵ Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Djibouti, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey and Afghanistan are the members of the Contact Group.

The first meeting of the Contact Group was held at the UN Headquarters in New York on 26 September 2012 on the sideline of the 67th session of the UNGA. In the meeting Foreign Minister Dipu Moni urged the OIC member to contribute to address the root cause of the Rohingya problem including reconciliation between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities in North Rakhine State of Myanmar. The citizenship rights of the Rohingyas and other continued trafficking and emigration were also addressed. Under the directives of the 4th Extraordinary Summit the OIC the Secretary General dispatched a high level delegation to Myanmar in early September 2012 which was commended by Bangladesh. Bangladesh also expressed satisfaction at the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between the Myanmar Government and the OIC Secretariat to implement humanitarian programme for the benefit of all communities living in the Rakhine State.

The OIC Contact Group held an urgent meeting on 14 April 2013 on the level of foreign ministers to discuss the plight of the Rohingya Muslim minority. The session was convened by OIC Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu following the escalation of extremist Buddhists' acts of violence targeting the Muslim minority in Myanmar. Bangladesh ruled out the official attempt in Myanmar to term the Rohingyas as Bengali or Bangladeshi immigrants that did not have any historical or legal basis. Bangladesh in the meeting Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni has sought OIC's firm steps to address some immediate and short-term priorities for improving the Rohingya situation in the Rakhine State of Myanmar. In her speech, the foreign minister placed five to-do steps for OIC for resolving the issues which are outlined below:-

Firstly, OIC's offer of humanitarian assistance should be conducted not only for Rohingyas but for all distressed and displaced people in the Rakhine State, to convince the Myanmar authorities, and particularly the Rohingya and Rakhine communities.

Secondly, OIC should urge the Myanmar authorities to allow adequate access of UNHCR to set up flood-resilient shelters in the Rohingya camps as the shelter and health conditions in the Rohingya makeshift camps were likely to get worsened with the onset of monsoon.

Thirdly, the international community should encourage the Government of Myanmar to create an environment conducive to dialogue between the Muslims and Buddhists in the Rakhine State and other sectarian flashpoints. The OIC could possibly offer to play the role of a facilitator for holding inter-communal and inter-faith dialogues to reinforce mutual respect and understanding.

Fourthly, the OIC should continue to urge the Government of Myanmar to create better economic opportunities for the Muslim minorities in Myanmar.

Fifthly, the concerned regional countries needed to enhance further cooperation to prevent the rising trend of irregular movements at sea by Rohingyas from the coasts of Myanmar and Bangladesh, mostly towards Malaysia and Thailand, and provide necessary support to the victims.

The representatives of the of the OIC Contact Group held a three-hour-long meeting with Myanmar Vice President Sai Mauk Kham in Naypyidaw on November 14, 2013 and raised the issue of the humanitarian situation in Myanmar and the expectations of the OIC and the Muslim world from the Myanmar government about the attacks against Muslims in the South Asian country. The Contact Group proposed to prepare an action plan concerning the humanitarian situation in Myanmar.⁸⁶

The visit of OIC Secretary General Iyad Ameen Madani in Bangladesh from 9-12 March 2014 was an important step towards strengthening OIC-Bangladesh ties in various fields and particularly in the process of OIC's measures in resolving the

Rohingya problem. During his visit, he met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque and other concerned, stressed to take initiative for the repatriation of Myanmar Refugees from Bangladesh. He rightly considered the Rohingyas as Myanmar citizens, who took shelter in Bangladesh, and expected quick solution of the problem by returning them to their homeland. His visit along with the visit of Sheikh Hasina to Myanmar in early March 2014, prior to his visit, thus proved to be fruitful as his statement furnished a clear indication to resolve the problem in the future.

In fact, the views and policies that Bangladesh adopts regarding the Rohingyas, have been properly bypassed to the OIC which is acting as a pressure group in the *Ummah*. Therefore, the concerted efforts of both Bangladesh and OIC will be required to a principled solution of the issue.

Analyzed as such the above discussion reveals that the lasting ties between OIC and Bangladesh mostly rests on the profound involvement of Bangladesh in multifaceted activities and issues of the OIC. It is a unique honour for Bangladesh to host the Islamic University of Technology which performs major educational activities of the OIC in technical and technological fields. It has played an important role in food security and agricultural development of the Islamic states not only by its deliberations but also its practical actions. The establishment of an Islamic Common Market is an original idea of Bangladesh of which it has insisted frequently and the OIC has achieved major progress in implementing some of its pre-requisites towards an ICM specially spreading trade among the Islamic states. Bangladesh's advocacy for LDCs in OIC as in other international organizations has indeed become a step forward towards establishing a self-reliance Islamic community in the Islamic *Ummah*. Bangladesh was able to adequately address the Indian Subcontinent issues to the OIC and played an important and unique role whenever some crises cropped up in the Islamic world particularly during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Iran-Iraq War and Serbian genocidal activities on the Bosnians.

However, analysts are critical about Bangladesh's stand taken on the issue of independence movement of Kosovo spanning the tenure from 07 September 1990 when Kosovo first proclaimed independence to 17 February 2008 when Kosovo

declared independent for the second time. Researchers point out that the passive role of Bangladesh in Kosovo issue was due to direct influence of Russia which backed Serbia in its naked aggression on Kosovo. Besides, Bangladesh did everything possible for the safeguarding of the rights and interests of the Muslim minorities in the world under the umbrella of the OIC. Bangladesh as a member of OIC has made concerted efforts with other member states to counter the challenges facing Muslim *Ummah* in the Twenty-First Century giving special importance combating Islamophobia of the West. By performing these activities within the OIC Bangladesh has been able to prove its potentiality as an important and integral part of the *Ummah* that has indeed facilitated it to foster further responsive bonds with the OIC as well its member states.

Notes and References

1. Resolution No. 5/9-E
2. Resolution No. 11/10-E
3. Resolution No. 27/22-E
4. Resolution No. 30/27-E, Paragraph 20
5. Resolution No. 13/9-C
6. Resolution No. 4/35-E, Section 17
7. It determines general policy and provides general guidance; examines the activities of the university and submits recommendations to the ICFM; internal rules and regulations which govern the internal activities are shaped through the decisions of this assembly; elects the members of the governing body and examines the whole budget for a year. The Finance Control Organ of the university audits the financial possessions of the university and submits it to this assembly. Then it is submitted to the ICFM from here.
8. Members of the Board are selected as per geographical distribution and importance of the countries and people. The secretary general of OIC or his representative and the Vice Chancellor of the University become members of this board by their status. They are included as ex-officio members. This board focuses on the precision activities and programs of IUT and sends recommendations to the Joint General Assembly. This is the body that consults about the promoting measures of IUT with General Secretariat and it approves the final curricula of training and research programs. One of its prime jobs is to grant degrees, diplomas and certificates according to academic regulations.
9. The Committee is empowered to deal, between meetings of the board, with any matter that may be referred to it by the Vice Chancellor or that may be delegated by the Board. All interim actions of this Committee are reported to the Governing Board. It consists of the Secretary of Ministry of Labour and Employment of the Bangladesh as the Chairman, heads of the diplomatic missions of the member states of OIC in Bangladesh (to be nominated by the Governing Board) and the Vice Chancellor of IUT as general member.
10. See *OIC-10Y-PoA/RM/2006/Final*, Section 2: Development of Socio-Economic and Scientific Issues, V. Higher Education, Science and Technology
11. The objectives of the ISSF are to strengthen Islamic solidarity among youth in member states and promote Islamic identity in the fields of sports; to inculcate the principles of non-discrimination as to religion, race or color, in conformity with the precepts of Islam; to reinforce the bonds of unity, amity and fraternity among youth in member states; to introduce OIC goals to the youth in the member states; to encourage member NOCs (National Olympic Committees) to unify stances in Olympic, international, continental and regional conferences and meetings and to cooperate with all international and

continental sports institutions and organizations; to boost cooperation among member states on matters of common interest in all fields of sports activities; to preserve sports principles and to promote the Olympic sports movements in the Muslim world; to encourage the spirit of sportsmanship, principles of fair play and non-violent behavior in sports events; to respect the issues of environment in sports facilities; to join the campaign against doping in sports; to support the principles of peace and the related efforts in the field of sports all over the world; to pay due attention to sport education, health and recreation; to encourage sports tourism; to promote the sports culture; to develop woman sports in line with the teachings of Islam.

12. For example, Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr. Mochtar Kusumaatmadi (in the 11th ICFM) expressed his country's support to the proposal describing it as 'important'.
13. See Resolution No. 23/12-P
14. Resolution No. 1/4-MFSAD
15. Resolution No. 12/12-E
16. The economic and political integration of EU, ASEAN and NAFTA have evolved in stages, passing through phases of free trade areas, customs union and finally a common market. The EU in the initial stage developed through the sectoral common market, the European Coal and Steel Community.
17. Bangladesh took the initiative and formally moved a resolution to establish a South-East Asian Cooperation Organization (SEACO) at a seminar organized by the Indonesian Government and the IDB, held in Bandung on 11-18 December, 1992, as a first step towards globalization of their trade and industry. The resolution was unanimously adopted by the OIC member states. Subsequently, the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry in a meeting in Dhaka with the Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammed on the 13th of February 1993 advocated the formation of 'SEACO' and sought the support of the Malaysian Government for the proposal. A resolution advocating the formation of SEACO to enhance Regional and Sub-regional cooperation amongst the OIC member states in the South and South-East Asia region, and thereby complete the regional framework for the proposed Islamic Free Trade Area (IFTA) and the Islamic Common Market as envisaged by the Dakar Declaration of the sixth Islamic summit, has been recommended by the 11th General Assembly of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity held on 6-7 December 1993 in Kuala Lumpur.
18. The studies conducted by IDB showed that some Muslim countries go to western markets for selling their products and some Muslim states buy the same from the west.
19. See Resolution No. 1/10-E, Section 10
20. See Resolution No. 5/3-E(IS)

21. See also Chapter IV
22. Substantial New Programme of Action (SNPA) was a programme of UN. The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris from 1 to 14 September 1981, unanimously adopted the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries. The UNCTAD resolution was adopted at the ninth session of the UNCTAD in Manila in 1978, on the debt of developing countries. For the full text of the resolution, See *The Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Developments, Fifth session, Vol. III, New York, UN, 1978*
23. See Resolution No. 3/16-E
24. See Resolution No. 3/19-E
25. See *The Final Communique of the Sixth Summit Conference*, section 45
26. For example, Bangladesh played a very significant role at the OIC Foreign Ministers meeting prior to the Seventh Summit (1994) in the formulation and adoption of the resolution on poverty alleviation of LDCs.
27. The 11-points included a special action programme for the Islamic LDCs in their development efforts to provide immediate relief on an emergency basis to overcome their balance of payment crisis; investment in the food and agricultural sector with the aim of self-sufficiency in food and establishment of a stable and viable food security system for the Islamic world, as vast majority of the Islamic countries are heavily dependent on other countries for their food supplies; a special effort to import goods from fellow Islamic countries on a preferential basis; immediate action for an Islamic Common Market; development of a separate banking system of their own in order to facilitate their trade and commerce; employment of nationals from Islamic countries in all fields where employment of expatriates is necessary; special efforts to increase investment in the Islamic world by Islamic countries both in public and private sectors promoting joint ventures and financial institutions; and expanding considerably the activities of the IDB not only in terms of project financing but also in the field of research and consultancy services.
28. The 7-points included a special action programme for the Islamic LDCs hard hit by the recession; investing in food and agriculture sector in member countries on priority; special action plan for natural disaster hit people in OIC countries; rolling back of protectionism; removal of trade barriers and strengthening the world trading system through the UN GATT and other international for a convening of an international conference on monetary and financial issue to consider appropriate reforms aimed at providing greater stability and momentum for development.

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29. Foreign Minister M. Shamsul Huq in this respect said (in the 8th ICFM, 1977) that, those countries which were rich in human resources should be helped in development of skill so that other countries drew upon the manpower resources of the first group of countries as required. He pointed out that though the Islamic countries collectively commanded vast capital and human resources, the distribution of such resources among different countries was uneven.
 30. Resolution No. 1/8-E, Chapter I, article I
 31. For example, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia urged the leaders of the OIC countries to buy more commodities and import more manpower from Bangladesh.
 32. For example, the OIC decided to invest 15.20 million dollar for the development of Bangladesh's fisheries sector during the session of Capacity Building Programme of OIC held in Malaysia on 29 March 2005.
 33. For example, see Resolution No. 6/21-E
 34. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made the plea while addressing the opening session of the Sixth World Islamic Economic Forum (WIFE) held in Kuala Lumpur on 19 May 2010. She proposed the establishment of an OIC task force to find ways of support to member states facing the challenges of climate change. See also Resolution No. 4/37- S7T
 35. Resolution No. 12/30-S&T
 36. See *Dakar Declaration of the Sixth Islamic Summit Conference*, Section III, Paragraph, IX
 37. See *The Final communiqué of the Eighth Summit Conference*, Paragraph 136
 38. See *Tehran Declaration of the Eighth Summit Conference*, Paragraph 20
 39. See Resolution No. 15/26-C
 40. Resolution No. 6/27-ORG, 2/33-ORG, Paragraph 18, and 3/37-ORG
 41. *Coordination Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers, New York, 1983: Brief for Bangladesh Delegation*, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, 1983, p. 8
 42. During the Seventh NAM Summit in New Delhi, 1983, President H. M. Ershad met separately with various heads of states and government. During their discussion, 22 OIC member countries indicated their support for the Bangladeshi candidature. Reactions from high level contacts during the Fourteenth ICFM, in Dhaka, 1983, were also favourable to the candidature. See *The Fourth Islamic Summit Conference, Casablanca, Morocco, 16-18 January, 1984*, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, 1983, p. 10
 43. *Impact International*, 2001, Posted in:
<http://www.salaam.co.uk/knowledge/impact/Vol31No8p48.pdf>

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44. Bangladesh seemed to be more confident in winning the election when Foreign Secretary Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury told reporters on 20 November, 2003, immediately after concluding the 10th Summit, “We have every reason to feel confident to get the job. More than 25 countries have already given their written or categorical verbal assurance of backing Bangladesh in run for the next Secretary General.” Ambassador Osmani told BSS on 17 June 2004, “Our expectation to win the OIC Secretary General post was reasonable and justified as more than 30 countries assured us of their support either in writing or verbally.”
 45. Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan while talking to newsmen on 18 June, 2004, at Zia International Airport after returning home from 31st ICFM, said, “Had there been vote on the merit of candidate’s deliberations, we would have secured 98 percent votes.”
 46. ‘Former diplomats blame Negative campaign against Dhaka’s OIC candidate’, *Bangladesh Observer*, June 17, 2004, Dhaka
 47. Ambassador Osmani pointed out in this respect (while talking to BSS on 17 June 2004), “In the past also Bangladesh won UNSC seat as almost all the countries who promised us their support had cast their votes in favour of Dhaka during President Zia’s time in the late 1970s, but regretted that this time some countries deviated from their promised assurance at the last moment.”
 48. Harun ur Rashid, ‘Why did Bangladesh lose the OIC race?’, *The Daily Star*, Editorial, June 23, 2004
 49. *Ibid.*
 50. Salah uddin Qader Chowdhury said in a reaction while talking to UNB over phone from Istanbul on 16 June, 2004, “It is a major victory of pro-Israeli lobby.” He added, “The OIC and Israeli flags will now fly in Ankara.” Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan disowned S. Q. Chowdhury’s view that his defeat was tantamount to a major victory of certain pro-Israeli bloc.
 51. Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan in this respect said (while addressing a crowded media conference at Foreign Ministry), “A small number of key players within the OIC used to do some backstage negotiations to decide the destiny of secretary general hopefuls.”
 52. The main opposition Awami League triggered a war of words with the government party in parliament on 16 June, 2004. Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina said, “We had prospect for securing the post for this term but all prospects were marred with the nomination of a war criminal, terrorist and arm-smuggler.” On a point of order Awami League member Suranjit Sengupta said, “As a nation we are shocked that Bangladesh got a drubbing securing only 12 votes against Turkey which bagged 32 at the balloting. Instead of going for consensus, Bangladesh contested the election and return with bronze medal instead of

gold. The country's image was tarnished." Sheikh Hasina added (while addressing the newly elected Sherpur Bar Association leaders), "If Bangladesh would nominate an honest and fair person for the post, the country would not be defeated." She also added, "People will never forgive Khaleda Zia for spending Tk. 100 crore. Despite the Foreign Ministry has said they spent only 20 crore, the actual cost for the election would be more than Tk 100 crore.....This defeat threw the country into a deep shame"

53. BNP leader K M Obaidur Rahman and Health Minister Dr. Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain (on 17 June in Parliament) argued that it was not S. Q. Chowdhury but Bangladesh that was the candidate. So, the opposition should not take any pleasure in the defeat of Bangladesh. K M Obaidur Rahman said, "There is nothing to be ashamed as Bangladesh got the same vote as secured by a rich country like Malaysia. However, we are all hurt." He observed that although Bangladesh was defeated after contesting the election with prestige that opened up a way of victory. Health Minister Dr. Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain clobbered Awami League for hosting dinner for envoys of the Islamic countries in Dhaka and sending former diplomat Arshaduzzaman to Turkey for campaigning against Bangladesh candidate. He said, "By doing so, the opposition virtually campaigned against Bangladesh and tried to portray the country as terrorist and supporter of Al-Qaida and Laden."
54. Salah uddin Qader Chowdhury in this respect said, "It is a welcome development that the organization like OIC could come out from the control of backroom play. All credit goes to Bangladesh and Malaysia that those who used to control OIC were forced to go to democratic practice and election."
55. Mohammad Shamsul Huq, *Bangladesh in International Politics: The Dilemma of the Weak States.*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1993, p. 259
56. Al Quds Committee was founded as a specialized Standing committee on the recommendation of the Sixth ICFM of the OIC, held in Jeddah, in June 1975. The concern of the member states of the OIC over Palestine problem in general and the continued occupation of Jerusalem led the Islamic countries to create a permanent committee on Jerusalem known as Al Quds Committee. Its purpose is to follow up the decisions of the OIC and the other international organizations aimed at the preservation and liberation of Al Quds (Jerusalem). Initially the Committee had 13 members (Saudi Arabia, Libya, Jordan, Iran, Guinea, Lebanon, Pakistan, Sudan, Morocco, Indonesia, PLO, Egypt, and Syria). The membership of the Committee was enlarged to 15 with the election of Bangladesh and Senegal as its members during the Ninth ICFM in Dakar in 1978. The Committee was modified in different times. Now its members are 16 (Bangladesh, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Iran, Guinea, Lebanon, Pakistan,

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- Indonesia, Palestine, Senegal, Niger, Egypt, Mauritania, and Syria). The main financial organ of the Committee was the Jerusalem fund. The 23rd ICFM held in Conakry, in 1995, decided to create the Bayt Al Mal Al Quds Agency as an affiliated agency of the Committee.
57. The Committee approved a comprehensive action programme in political, information and publicity fields for the liberation of Jerusalem and the restoration of the national and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.
 58. *Meeting of the Al-Quds Committee, Fez, Morocco, 19-20 April, 1984: Brief for the Bangladesh Delegation*, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, p. 10
 59. *Ibid.* pp. 12-13
 60. Mohammad Shamsul Huq, *op. cit.* p. 260
 61. *Ibid.*
 62. See *The Final communique of the Twelfth Conference of Islamic foreign Ministers*
 63. *Ibid.* p. 6
 64. The Al Quds Committee convened its 20th meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 17-18 January 2014.
 65. See *Final Declaration of the Seventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Paragraph 29
 66. Bangladesh Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud in the 18th ICFM held in Riyadh, on 13-16 March, 1989, said, “Our prayers were answered and efforts bore fruits when the last soldier of the occupation army departed soil of Afghanistan.”
 67. See *Casablanca Declaration of the Seventh Islamic Summit Conference*, Paragraphs 49-52
 68. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made the statement while he was addressing the 8th Islamic Summit in December, 1997.
 69. See *Final Communique of the Ninth Extraordinary Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers*, Paragraphs 11-12
 70. Foreign Minister Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury after concluding the Ninth Extraordinary ICFM on 10 October, 2001, said that Bangladesh as a member of the OIC would certainly agree on the resolutions of the OIC about the crisis, stemming from US military strikes on Afghanistan in retaliatory action for terrorist attacks on America.
 71. Iraq dated the War from September 4, 1980 when it claimed Iran launched air and ground attacks on Iraqi border towns and positions. Iran said the War started on 22 September, 1980 when the Iraqi air forces raided military targets deep inside Iran and Iraqi troops invaded its territory.

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72. President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan was the Chairman and OIC Secretary General, Habib Chatty and Yasser Arafat, the PLO Chief, were the members of the committee.
 73. Resolution No. 6/3-E(IS)
 74. Bangladesh Foreign Minister Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq urged on the Council in its meeting on 25 October 1980, for such action in the following words: "Bangladesh assures the Council of its fullest cooperation in performing its charter responsibility in ending the hostilities between Iran and Iraq and ensuring Peace and security. In this connection we would like to point out that time is of the very essence and we must move immediately and unitedly in our efforts to end further shedding of blood and to establish lasting peace and fraternal relations between these two states of the UN."
 75. Muhammad Shamsul Huq, *Bangladesh in International Politics: The Dilemmas of the Weak States*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1993, pp. 265-69
 76. The *Fourth Islamic Summit Conference, Casablanca, Morocco, 16-18 January, 1984*, International Organization Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, 1983, p. 116
 77. The Delegation of the IPC, led by the Senegalese Foreign Minister Mostafa Niasse and consisting of the Guinean Foreign Minister Abdullah Toure and Ambassadors of other IPC member-countries .
 78. Bangladesh Foreign Minister A. S. M. Mostafizur Rahman, who delivered statement in the Seventh Extraordinary ICFM said, "The issue of Bosnia cannot be categorized as a civil war. It is in fact a systematic dismemberment of a sovereign country which is also a member of the UN." He added, "The case of Bosnia-Herzegovina remains an acid test for the credibility of the international community."
 79. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia made the statement while she addressed the Seventh Summit on 13-15 December, 1994.
 80. See *Casablanca Declaration of the Seventh Islamic Summit Conference*, Paragraphs 36-48
 81. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made the statement while she was addressing the 8th Islamic Summit in Tehran, December, 1997.
 82. Chief adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed in his address about Islamophobia to the Eleventh OIC summit in Dakar, 2008, said, "We must do the needful to counter these apprehensions, nullify those fears by our explanations and painting to the world what Islam stands for." He added "Islam and terrorism are incompatible and absolutely irreconcilable."
 83. Referring to the rising Islamophobia in the West, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, in the 37th ICFM, in May, 2010, said, "We should not overact, but engage thoroughly, systematically, persuasively showing why such actions are prejudiced and discriminatory.

84. Foreign Minister Dipu Moni made the call while she was speaking at the opening session of the Ministerial Meeting on 04 February 2013 in Cairo in preparation to the 12th Islamic Summit Conference to be held in the Egyptian capital on February 6-7.
85. See Resolution No. 3/\$-EX (IS)
86. See Appendix-IX

An in-depth analysis from the discussions in the previous chapters reveals that the Organization of Islamic Conference is an institutional outcome of the cherished desire of Muslims for unifying themselves under a common platform. The idea of Islamic unity has come up from the holy scripts of Islam and it was practically expressed in different ways in different places and at different phases. In modern times the appeal for Islamic unity on Islamic basis was first made in the last quarter of the 19th century by the Pan-Islamic vision. The Organization of Islamic Conference is the outcome of the Pan-Islamic doctrine which resumed and developed through the idea of Islamic conferences and turned into a concrete shape with the idea of Neo Pan-Islamism in accordance with the requirements of the Muslim world in the 20th century.

The 20th century witnessed aggressive penetration of western imperialists into the social, political, cultural and economic life of Muslims and Islamic countries and even posed threat to their political independence. The situation aroused the consciousness of the Muslims and helped them to cultivate a sentiment for unity in order to strengthen their ranks and to resist aggressive western penetration. Several attempts aimed at bringing together the Muslims were made, either by individual initiative or governmental action, in order to develop a common approach towards common problems. In the early 20th century the idea of Pan-Islamism was resumed and found expressed in the form of calls for international Islamic conferences for the goal. Holding of Islamic conferences became a regular feature in the post World War II period and it got institutionalized at the end of 1960s. The sense of Muslim Unity has also been reflected in and encouraged by the actions of states and international organizations.¹ The idea of Islamic solidarity got concretized in 1960s with the initiative of King Faisal by his new Pan-Islamic drive and the idea of Neo Pan-Islamism found profound expression with the desecration of the al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli forces. King Faisal's initiatives for Islamic solidarity under the Neo Pan-Islamism proved most successful in the formation of OIC and the Rabat Summit Conference convened in September 1969, became instrumental in its creation.

Since the Rabat summit, the OIC had got institutionalized establishing a permanent secretariat and formulating its charter. Within a decade, the OIC assumed a consolidated form. The body structure and functions of OIC have been increased over the last forty-five years. The membership has grown from its founding members of 25

to 57 states. It has evolved a number of subsidiary, affiliated and specialized organs and institutions, created several standing committees. Several universities are functioning under the aegis of OIC. Its activities have been extended significantly in response to the necessity and challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* to achieve its coveted objectives. The activities are not confined within its headquarters only but extended throughout the Islamic world.

The OIC has dealt with a number of political issues that were burning issues for that particular period. The Palestine question is the common agendum of almost all OIC Summits and Foreign Minister conferences. In fact, OIC was created to protect the holy places of Palestine and probably the most resolutions have been taken on the issue. Besides, it had serious concern over the Iran-Iraq War, Afghanistan crisis, Gulf War, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo and other issues, and adopted measures for the resolution of the crisis. It has also given humanitarian assistance to Muslim communities affected by violent conflicts and natural disasters in cooperation with UN organizations particularly UNCHAR. Combating international terrorism the OIC adopted a Code of Conduct (1994), a Convention (1998), condemned major terrorist attacks particularly 9/11, and adopted various resolutions. The OIC not only condemned attacks and ongoing discriminations against the Muslim communities in Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and other places in the world, but also took necessary actions for safeguarding their rights specially by forming committee of experts and contact groups and formulating plan of action. In the economic field the OIC has attained the most success. Agreement and plan of action on economic and commercial cooperation were adopted in 1981 to strengthen economic cooperation among member states. The Ten-Year Programme of Action was adopted in 2005 for fostering economic and trade cooperation among the member states of OIC. The execution of Trade Preferential System among the OIC member states (TPS-OIC) marked a major progress in strengthening economic cooperation among the member states.

The 21st century the *Ummah* witnessed several political, religious and economic challenges that necessitated specific reforms to confront them. The OIC has been reinforced through a large scale of reforms and activities to face the challenges in the 21st century. The Ten-Year Programme of Action was adopted in order to meet the challenges facing the *Ummah* in the century. The change of logo of the Organisation

of the Islamic Conference and its name to become the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2011 reflects a qualitative shift in the performance of the OIC and enormous enhancement of its effectiveness as an international organization active in diverse areas of politics, economy, culture and society. An amended new charter was adopted in 2008 with a view to reforming the body and speeding up its decision making. The revised charter stressed on modernizing the OIC, encouraged solidarity between the wealthy and poorest nations of OIC, launched a campaign against Islamophobia. An Islamic observatory on Islamophobia was established in September in order to articulate the true picture of Islam and combat Islamophobia by releasing report on the matter. The intra-OIC trade among the member states has been increased substantially under the Ten-Year Programme of Action.

The Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent had the unfathomable devotion to Islam and Muslim *Ummah* prior to the emergence of OIC. Indian Muslims worked together with other Muslims to carry the Pan-Islamic Movement forward. They carried out Khilafat Movement motivated by the spirit of the Pan Islamic doctrine during and after the First World War. They had the considerable share of every happening in the Muslim world. All Indian Khilafat Conference and Jamiat-e-Ulema and other Indian Muslims played important role in the Khilafat Congress (Mutamarul Khilafah) in Cairo, in May 1926, the Mecca Congress in June 1926 and World Muslim Congress held in Jerusalem in 1932. Maulana Muhammad Ali, Maulana Showkat Ali and Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal played the leading role in the conferences as Indian delegates. The Muslim League and the Khilafat Movement were concerned with the crises in the Muslim *Ummah*. They espoused whole-heartedly the cause of the Palestine and rendered political, moral, and material support to the Palestinians. Through a series of meetings and demonstrations they denounced Zionist and British occupation of Jerusalem and other holy places, objected to the proposed mandate system and suggested that Arab lands should be governed by the Arab themselves and condemned the British proposal to partition Palestine. They appealed to the Muslims of the subcontinent not to join British army to fight their Arab brethren. The Muslim League passed numerous resolutions on Palestine question in its sessions in different places and at different times from 1918 to 1947.

After Pakistan and India being separated, Muslims of both states kept up Islamic connection to the *Ummah* steadily and attended conferences either officially or in individual capacities. It was an abiding objective of the foreign policy of the newly independent Pakistan to develop close and fraternal links with the Muslim countries. In her international affairs, the Palestine issue was given at the top most priority. Pakistani leaders made strong advocacy in favour of Palestinians in the international organizations. They criticized the UN partition of Palestine in 1947, voted against the administration of Israel into the UNO, provided aid to the Palestinian refugees through the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA). Pakistan in the early days of its independence made serious efforts to bring the entire Muslim world closer by hosting several Islamic conferences particularly reviving of the practically defunct organization Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami (World Muslim Congress). Pakistan then concentrated in the cooperation of Muslim states in more tangible areas of economy and founded International Islamic Economic Conference. It tried to set the ideal of building up a commonwealth of Muslim countries through the organizations.

The people of Bangladesh had historical bond with Muslim world which dates back hundreds of years from the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state. The Arabs had commercial, religious and cultural contacts with the area, now comprising Bangladesh, long before the Muslim conquest of Bengal in the beginning of the 13th century. It came more and more in close contact with the *Ummah* during the long 550 years of Muslim rule prior to the British occupation of the territory. An automatic global Islamic connection of Bengal with Muslims and Islam was built up during the period as Bengal in that period was ruled almost by the outsider Muslim rulers. The Bengalee Muslims had shown considerable devotion to Islam and Muslim *Ummah* through ages as part of South Asians in general and Bengalees in particular. The Muslims of East Bengal and East Pakistan as part of South Asia and Pakistan respectively, had the similar concern to Islam and the Muslim *Ummah* since the Pan-Islamic Movement. The Bengalees upheld the sentiment of keeping up ties with the Muslim *Ummah* even during the British period and assimilated themselves with the international Islam under the umbrella of the Khilafat Movement and Muslim League despite the limitations imposed on them. The Bengalee Muslims strongly supported the demand for Pakistan and worked wholeheartedly for achieving the goal. During the Pakistan period the people of East Pakistan played pro-active role to the causes of

Islamic *Ummah*. The East Pakistani legislators were vocal to the Muslim causes and demonstrated chauvinistic tendencies more pronounced than those of West Pakistan.

During the War of Independence of Bangladesh its global Islamic connection was temporarily detached due to the Pakistani propaganda against Bangladesh in the Islamic world. The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state marked a new phase in its foreign policy specially with the Muslim world. The membership of Bangladesh in OIC much depended on the recognition and formal relations between Bangladesh and the Muslim states. Therefore, in the first few years after its independence, it was essential for Bangladesh to remove misconceptions in the Arab world and Bangladesh successfully removed the gross misunderstanding in the Islamic world by its constant and ceaseless effort which made the task of Bangladesh's admission to the OIC easy. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first President of Bangladesh, played a pioneering important role in this mission. Bangladesh was formally admitted in OIC during the Lahore Summit in 1974. Since the admission, Bangladesh has been actively participating in its summits and conferences of the OIC. It has been playing very vital role in some standing committees, affiliated, specialized and subsidiary institutions and organs and dealing with the burning issues in the Islamic world. Bangladesh formulated the everlasting ties with the Islamic world not only through the activities of Bangladesh and OIC during sessions of different conferences but also the bilateral and multilateral sideline talks, meetings and discussion during these sessions with the Muslim leaders of Muslim nations and different Islamic forums within the OIC and the Muslim world. At the same time, OIC has become an important via medium in boosting Bangladesh's connectivity with the regional and international organizations.

In the entire gamut of foreign policy of Bangladesh, OIC-Bangladesh relations forms an important aspect. In actuality, Bangladesh's participation in the Lahore Summit and its admission to the OIC in the session had long lasting impact on Muslim leaders. This was a major diplomatic gain for Bangladesh which facilitated Bangladesh to fully consolidate her position in OIC and the Muslim world and pay much dividend in economic aid and assistance in every passing day since 1974. In the early years of its emergence it seemed that Bangladesh's survival as an independent state both politically and economically largely rested on its Islamic character. The post-Mujib

military rulers were conscious about the fact and sponsored pro-Islamic state policies which fetched them much dividend internally and externally. Financial assistance from the Muslim states particularly the oil rich Arab states increased tremendously during the military rule. The donation and loans of Arab states, especially of Saudi Arabia, poured into the country since 1975, with much of the aid channeled into Islamic education and culture. The exporting of labour was also increasing day by day with the normalization of relations between Bangladesh and other Islamic countries. The normalization facilitated Bangladesh not only to entry into OIC but also some other international organizations and agencies with their help. Like OIC Bangladesh also lays utmost importance and priority to the unity of Muslim *Ummah*. Bangladesh has demonstrated the sense of unity of the *Ummah* in different forms and ways; sometimes emphasizing on economic cooperation, sometimes on political cohesion, sometimes on Islamic solidarity based on religion of Islam.

Bangladesh executes major activities of OIC through the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) previously functioned as Islamic Centre for Vocational and Technical Training and Research (ICTVTR) and Institute of Technology (IIT) respectively. Bangladesh rightly realized from the very outset the growing need of technical and vocational training within the Muslim world to meet the rapidly rising demand for trained manpower of various types and levels. The OIC and its member states not only welcomed the proposal but also approved it taking all the necessary steps, financial contributions and all other administrative measures to render the Centre operational with its headquarters in Dhaka. This is a great honour for Bangladesh to host the Centre or Institute or University. The establishment of the centre in Dhaka indicates that-

1. Bangladesh has the potentiality to operate such an educational institution that provides technical and technological studies;
2. Bangladesh has the tremendous need of vocational, technical and technological training as it has the huge number of unemployed, non-skilled or semi-skilled manpower amongst whom a large portion work in the Islamic countries as workers, day-labourers and other lower occupational works; and

3. the OIC has the confidence on Bangladesh leadership (specially at the time when the ICTVTR came into existence) in running such an important organ of OIC as the ICTVTR/IIT/IUT.

In fact, the acceptance and credibility of President Ziaur Rahman to the Muslim states and OIC facilitated Bangladesh attaining assistance and facilities in a variety of grounds and in a variety of ways. His relations and influences on the Islamic leaders was so profound that when his well-renowned Presidential Adviser (later Foreign Minister) Professor Mohammad Shamsul Huq proposed to set up the ICTVTR in Dhaka, they took the matter with special importance and the OIC took necessary steps to implement the project. The Centre was persistently working for gaining success in its aim and its activities was increasing day by day. Therefore, the Centre was later converted to 'Islamic Institute of Technology' (IIT) and finally it emerged as the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) with a view to properly reflecting the activities of the Centre and facilitating the international recognition. Several attempts have been taken by IUT for further improvement of its education quality. IUT has become an internationally recognized educational and research institution through arranging international seminars; signing of the memorandum of agreement with the other three OIC universities, providing scholarships to the Muslim minority students, commencing skill and knowledge upgrading training programmes and offering long regular courses, providing co-curricular activities and arranging games; achieving membership of some renowned associations of world universities; conferring degrees by arranging convocation on a regular basis; converting the vast manpower resources of the *Ummah* into productive human capital through imparting the required technical and vocational training; and so on. IUT is the only International University in Bangladesh that plays an important part in her relations with OIC and other international bodies that OIC is concerned.

In the cultural area of OIC, Bangladesh had the remarkable contribution. The holding of periodical international games amongst the member states of the OIC was the original idea of Bangladesh that OIC adopted. The Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) was established according to the proposal from Bangladesh which is responsible for the direction and control of the Islamic Solidarity Games. This is one of the peculiarities of OIC from other inter-governmental organizations and even

from UN that it deals sports together with other social, economic, political and cultural activities. At the same time it is a new dimension of practically expressing the idea of Islamic unity and solidarity through arranging international games among Islamic countries on a regular basis in which Bangladesh has the pioneer role. Therefore, the Islamic Solidarity Games has become one of the ways strengthening Islamic brotherhood and solidarity, promoting Islamic identity in the fields of sports and developing closer understanding and goodwill among the Muslim countries.

The proposal of Bangladesh in 1980s for a Ministerial level Standing Committee to deal with emergency situation evoked overwhelming support. The Committee could not be materialized immediately as the Committee of this type seemed to be contrary to the OIC charter. Nevertheless, the OIC upheld the idea and this type of committee was materialized in another form by establishing a ministerial level Executive Committee in 2005 with a view to following up the adopted resolutions and considering urgent matters which warrant attention between OIC inter-sessional meetings. In fact, the decision for the establishment of an Executive Committee was taken as part of reforming of OIC in the 21st century to make an action-oriented and updated OIC by its day-to-day functioning.

Bangladesh played important role in studies and research for food security and agricultural development in Islamic countries. Establishment of an Islamic Food Bank for self-sufficiency in basic food item of Islamic countries was the original idea that Bangladesh placed to OIC in 1977. In 1980s, Bangladesh sincerely worked for the three studies assigned by OIC on food security and agricultural development. OIC also adopted several resolutions in its different sessions recognizing the importance of food security. The OIC laid special importance to the food security and agricultural development matter in the recent years particularly in response to the consequence of worldwide food and other crises in 2008 which severely affected the OIC countries. Accordingly, the OIC established a Task Force on Agriculture, Rural development and Food Security. In 2011, OIC also adopted resolution for the establishment of OIC Food Security institution in Kazakhstan. It welcomed the offer of the Djibouti to host a Center for OIC Food Security Reserve for East, Central and Southern Africa and Horn of Africa in Djibouti. In fact, self-sufficiency in all kind of foods and agricultural products for a particular country is almost impossible in the contemporary

global economy. Particularly the food crises and food price problems have appeared to be common phenomena in the global economy which require collective self-reliance initiatives to countenance them. The collective agricultural cooperation and food security efforts of the OIC countries could be the finest prospects for Muslim states to meet the food crises and agricultural deficiency. Bangladesh as the top listed OIC country of agriculture-based economy, stressed on the matter at the very outset and can carry out more progressive and multi-dimensional role in future with its advanced agricultural research and technologies, highly appreciated at home and abroad, for the greater interest of the *Ummah* and the highly densely population of its own. The food security and the agricultural sufficiency of the Muslim states can also be one of the important preconditions in the way of establishing an Islamic Common Market, for which Bangladesh has been constantly and strongly pleading.

It was a monumental recommendation of Bangladesh for establishment of Islamic Common Market (ICM). This was an original idea of Bangladesh that President Ziaur Rahman placed before the OIC at the third Islamic Summit Conference held in Taif, 1981. Since then, Bangladesh has been frequently calling for an Islamic Common Market. The OIC incorporated the concept of ICM and stressed on enhancing economic cooperation among Muslim countries considering ICM a long-run process. Bangladesh laid emphasis on increasing intra-OIC trade as part of economic development of the OIC countries and at the same time to achieve preconditions of establishing an ICM. The establishment of an ICM like EU could be the comprehensive economic solution of the OIC countries. The ICM is a progressive approach to OIC economic integration. But an over-all Islamic common market is actually long-run process. Bangladesh also realized the fact that an ICM could be achieved only in phases. It set four phases to achieve the ICM by 2000. Bangladesh laid emphasis on preferential trading, sectoral Common Market and an Islamic free trade area before implementing ICM. OIC also achieved much progress in this aim by executing several economic activities specially undertaking TPS-OIC and Ten-Year Programme of Action. In fact, the establishment of an ICM could be the comprehensive economic solution of the OIC countries which would facilitate more the LDIC like Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is playing leading role in OIC in favour of the Least Developed Islamic Countries (LDIC) for safeguarding their special interests and needs. It's advocacy for LDCs in other international organizations is also renowned. Bangladesh for the benefit of LDIC, always stresses on a self-reliant Islamic community, need for narrowing gap in the economic field between the developed and developing nations, poverty alleviation, human development, the need for micro-credits, preferential market access facilities to LDIC and so on. It had the strong urge to the rich Islamic nations to lessen debt burden of the poor member states which subsequently brought positive results for them. Bangladesh can be the model for OIC in poverty alleviation through micro-credits. The advocacy of Bangladesh for poor Islamic states within the OIC, has given Bangladesh a common acceptability to the OIC countries and that is also another part of tightening OIC-Bangladesh relations.

Since 1974 Bangladesh has been participating in diverse economic activities of the OIC and fetching much dividend. Since 1980s trade and economic dealings between Bangladesh and Islamic countries has been increasing in a higher growth rate with some exceptions. Under the Capacity Building Programme of OIC various projects on various sectors have been initiated in its member states and Bangladesh has received various OIC projects. IDB has been constantly supporting Bangladesh by promoting currency support, short term trade financing, disaster relief, grants and loans. Safeguarding of the economic security of the OIC countries for the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world became one of the most important tasks of Bangladesh in OIC. In fact, Bangladesh gave impetus to the economic cooperation among OIC countries and made suggestion and guidelines for the economic development of OIC member states in different times. Particularly, the 11-point programme (placed in 1981), 7-point programme (placed in 1986) and 7-point plan of action (placed in 2007) pointed out concrete economic guidelines and articulated the economic security of the Islamic countries. Bangladesh also placed concrete suggestions on the climate change issue which was adopted by OIC. OIC also accepted Bangladesh's proposal to assist the natural disaster prone Muslim countries in the hour of their disaster was accepted by the OIC. The economic dealings of Bangladesh with other Islamic countries occupies a major part in OIC-Bangladesh relations.

Bangladesh left contributions in social sectors in OIC and other international organizations like UN and achieved much appreciation. It remained a landmark contribution in the empowerment of women in the Islamic countries in the socio-economic development. It stressed on enhancing the role and status of women through providing for them proper education and involving them more effectively in the socio-economic development. Two Prime Ministers namely Begum Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina played the leading role in this respect as both the Prime Ministers achieved outstanding success in the empowerment of women in Bangladesh. The proposals and suggestions from Bangladesh part on the enhancement of the role and status of women and their induction into the mainstream of life were adequately replicated in resolutions of OIC. The OIC, recognizing the role of Bangladesh in women's empowerment, decided to support Bangladesh for membership in the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for a number of periods. The OIC also adopted Bangladesh's proposal for an action plan on the children for their security. Bangladesh's proposed for and strongly supported the establishment of a Human Rights Commission in Jeddah under OIC.

Bangladesh since the entry had consolidated its position in the OIC by involving itself with the OIC activities and securing important posts and offices of the OIC. Bangladesh by virtue of being a member of the OIC is a member of other institutions and organs. It also played very vital role in some standing committees, affiliated, specialized and subsidiary institutions and organs. Bangladesh was elected Vice-Chairman of OIC on behalf of the Asian Group for several terms. It became one of the 13 members of Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF). Bangladesh was also elected as a member of the first advisory Science Council of the Islamic Science foundation. It was also elected several times as member of various drafting committees, expert committees and preparatory ministerial meetings. Bangladesh was unanimously elected as a member to the Financial Control Organ (FCO) for a period of two years in 1995. Bangladesh received the unique honour to host the 14th ICFM in December 1983. The successful completion of the 14th ICFM in Dhaka undoubtedly had a salutary effect on increasing the image of Bangladesh in the Muslim *Ummah*. Bangladesh contested for the OIC Secretary General four times but had to withdraw candidature every time on political consideration. Bangladesh seemed to be more confident in electing her candidate in the first-ever secret balloting for electing the

Secretary General in the history of OIC in 2004, but Bangladesh lost the OIC top post race for the time due to some internal and external factors. The defeat led to a sharp reaction from the then main opposition party, Bangladesh Awami League. Nevertheless, Bangladesh left behind a landmark practice by initiating the process of democratization and transparency in electing the Secretary General instead of traditional system of selection.

Palestine crisis is a common agendum in almost all summits and other conferences and meetings. Resolutions on the issue are endorsed on a regular basis. Probably, the OIC has taken the most resolutions on the crisis. Bangladesh took a firm stand on the issue even before its admission to OIC. The OIC, therefore, co-opt Bangladesh as a member of Al-Quds Committee (Jerusalem Committee). Bangladesh played an active role both at home and abroad for the implementation of the decisions of the OIC on the Palestine issue. It was a unique honour for Bangladesh to be elected as a member of 3-member Committee (Tripartite Committee) of heads of states to evolve a new strategy to liberate Al Quds Al Sharif. In fact, the OIC could rely enough on President Ziaur Rahman as he emerged as a renowned, an influential and prominent Muslim leader. His untiring efforts as a member of both Al-Quds Committee and Tripartite Committee for the establishment of a Palestinian state and the liberation of Jerusalem were highly appreciated by the OIC. In fact, in the early years of the independence of Bangladesh, its support to the alienable rights of the Palestinians facilitated it to get recognition of Muslim states and to be a member of OIC. As the member of OIC and Al-Quds Committee, its performance on Palestine Question remained beyond question that facilitated it in enhancing further relations with the OIC member states.

As Bangladesh belongs to the region of Indian subcontinent, naturally it had the concern over the issues of the region. In mid 1970s the Farakka issue created problem in Bangladesh-India relations and tension prevailed between the two countries over the issue. The issue was properly placed to OIC by Bangladesh for the expeditious and satisfactory solution. The OIC called for immediate solution of the problem and expressed deep concern. It called for sharing equitably the waters of the international river Ganges realizing the adverse effects on the economy of Bangladesh by withdrawal of the Ganges waters building the Farakka Barrage. Bangladesh has the

grave concern over the Kashmir issue and wants a peaceful solution of the crisis through dialogue between the two parties.

Bangladesh played a pioneer role in OIC against the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan (1979-89). The issue was at first addressed by OIC at its First Extraordinary ICFM (in Islamabad on 27-29 January, 1980) which was convened at the suggestion and request of Bangladesh. The early call of Bangladesh against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan proved the clear transformation of internal and foreign policy of Bangladesh. During the post-Mujib military rule and specially during the rule of President Ziaur Rahman, Bangladesh held the anti-Soviet feelings, profound sense of Islamic solidarity and sense of neutrality of a state all of which can be considered for the call. Bangladesh adopted clear and unequivocal stand for Afghan people and pleaded for a political solution in Afghanistan with the withdrawal of foreign troops. The views and proposals of Bangladesh with other Islamic countries on the issue were effectively and considerably reflected in the subsequent OIC resolutions. Bangladesh also pursued all the OIC resolutions on Afghanistan during the Mujahedeen, Taliban and post Taliban era.

Bangladesh played a unique role to end the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) as a member of Islamic Peace Committee (IPC). It was a great honour for Bangladesh that the OIC appointed a One-Man-Mission under President Ziaur Rahman who started to make shuttle diplomacy between Baghdad and Tehran. The untiring efforts of the One-Man-Committee brought most encouraging outcome. But, unfortunately, the tragic assassination of President Ziaur Rahman on 30 May 1981 thwarted such noble effort to achieve peace. Bangladesh and OIC worked together and held firm and unequivocal position for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bangladesh carried out its role in Bosnia as part of the UN Peace Keeping Force and became one of the first countries to recognize the newly independent country. However, Bangladesh's torpor and passivity towards the Kosovo independence issue has triggered off bitter criticism from the conscious scholars, academia as well as diplomats.

Bangladesh became a part and parcel of the reforming process of OIC to meet the challenges facing the *Ummah* in the 21st century. It endorsed the Ten-Year Programme of Action (2005), Revised Charter of OIC (2008), TPS-OIC. It believes

in concerted Islamic action combating Islamophobia of the West. In other words, Bangladesh has taken the right initiative for fighting phobia against Islam as displayed by the Western world and devised concrete steps to dissipate terrorism, extremism, parochialism and bigotry all of which has no place in Islam.

Bangladesh has been expressing heart-felt association with measures taken by OIC and other organizations to help minority Muslims in different parts of the world facing moral, mental and humanitarian difficulties. Bangladesh expressed its support to the legitimate rights of the Turkish Cypriot Muslims and strongly supported the establishment of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation in Cyprus. Bangladesh as a member in the OIC Committee of Eight played substantial role in safeguarding the rights of the Muslims of the Southern Philippines. It was also concerned with the turmoil situation in Chad and the problems of the Western Sahara. It also supports each and every move in the struggle against apartheid. The Rohingya issue remains an outstanding concern for Bangladesh. Bangladesh has rightly placed the issue in OIC and it was properly bypassed to the OIC. The OIC has tried to solve the problem by forming a OIC Contact Group and signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between the Myanmar Government and the OIC Secretariat to implement humanitarian programme for the benefit of all communities living in the Rakhine State. In fact, the OIC is acting as a pressure group in the *Ummah* for the peaceful and principled solution of crises scattered in the Islamic domains.

In the ultimate analysis it may be contended that the Organization of Islamic Conference is the most successful manifestation of the unifying thrust of Islam in modern times in a modern setting. OIC played an important role in formulating Islam as one of the existing major civilizations in the contemporary world. Melko rightly observed that Islam emerged as one of the five existing civilizations.² Among the five, Western Civilization proved to be most influential. Samuel P. Huntington succinctly observes that the relations between Western and Islamic civilizations have been often stormy.³ In the clash of civilizations, survival of Islamic civilization much depends on the proper functions and activities of OIC and the optimum use of wealth of the OIC countries through meaningful cooperation. Confronting the challenges of the 21st century has appeared to be an important phenomenon before this inter-governmental Muslim body. The OIC has thus the potentiality to counter the challenges as it has

extended its area of cooperation in diverse fields and induced various reform programmes to be suited to the needs of changing times. The sense of Islamic unity has been transplanted to practical Islamic cooperation not only in expression through the changing of nomenclature of OIC to assume Organization of Islamic Cooperation but also through practical implementation of its policy making decisions.

Bangladesh as the second largest Muslim country and an integral and major part of OIC and the *Ummah* played an effective vis-à-vis imperative role for a strong and self-sufficient Islamic community. The OIC Secretary General Iyad Ameen Madani on his maiden visit to Dhaka on 9 March 2014 opined that a strong Muslim country means a stronger OIC and a stronger OIC means a stronger *Ummah*.

Critics and analysts, however, use the expressions ‘Oh, I see!’ and ‘Paper Organization’, to indicate sarcastically the deficiency of OIC and its failure to address various major issues confronting the Muslim *Ummah*.⁴ This has been exposed in a most brazen manner particularly during the inhuman 50 day aggression by Israel on the Gaza Strip during the holy month or Ramzan in 2014. What is required in the 3rd millennium is capacity-building within the OIC member states so as to enable them to take realistic steps to confront any problem as and when it arises. Mere lip service and table talks will not suffice to solve the problem-ridden areas in the Muslim *Ummah*. So far as Bangladesh is concerned it has the proven potential and ability to contribute to the effective functioning of the OIC. The continued pro-active role of Bangladesh is thus sine qua non to keep the wheels of OIC moving.

Notes and References

1. Huntington, Samuel, P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, New York, 2003, p. 176
2. Other existing civilizations are Chinese, Japanese, Indian and Western. See, Melko. *Nature of Civilizations*, p. 133
3. Huntington, Samuel, P. *op. cit.* p. 209
4. “Discussion on these vital issues end in feeble, inconclusive and tentative resolutions...Till unity covers a minimum agreement is reached among the 57 Muslim states, OIC will be rightly indicated as ‘Oh, I see!’” Asafuddowlah, *Of Pains and Panics*, Adorn Publication, Dhaka, 2010, p. 496

APPENDIX -I



Photo 1.a: Emblem of *Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami* (World Muslim Congress) -1926



Photo 1.b: Headquarters of *Motamar al-Alam al-Islami* (World Muslim Congress), ST. 9-A, Block-7, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, University Road, Karachi – 75300, Pakistan
Source: <http://motamaralalamalislami.org/> (1.a-1.b)

APPENDIX-II



Photo: 2.a: Emblem of the Organization of Islamic Conference

Source:

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=AwrSbmx6ZJBT_nUAqexXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTB0cTQwYmdvBHNIYwNzYwRjb2xvA2dxMQR2dGlkA1ZJUDI4MV8x?_adv_prop=image&fr=ytf1-yff29&sz=all&va=oic+flag



Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

Photo 2.b: Emblem of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Source: http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv2/upload/media/logo/oic_logo_hi_res.jpg



Photo 2.c: Flag of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Source:

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=AwrSbmx6ZJBT_nUAqexXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTB0cTQwYmdvBHNIYwNzYwRjb2xvA2dxMQR2dGlkA1ZJUDI4MV8x?_adv_prop=image&fr=ytff1-yff29&sz=all&va=oic+flag

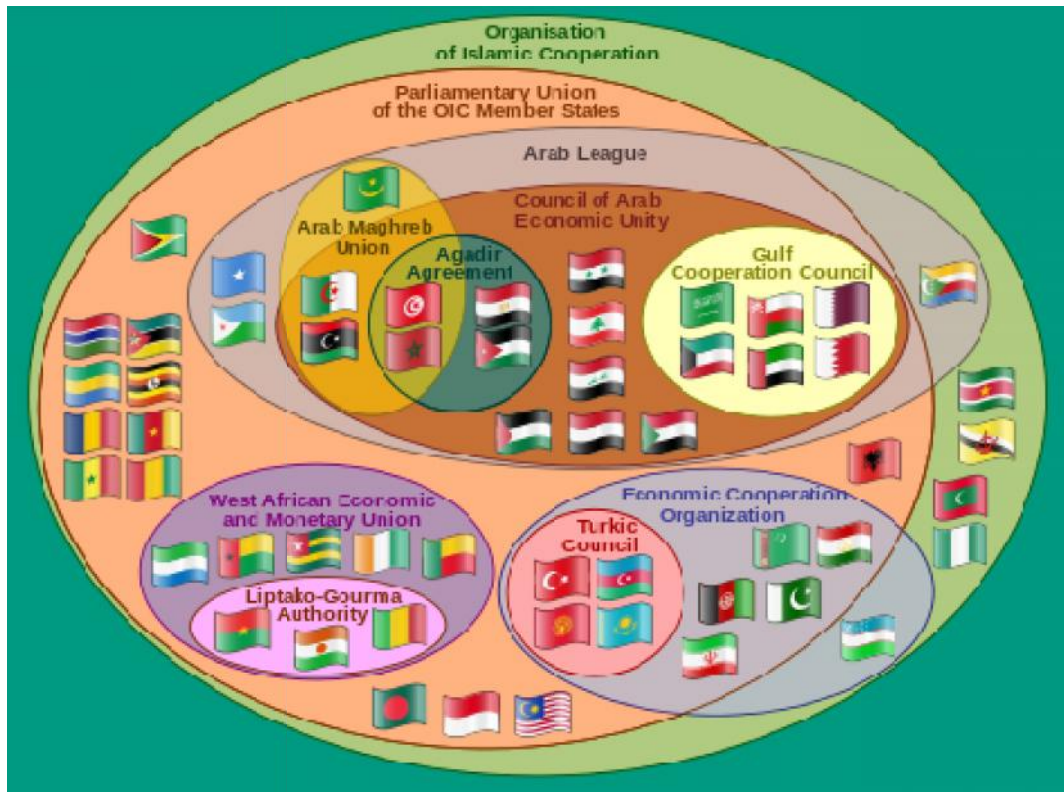


Photo 2.d: The OIC Headquarters



Photo 2.e: OIC New Headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (Proposed)
Source: <http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1208779>

APPENDIX-III

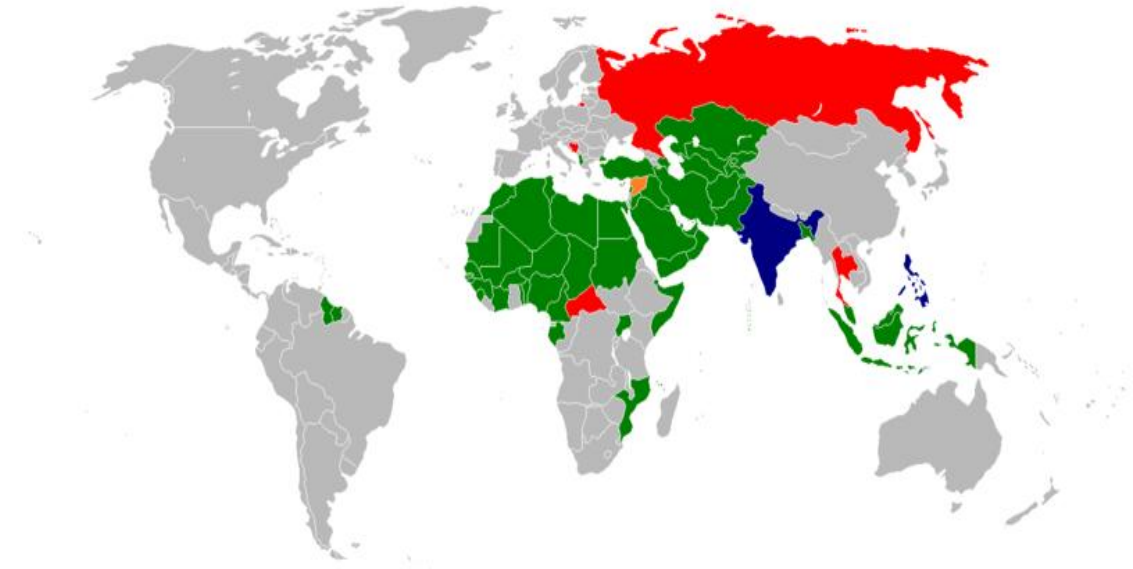






Member states in OIC as in other organizations

Source:

https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_ylt=AwrSbmx6ZJBT_nUAqexXNy oA;_ylu=X3oDMTB0cTQwYmdvBHNIYwNzYwRjb2xvA2dxMQR2dGlkA1ZJUDI 4MV8x?_adv_prop=image&fr=ytf1-yff29&sz=all&va=oic+flag

APPENDIX-IV



-  Member states
-  Observer states
-  Blocked states
-  Suspended states

Map of OIC Countries

Source:

http://r.search.yahoo.com/_ylt=A0SO80Ryb5BT5gwAYFJXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTEzdnZqYTFmBHNIYwNzcgRwb3MDMQRjb2xvA2dxMQR2dG1kA1ZJUDI4MV8x/RV=2/RE=1402003443/RO=10/RU=http%3a%2f%2fen.wikipedia.org%2fwiki%2fOrganisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation/RK=0/RS=XqXBBBmfml3KKD6v.7nQEgU7ZYS

APPENDIX-V

5.a: THE ORIGINAL OIC CHARTER (Adopted in 1972)

The Representatives of

The Kingdom of Afghanistan, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the State of the United Arab Emirates, the State of Bahrain, the Republic of Chad, the Arab Republic of Egypt, The Republic of Guinea, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the State of Kuwait, the Republic of Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of Mali, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Kingdom of Morocco, the Republic of Niger, the Sultanate of Oman, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Sierra Leone, the Somali Republic, the Democratic Republic of Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Republic of Tunisia, the Republic of Turkey, and the Yemen Arab Republic, meeting in Jeddah from 14 to 18 Muharram, 1392 H (29 February - 4 March, 1972); (30 members).

REFERRING to the Conference of the Kings and Heads of State and Government of Islamic countries held in Rabat, 9 - 12 Rajab, 1389 (22 - 25 September 1969);

RECALLING the First Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Jeddah, 15 - 17 Muharram 1390 (23 - 25 March, 1970), and the Second Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Karachi, 27 - 29 Shawal 1390 (26 - 28 December, 1970);

CONVINCED that their common belief constitutes a strong factor for rapprochement and solidarity among Islamic people;

RESOLVED to preserve Islamic spiritual, ethical, social and economic values, which will remain one of the important factors of achieving progress for mankind;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to the United Nations Charter and fundamental Human Rights , the purposes and principles of which provide the basis for fruitful cooperation among all people;

DETERMINED to consolidate the bonds of the prevailing brotherly and spiritual friendship among their people, and to protect their freedom, and the common legacy of their civilization restoring particularly on the principles of justice, tolerance and non-discrimination;

IN THEIR ENDEAVOR to enhance human well-being, progress and freedom everywhere and resolved to unite their efforts in order to secure universal peace which ensures security, freedom and justice for their people and all people throughout the world.

APPROVES the present Charter of the Islamic Conference:-

ARTICLE I

The Islamic Conference:

The Member States do hereby establish the Organization of "The Islamic Conference".

ARTICLE II

Objectives and Principles:

A) Objectives:

The objectives of the Islamic Conference shall be

to promote Islamic solidarity among Member States;

to consolidate cooperation among Member States in the economic, social, cultural, scientific and other vital fields of activities, and to carry out consultations among Member States in international organizations; to endeavor to eliminate racial segregation, discrimination and to eradicate colonialism in all its forms;

to take necessary measures to support international peace and security founded on justice;

to coordinate efforts for the safeguarding of the Holy Places and support of the struggle of the people of Palestine, to help them regain their rights and liberate their land;

to back the struggle of all Muslim people with a view to preserving their dignity, independence and national rights;

to create a suitable atmosphere for the promotion of cooperation and understanding among Member States and other countries.

B) Principles:

The Member States decide and undertake that, in order to realize the objectives mentioned in the previous paragraph, they shall be inspired and guided by the following principles:-

total equality between Member States;

respect of the right of self-determination, and non-interference in the domestic affairs of Member States;

respect of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each Member States;

settlement of any conflict that may arise by peaceful means such as negotiation,

mediation, reconciliation or arbitration;
abstention from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity, national unity or political independence of any Member States.

ARTICLE III

Conference bodies:

The Islamic Conference is made up of:-

1. the Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government
2. the Conference of Foreign Ministers, and the General Secretariat and Subsidiary Organs.

ARTICLE IV

Conference of Kings and Heads of State:

The Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government is the supreme authority in the Organization.

The Islamic Summit Conference shall convene periodically, once every three years.

It shall also be held whenever the interest of Muslim Nations warrants it, to consider matters of vital importance to the Muslims and coordinate the policy of the Organization accordingly.

ARTICLE V

Conference of Foreign Ministers:

1. Conference sessions:

a) The Islamic Conference shall be convened once a year or whenever the need arises at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs or their officially accredited representatives. The sessions shall be held in any one of the Member States.

b) An extraordinary session may be convened at the request of any Member State or at the request of the Secretary General, if approved by two-thirds of the Member States. The request may be circulated to all Member States in order to obtain the required approval; and

c) The Conference of Foreign Ministers has the right to recommend the convening of a Conference of Heads of State or Government. The approval can be obtained for such a Conference by circulating the request to all Member States.

2. The Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers shall be held for the following purposes:-

a) To consider the means of implementing the general policy of the Conference.

- b) To review progress in the implementation of resolutions adopted at previous sessions.
- c) To adopt resolutions on matters of common interest in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Conference set forth in this Charter.
- d) To discuss the report of the Financial Committee and approve the budget of the Secretariat General.

1. To appoint the Secretary General.

2. To appoint four Assistants to the Secretary General on recommendation of the Secretary General; (The post of a fourth Assistant Secretary General will be for the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and Palestine), and

In recommending his Assistants, the Secretary General shall duly take competence, integrity and duly take into consideration their dedication to the Charter's objectives as well as the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

f) To fix the date and venue of the coming Conference of Foreign Ministers;

g) To consider any issue affecting one or more of the Member States whenever a request to that effect is made with a view to taking appropriate measures in that respect

3. Resolutions or recommendations of the Conference of Foreign Ministers shall be adopted by a two-third majority.

4. Two-thirds of the Member States in any session of the Conference of Foreign Ministers shall constitute the quorum.

5. The Conference of Foreign Ministers decides on the basic procedures which it follows and which could be good for the Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government. It appoints a Chairman for each session. This procedure is also applied in subsidiary organs set up by the Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government and also by the Conference of Foreign Ministers.

ARTICLE VI

The General Secretariat:

1. The General Secretariat shall be headed by a Secretary General appointed by the Foreign Ministers Conference for a period of four years renewable once only.

2. The Secretary General shall appoint the staff of the General Secretariat from amongst nations of Member States, paying due regard to their competence and integrity, and in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

3. In the performance of their duties, the Secretary General, his Assistants, and the staff of the General Secretariat, shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or authority other than the Conference. They shall refrain from taking any action that may be detrimental to their position as international officials responding only to the Conference. Member States undertake to respect this quality and the nature of their responsibilities, and shall not seek to influence them in any way in the discharge of their duties.

4. The Secretariat General shall work to promote communication among Member States and provide facilities for consultations and exchange of views as well as the dissemination of information that may have common significance to these States.

5. The headquarters of the Secretariat General shall be in Jeddah pending the liberation of "Baitul Maqdis" (Jerusalem).

6. The General Secretariat shall follow up the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the Conference and report back to the Conference. It shall also directly supply the Member States with working papers and memoranda through appropriate channels, within the framework of the resolutions and recommendations of the Conference.

7. The General Secretariat shall prepare the meetings of the Conference in close cooperation with the host states insofar as administrative and organizational matters are concerned.

8. In the light of the agreement on immunities and privileges to be approved by the Conference:

a) The Conference shall enjoy, in the Member States, such legal capacity, immunities and privileges as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions and the fulfillment of its objectives.

b) Representatives of Member States shall enjoy such immunities and privileges as may be necessary for the exercise of their functions related to the Conference; and

The Staff of the Conference shall enjoy the immunities and privileges necessary for the performance of their duties as may be decided by the Conference.

ARTICLE VII

Finance:

All expenses on the administration and activities of the Secretariat shall be borne by Member States proportionate to their national incomes.

The Secretariat shall administer its financial affairs according to the rules of procedure approved by the Conference of Foreign Ministers.

A Standing Financial Committee shall be set up by the Conference from the accredited representatives of the participating States, and shall meet at the Headquarters of the General Secretariat. This Committee shall in conjunction with the Secretary General, prepare and supervise the budget of the General Secretariat in accordance with the regulations approved by the Conference of Foreign Ministers.

ARTICLE VIII

Membership:

The Organization of the Islamic Conference is made up of the States which took part in the Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government held in Rabat and the two Foreign Ministers' Conferences held in Jeddah and Karachi, and signatory to the present Charter. Every Muslim State is eligible to join the Islamic Conference on submitting an application expressing its desire and preparedness to adopt this Charter. The application shall be deposited with the General Secretariat, to be brought before the Foreign Ministers' Conference at its first meeting after the submission of the application. Membership shall take effect as of the time of approval of the Conference by a two-third majority of the Conference members.

ARTICLE IX

Islamic Organization:

The General Secretariat shall act within the frame-work of the present Charter with the approval of the Conference to consolidate relations between the Islamic Conference and the Islamic Organizations of international character and to bolster cooperation in the service of the Islamic objectives approved by this Charter.

ARTICLE X

Withdrawal:

Any Member State may withdraw from the Islamic Conference by sending a written notification to the Secretariat General, to be communicated to all Member States.

The State applying for withdrawal shall be bound by its obligations until the end of the fiscal year during which the application of withdrawal is submitted. It shall also settle any other financial dues to the Conference.

ARTICLE XI

Amendment:

Amendment to this Charter shall be made, if approved and ratified by a two-third majority of the Member States.

ARTICLE XII

Interpretation:

Any dispute that may arise in the interpretation, application or implementation of any Article in the present Charter shall be settled peacefully, and in all cases through consultations, negotiations, reconciliation or arbitration.

ARTICLE XIII

Language: Languages of the Conference shall be Arabic, English and French.

ARTICLE XIV

Ratification:

This Charter shall be approved and ratified by Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in accordance with the procedure prevailing in their respective countries. This Charter goes into effect as of the date of deposition of the instruments of ratification with the General Secretariat by a simple majority of the States having participated in the Third Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Jeddah from 14 to 18 Muharram 1392 (29 February - 4 March, 1972).

This Charter has been registered in conformity with Article 102 of the United Nation's Charter on February 1st, 1974.

5.b: THE OIC REVISED CHARTER (adopted in 2008)

In the name of Allah, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful We the Member States of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, determined:

to acknowledge the Conference of Kings, Heads of State and Government of the Member States convened in Rabat from 9 to 12 Rajab, 1389 H, corresponding to 22 to 25 September 1969, as well as the Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Jeddah from 14 to 18 Muharram 1392 H corresponding to 29 February to 4 March 1972;

to be guided by the noble Islamic values of unity and fraternity, and affirming the essentiality of promoting and consolidating the unity and solidarity among the Member States in securing their common interests at the international arena;

to adhere our commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter, the present Charter and International Law;

to preserve and promote the lofty Islamic values of peace, compassion, tolerance, equality, justice and human dignity;

to endeavour to work for revitalizing Islam's pioneering role in the world while ensuring sustainable development, progress and prosperity for the peoples of Member States;

to enhance and strengthen the bond of unity and solidarity among the Muslim peoples and Member States; to respect, safeguard and defend the national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all Member States;

to contribute to international peace and security, understanding and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions and promote and encourage friendly relations and good neighbourliness, mutual respect and cooperation;

to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, rule of law, democracy and accountability in Member States in accordance with their constitutional and legal systems;

to promote confidence and encourage friendly relations, mutual respect and cooperation between Member States and other States;

to foster noble Islamic values concerning moderation, tolerance, respect for diversity, preservation of Islamic symbols and common heritage and to defend the universality of Islamic religion;

to advance the acquisition and popularization of knowledge in consonance with the lofty ideals of Islam to achieve intellectual excellence;

to promote cooperation among Member States to achieve sustained socioeconomic development for effective integration in the global economy, in conformity with the principles of partnership and equality;

to preserve and promote all aspects related to environment for present and future generations;

to respect the right of self-determination and non-interference in the domestic affairs and to respect sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each Member State;

to support the struggle of the Palestinian people, who are presently under foreign occupation, and to empower them to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination, and to establish their sovereign state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, while safeguarding its historic and Islamic character, and the holy places therein;

to safeguard and promote the rights of women and their participation in all spheres of life, in accordance with the laws and legislation of Member States;

to create conducive conditions for sound upbringing of Muslim children and youth, and to inculcate in them Islamic values through education for strengthening their cultural, social, moral and ethical ideals;

to assist Muslim minorities and communities outside the Member States to preserve their dignity, cultural and religious identity;

to uphold the objectives and principles of the present Charter, the Charter of the United Nations and international law as well as international humanitarian law while strictly adhering to the principle of non-interference in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State;

to strive to achieve good governance at the international level and the democratization of the international relations based on the principles of equality and mutual respect among States and non-interference in matters which are within their domestic jurisdiction;

Have resolved to cooperate in achieving these goals and agreed to the present amended Charter.

CHAPTER I

Objectives and Principles

Article

1

The objectives of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation shall be:

1. To enhance and consolidate the bonds of fraternity and solidarity among the Member States;
2. To safeguard and protect the common interests and support the legitimate causes of the Member States and coordinate and unify the efforts of the Member States in view of the challenges faced by the Islamic world in particular and the international community in general;

3. To respect the right of self-determination and non-interference in the domestic affairs and to respect sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each Member State;
4. To support the restoration of complete sovereignty and territorial integrity of any Member State under occupation, as a result of aggression, on the basis of international law and cooperation with the relevant international and regional organisations;
5. To ensure active participation of the Member States in the global political, economic and social decision-making processes to secure their common interests;
6. To promote inter-state relations based on justice, mutual respect and good neighbourliness to ensure global peace, security and harmony;
7. To reaffirm its support for the rights of peoples as stipulated in the UN Charter and international law;
8. To support and empower the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and establish their sovereign State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, while safeguarding its historic and Islamic character as well as the Holy places therein;
9. To strengthen intra-Islamic economic and trade cooperation; in order to achieve economic integration leading to the establishment of an Islamic Common Market;
10. To exert efforts to achieve sustainable and comprehensive human development and economic well-being in Member States;
11. To disseminate, promote and preserve the Islamic teachings and values based on moderation and tolerance, promote Islamic culture and safeguard Islamic heritage;
12. To protect and defend the true image of Islam, to combat defamation of Islam and encourage dialogue among civilisations and religions;
13. To enhance and develop science and technology and encourage research and cooperation among Member States in these fields;
14. To promote and to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms including the rights of women, children, youth, elderly and people with special needs as well as the preservation of Islamic family values;
15. To emphasize, protect and promote the role of the family as the natural and fundamental unit of society;
16. To safeguard the rights, dignity and religious and cultural identity of Muslim communities and minorities in non-Member States;
17. To promote and defend unified position on issues of common interest in the international fora;

18. To cooperate in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, organised crime, illicit drug trafficking, corruption, money laundering and human trafficking;

19. To cooperate and coordinate in humanitarian emergencies such as natural disasters;

20. To promote cooperation in social, cultural and information fields among the Member States.

Article

2

The Member States undertake that in order to realize the objectives in Article 1, they shall be guided and inspired by the noble Islamic teachings and values and act in accordance with the following principles:

1. All Member States commit themselves to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter;

2. Member States are sovereign, independent and equal in rights and obligations;

3. All Member States shall settle their disputes through peaceful means and refrain from use or threat of use of force in their relations;

4. All Member States undertake to respect national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of other Member States and shall refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of others;

5. All Member States undertake to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and to refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs as enshrined in the present Charter, the Charter of the United Nations, international law and international humanitarian law;

6. As mentioned in the UN Charter, nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the Organisation and its Organs to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State or related to it;

7. Member States shall uphold and promote, at the national and international levels, good governance, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law;

8. Member States shall endeavour to protect and preserve the environment.

CHAPTER II

Membership

Article

3

1. The Organisation is made up of 57 States member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and other States which may accede to this Charter in accordance with Article 3 paragraph 2.

2. Any State, member of the United Nations, having Muslim majority and abiding by the Charter, which submits an application for membership may join the Organisation if approved by consensus only by the Council of Foreign Ministers on the basis of the agreed criteria adopted by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

3. Nothing in the present Charter shall undermine the present Member States' rights or privileges relating to membership or any other issues.

Article 4

1. Decision on granting Observer status to a State, member of the United Nations, will be taken by the Council of Foreign Ministers by consensus only and on the basis of the agreed criteria by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

2. Decision on granting Observer status to an international organisation will be taken by the Council of Foreign Ministers by consensus only and on the basis of the agreed criteria by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

CHAPTER III

Organs

Article 5

The Organs of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation shall consist of:

1. Islamic Summit
2. Council of Foreign Ministers
3. Standing Committees
4. Executive Committee
5. International Islamic Court of Justice
6. Independent Permanent Commission of Human Rights
7. Committee of Permanent Representatives
8. General Secretariat
9. Subsidiary Organs
10. Specialized Institutions
11. Affiliated Institutions

CHAPTER IV

Islamic Summit

Article 6

The Islamic Summit is composed of Kings and Heads of State and Government of Member States and is the supreme authority of the Organisation.

Article 7

The Islamic Summit shall deliberate, take policy decisions and provide guidance on all issues pertaining to the realization of the objectives as provided for in the Charter and consider other issues of concern to the Member States and the Ummah.

Article 8

1. The Islamic Summit shall convene every three years in one of the Member States.
2. The Preparation of the Agenda and all necessary arrangements for the convening of the Summit will be done by the Council of Foreign Ministers with the assistance of the General Secretariat.

Article 9

Extraordinary Sessions will be held, whenever the interests of Ummah warrant it, to consider matters of vital importance to the Ummah and coordinate the policy of the Organisation accordingly. An Extraordinary Session may be held at the recommendation of the Council of Foreign Ministers or on the initiative of one of the Member States or the Secretary-General, provided that such initiative obtains the support of simple majority of the Member States.

CHAPTER V

Council of Foreign Ministers

Article 10

1. The Council of Foreign Ministers shall be convened once a year in one of the Member States.
2. An Extraordinary Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers may be convened at the initiative of any Member State or of the Secretary-General if such initiative is approved by a simple majority of the Member States.
3. The Council of Foreign Ministers may recommend convening other sectorial Ministerial meetings to deal with the specific issues of concern to the Ummah. Such meetings shall submit their reports to the Islamic Summit and the Council of Foreign Ministers.
4. The Council of Foreign Ministers shall consider the means for the implementation of the general policy of the Organisation by:
 - a. Adopting decisions and resolutions on matters of common interest in the implementation of the objectives and the general policy of the Organisation;
 - b. Reviewing progress of the implementation of the decisions and resolutions adopted at the previous Summits and Councils of Foreign Ministers;
 - c. Considering and approving the programme, budget and other financial and administrative reports of the General Secretariat and Subsidiary Organs;
 - d. Considering any issue affecting one or more Member States whenever a request to that effect by the Member State concerned is made with a view to taking appropriate measures in that respect;
 - e. Recommending to establish any new organ or committee;

f. Electing the Secretary General and appointing the Assistant Secretaries General in accordance with Articles 16 and 18 of the Charter respectively;

g. Considering any other issue it deems fit.

CHAPTER VI

Standing Committees

Article 11

1. In order to advance issues of critical importance to the Organisation and its Member States, the Organisation has formed the following Standing Committees:

i. Al Quds Committee

ii. Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC)

iii. Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC)

iv. Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH).

2. The Standing Committees are chaired by Kings and Heads of State and Government and are established in accordance with decisions of the Summit or upon the recommendation of the Council of Foreign Ministers and the membership of such Committees.

CHAPTER VII

Executive Committee

Article 12

The Executive Committee is comprised of the Chairmen of the current, preceding and succeeding Islamic Summits and Councils of Foreign Ministers, the host country of the Headquarters of the General Secretariat as well as the Secretary-General as an exofficio member. The Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be conducted according to its Rules of Procedure.

CHAPTER VIII

Committee of Permanent Representatives

Article 13

The prerogatives and modes of operation of the Committee of Permanent Representatives shall be defined by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

CHAPTER IX

International Islamic Court of Justice

Article 14
The International Islamic Court of Justice established in Kuwait in 1987 shall, upon the entry into force of its Statute, be the principal judicial organ of the Organisation.

CHAPTER X

Independent Permanent Commission on Human Rights

Article 15
The Independent Permanent Commission on Human Rights shall promote the civil, political, social and economic rights enshrined in the organisation's covenants and declarations and in universally agreed human rights instruments, in conformity with Islamic values.

CHAPTER XI

General Secretariat

Article 16
The General Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary-General, who shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Organisation and such staff as the Organisation requires. The Secretary-General shall be elected by the Council of Foreign Ministers for a period of five years, renewable once only. The Secretary-General shall be elected from among nationals of the Member States in accordance with the principles of equitable geographical distribution, rotation and equal opportunity for all Member States with due consideration to competence, integrity and experience.

Article 17
The Secretary General shall assume the following responsibilities:

- a. bring to the attention of the competent organs of the Organisation matters which, in his opinion, may serve or impair the objectives of the Organisation;
- b. follow-up the implementation of decisions, resolutions and recommendations of the Islamic Summits, and Councils of Foreign Ministers and other Ministerial meetings;
- c. provide the Member States with working papers and memoranda, in implementation of the decisions, resolutions and recommendations of the Islamic Summits and the Councils of Foreign Ministers;
- d. coordinate and harmonize, the work of the relevant Organs of the Organisation;
- e. prepare the programme and the budget of the General Secretariat; f. promote communication among Member States and facilitate consultations and exchange of views as well as the dissemination of information that could be of importance to Member States;
- g. perform such other functions as are entrusted to him by the Islamic Summit or the Council of Foreign Ministers;

h. submit annual reports to the Council of Foreign Ministers on the work of the Organisation.

Article 18

1. The Secretary-General shall submit nominations of Assistant Secretaries General to the Council of Foreign Ministers, for appointment, for a period of 5 years in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution and with due regard to the competence, integrity and dedication to the objectives of the Charter. One post of Assistant Secretary General shall be devoted to the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and Palestine with the understanding that the State of Palestine shall designate its candidate.

2. The Secretary-General may, for the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the Islamic Summits and the Councils of Foreign Ministers, appoint Special Representatives. Such appointments along with mandates of the Special Representatives shall be made with the approval of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

3. The Secretary-General shall appoint the staff of the General Secretariat from among nationals of Member States, paying due regard to their competence, eligibility, integrity and gender in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The Secretary-General may appoint experts and consultants on temporary basis.

Article 19

In the performance of their duties, the Secretary-General, Assistant Secretaries General and the staff of the General Secretariat shall not seek or accept instructions from any government or authority other than the Organisation. They shall refrain from taking any action that may be detrimental to their position as international officials responsible only to the Organisation. Member States shall respect this exclusively international character, and shall not seek to influence them in any way in the discharge of their duties.

Article 20

The General Secretariat shall prepare the meetings of the Islamic Summits and the Councils of Foreign Ministers in close cooperation with the host country insofar as administrative and organizational matters are concerned.

Article 21

The Headquarters of the General Secretariat shall be in the city of Jeddah until the liberation of the city of Al-Quds so that it will become the permanent Headquarters of the Organisation.

CHAPTER XII

Article 22

The Organisation may establish Subsidiary Organs, Specialized Institutions and grant affiliated status, after approval of the Council of Foreign Ministers, in accordance with the Charter.

Subsidiary Organs

Article 23
Subsidiary organs are established within the framework of the Organisation in accordance with the decisions taken by the Islamic Summit or Council of Foreign Ministers and their budgets shall be approved by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

CHAPTER XIII

Specialized Institutions

Article 24
Specialized institutions of the Organisation are established within the framework of the Organisation in accordance with the decisions of the Islamic Summit or Council of Foreign Ministers. Membership of the specialized institutions shall be optional and open to members of the Organisation. Their budgets are independent and are approved by their respective legislative bodies stipulated in their Statute.

Affiliated Institutions

Article 25
Affiliated institutions are entities or bodies whose objectives are in line with the objectives of this Charter, and are recognized as affiliated institutions by the Council of Foreign Ministers. Membership of the institutions is optional and open to organs and institutions of the Member States. Their budgets are independent of the budget of the General Secretariat and those of subsidiary organs and specialized institutions. Affiliated institutions may be granted observer status by virtue of a resolution of the Council of Foreign Ministers. They may obtain voluntary assistance from the subsidiary organs or specialized institutions as well as from Member States.

CHAPTER XIV

Cooperation with Islamic and other Organizations

Article 26
The Organisation will enhance its cooperation with the Islamic and other Organizations in the service of the objectives embodied in the present Charter.

CHAPTER XV

Peaceful Settlement of Disputes

Article 27
The Member States, parties to any dispute, the continuance of which may be detrimental to the interests of the Islamic Ummah or may endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, seek a solution by good offices, negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or other peaceful means of their own choice. In this context good offices may include consultation with the Executive Committee and the Secretary-General.

Article 28
The Organisation may cooperate with other international and regional organisations

with the objective of preserving international peace and security, and settling disputes through peaceful means.

CHAPTER XVI

Budget & Finance

Article 29

1. The budget of the General Secretariat and Subsidiary Organs shall be borne by Member States proportionate to their national incomes.

2. The Organisation may, with the approval of the Islamic Summit or the Council of Foreign Ministers, establish special funds and endowments (waqfs) on voluntary basis as contributed by Member States, individuals and Organisations. These funds and endowments shall be subjected to the Organisation's financial system and shall be audited by the Finance Control Organ annually.

Article 30

The General Secretariat and subsidiary organs shall administer their financial affairs according to the Financial Rules of Procedure approved by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

Article 31

1. A Permanent Finance Committee shall be set up by the Council of Foreign Ministers from the accredited representatives of the participating Member States which shall meet at the Headquarters of the Organisation to finalize the programme and budget of the General Secretariat and its subsidiary organs in accordance with the rules approved by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

2. The Permanent Finance Committee shall present an annual report to the Council of Foreign Ministers which shall consider and approve the programme and budget.

3. The Finance Control Organ comprising financial/auditing experts from the Member States shall undertake the audit of the General Secretariat and its subsidiary organs in accordance with its internal rules and regulations.

CHAPTER XVII

Rules of Procedure and Voting

Article 32

1. The Council of Foreign Ministers shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

2. The Council of Foreign Ministers shall recommend the rules of procedures of the Islamic Summit.

3. The Standing Committees shall establish their own respective rules of procedure.

Article 33

1. Two-third of the Member States shall constitute the quorum for the meetings of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

2. Decisions shall be taken by consensus. If consensus cannot be obtained, decision shall be taken by a two-third majority of members present and voting unless otherwise stipulated in this Charter.

CHAPTER XVIII

Final Provisions Privileges and Immunities

Article 34

1. The Organisation shall enjoy in the Member States, immunities and privileges as necessary for the exercise of its functions and the fulfilment of its objectives.

2. Representatives of the Member States and officials of the Organisation shall enjoy such privileges and immunities as stipulated in the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of 1976.

3. The staff of the General Secretariat, subsidiary organs and specialised institutions shall enjoy privileges and immunities necessary for the performance of their duties as may be agreed between the Organisation and host countries.

4. A Member State which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the Council of Foreign Ministers if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years. The Council may, nevertheless, permit such a Member to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member.

Withdrawal

Article 35

1. Any Member State may withdraw from the Organisation by notifying the Secretary-General one year prior to its withdrawal. Such a notification shall be communicated to all Member States.

2. The State applying for withdrawal shall be bound by its obligations until the end of the fiscal year during which the application for withdrawal is submitted. It shall also settle any other financial dues it owes to the Organisation.

Amendments

Article 36

Amendments to the present Charter shall take place according to the following procedure:

a. Any Member State may propose amendments to the present Charter to the Council of Foreign Ministers;

b. When approved by two-third majority of the Council of Foreign Ministers and ratified by a two-third majority of the Member States, it shall come into force.

Interpretation

Article 37

1. Any dispute that may arise in the interpretation, application or implementation of any Article in the present Charter shall be settled cordially, and in all cases through consultation, negotiation, reconciliation or arbitration;

2. The provisions of this Charter shall be implemented by the Member States in conformity with their constitutional requirements.

Article 38

Languages of the Organisation shall be Arabic, English and French. Transitional Arrangement

RATIFICATION AND ENTRY INTO FORCE

Article 39

1. This Charter shall be adopted by the Council of Foreign Ministers by two-third majority and shall be open for signature and ratification by Member States in accordance with the constitutional procedures of each Member State.

2. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the Organisation.

3- This Charter replaces the Charter of the Organisation of The Islamic Conference which was registered in conformity with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations on February 1, 1974.

Done at the city of Dakar (Republic of Senegal), the Seventh day of Rabi Al-Awal, One Thousand Four Hundred and Twenty-nine Hijra, corresponding to Fourteenth day of March Two Thousand and Eight.

5.c: TEN-YEAR PROGRAMME OF ACTION

(To Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah In The 21st Century)

Introduction

The Muslim World is faced with grave political, socio-economic, cultural and scientific challenges with implications for its unity, peace, security and development. OIC Member States would need to cooperate decisively in order to face these challenges and to take necessary initiatives to overcome them. It has therefore become imperative for them to take joint actions within the framework of the OIC, based on common values and ideals so as to revive the Muslim Ummah's pioneering role as a fine example of tolerance and enlightened moderation, and a force for international peace and harmony.

Conscious of these challenges and anxious to bring the Ummah out of its present situation into a new reality marked by greater solidarity and more prosperity to achieve its decisive objectives and aspirations, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Ibn Abdulaziz, addressed the pilgrims on Eid Al-Adha Day in 1425 H, and called upon the leaders of the Muslim Ummah to convene an Extraordinary Conference of the leaders of OIC Member States to consider the issues of solidarity and Joint Islamic Action.

In preparation for this Extraordinary Conference, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques invited the scholars and intellectuals of the Ummah to meet in Makkah Al-Mukarramah in order to consider the state of the Ummah, develop visions and concepts and propose optimal solutions to the challenges facing the Ummah in all fields. Accordingly, an elite group of Muslim scholars and intellectuals from different countries met in Makkah Al-Mukarramah from 5 to 7 Shaaban 1426 H (9-11 September 2005) and examined the challenges facing the Ummah in the intellectual, cultural, political, media, economic and developmental fields. They also formulated a number of recommendations to effectively address these challenges.

Based on the views and recommendations of scholars and intellectuals, convinced of the potential for the Muslim Ummah to achieve its renaissance, and in order to take practical steps towards strengthening the bonds of Islamic solidarity, achieve unity of ranks, and project the true image and noble values of Islam and its civilizational approaches, a Ten-Year Programme of Action has been developed, which reviews the most prominent challenges facing the Muslim world today, as well as ways and means to address them in an objective and realistic way in order to serve as a practicable and workable programme for all OIC Member States.

In the intellectual and political fields, there are major issues, such as establishing the values of moderation and tolerance, combating extremism, violence and terrorism, countering Islamophobia, achieving solidarity and cooperation among Member States, conflict prevention, the question of Palestine, the rights of Muslim minorities and communities, and rejecting unilateral sanctions. All of these are issues which require a renewed commitment to be addressed through effective strategies. In this context, special attention needs to be given to Africa, which is the most affected region, due to poverty, diseases, illiteracy, famine, and debt burden.

In the economic and scientific fields, the Ummah needs to achieve higher levels of development and prosperity, given its abundant economic resources and capacities. Priority must be given to enhancing economic cooperation, intra-OIC trade, alleviating poverty in OIC Member States, particularly in conflict-affected areas, and addressing issues related to globalization, economic liberalization, environment, and science and technology.

As for education and culture, there is an urgent need to tackle the spread of illiteracy and low standards of education at all levels as well as a need to redress ideological deviation. In the social field, it is imperative to focus on the rights of women, children and the family.

In implementing the new vision and goals for the Muslim world, the role of the OIC is central, which requires its reform in a way that meets the hopes and aspirations of the Ummah in the 21st Century.

To achieve this new vision and mission for a brighter, more prosperous and dignified future for the Ummah, We, the Kings, Heads of State and Heads of Government of the OIC Member States, decide to adopt the following Ten-Year Programme of Action, with a mid-term review, for immediate implementation:

1. INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES

I. Political Will

1. Demonstrate the necessary political will in order to translate the anticipated new vision into concrete reality and call upon the Secretary-General to take necessary steps to submit practical proposals to the Member States for consideration and subsequent submission to the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.
2. Urge Member States to fully implement the provisions of the OIC Charter and resolutions.

II. Solidarity and Joint Islamic Action

1. Demonstrate strong commitment and credibility in Joint Islamic Action by effective implementation of OIC resolutions, and to focus on the adoption of implementable resolutions until the Ummah reaches its objectives. In this context, the Secretary General should be enabled to fully play his role in following up the implementation of all OIC resolutions.
2. Affirm commitment to Islamic solidarity among the OIC Member States vis-à-vis the challenges and threats faced or experienced by the Muslim Ummah, and request the Secretary General to elaborate a general framework, in consultation with Member States, on their duties and obligations in this regard, including solidarity and support to Member States who are facing threats.

3. Participate and coordinate effectively in all regional and international forums, in order to protect and promote the collective interests of the Muslim Ummah, including UN reform, expanding the Security Council membership, and extending the necessary support to candidatures of OIC Member States to international and regional organizations.
4. Continue to support the issue of Al Quds Al Sharif as a central cause of the OIC and the Muslim Ummah.
5. Reaffirm previous resolutions and decisions of the OIC on Jammu and Kashmir, Cyprus, Nagorno Karabakh and Somalia and demonstrate solidarity with these Muslim peoples in their just causes.

III. Islam - The Religion of Moderation and Tolerance

1. Endeavour to spread the correct ideas about Islam as a religion of moderation and tolerance and to safeguard Islamic values, beliefs and principles in order to fortify Muslims against extremism and narrow-mindedness.
2. Condemn extremism in all its forms and manifestations, as it contradicts Islamic and human values; and address its political, economic, social, and cultural root-causes, through development programmes and resolution of long-standing conflicts, which are to be faced with rationality, persuasion, and good counsel.
3. Emphasize that inter-civilizational dialogue, based on mutual respect and understanding, and equality amongst people are prerequisites for international peace and security, tolerance, peaceful co-existence, and participation in developing the mechanism for that dialogue.
4. Encourage inter-religious dialogue and underline common values and denominators.
5. Ensure the participation of the OIC and its specialized bodies, as a proactive partner in the dialogue among civilizations and religions, as well as in initiatives and efforts exerted in this regard.
6. Utilize the different mass media in order to serve and defend the causes of the Muslim Ummah, promote the noble principles and values of Islam, and correct misconceptions about it.
7. Strive for the teaching of Islamic education, culture, civilization, and the jurisprudence and literature of difference; call on Member States to cooperate amongst themselves in order to develop balanced educational curricula that promote values of tolerance, human rights, openness, and understanding of other religions and cultures; reject fanaticism and extremism, and establish pride in the Islamic identity.

IV. Multiplicity of Islamic Jurisprudence

1. Underline the need to strengthen dialogue among Islamic Schools, affirm the true faith of their followers and the inadmissibility of accusing them of heresy, as well as

the inviolability of their blood, honor and property, as long as they believe in Allah Almighty, in the Prophet (PBUH) and in the other pillars of the Islamic faith, respect the pillars of Islam and do not deny any self-evident tenet of religion.

2. Condemn the audacity of those who are not qualified in issuing religious rulings (fatwa), thereby flouting the tenets and pillars of the religion and the well-established schools of jurisprudence. Consequently, compliance with the principle of fatwa, as approved by scholars, must be observed in line with the relevant provisions of the International Islamic Conference held in Amman in late July 2005 and in the recommendations of the Forum of Muslim Scholars and Intellectuals Preparatory to the Summit convened by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques in Makkah Al Mukarramah from 9 to 11 September 2005.

V. The Islamic Fiqh Academy (IFA)

1. Entrust the Secretary General to invite a group from the members of the Islamic Fiqh Academy and eminent Islamic scholars from outside to prepare a detailed study to develop the IFA's work in accordance with the following objectives, for consideration by the ICFM:

- a. Coordinate religious ruling (fatwa) authorities in the Muslim world.
- b. Counter religious and sectarian extremism, refrain from accusing Islamic schools of heresy, emphasize dialogue among them, and strengthen balance, moderation, and tolerance.
- c. Refute fatwas that take Muslims away from the parameters and constants of their religion and its established schools.

VI. Combating terrorism

1. Emphasize the condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, and reject any justification or rationalization for it, consider it as a global phenomenon that is not connected with any religion, race, color, or country, and distinguish it from the legitimate resistance to foreign occupation, which does not sanction the killing of innocent civilians.
2. Introduce comprehensive qualitative changes to national laws and legislations in order to criminalize all terrorist practices as well as all practices to support, finance, or instigate terrorism.
3. Affirm commitment to the OIC Convention on Combating Terrorism, participate actively in international counter-terrorism efforts, and endeavor to implement the recommendations of the International Conference on Combating Terrorism, held in Riyadh in February 2005, including the establishment of an International Center for Combating Terrorism, as well as the recommendations of the Special Meeting of OIC Foreign Ministers on Terrorism, held in Kuala Lumpur in April 2002.
4. Support efforts to develop an International Code of Conduct to Combat Terrorism and to convene an international conference or a special session of the UN General

Assembly to reiterate the international consensus on establishing a comprehensive strategy to combat this dangerous phenomenon.

VII. Combating Islamophobia

1. Emphasize the responsibility of the international community, including all governments, to ensure respect for all religions and combat their defamation.
2. Affirm the need to counter Islamophobia, through the establishment of an observatory at the OIC General Secretariat to monitor all forms of Islamophobia, issue an annual report thereon, and ensure cooperation with the relevant Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in order to counter Islamophobia.
3. Endeavor to have the United Nations adopt an international resolution to counter Islamophobia, and call upon all States to enact laws to counter it, including deterrent punishments.
4. Initiate a structured and sustained dialogue in order to project the true values of Islam and empower Muslim countries to help in the war against extremism and terrorism.

VIII. Human Rights and Good Governance:

1. Seriously endeavor to enlarge the scope of political participation, ensure equality, civil liberties and social justice and to promote transparency and accountability, and eliminate corruption in the OIC Member States.
2. Call upon the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers to consider the possibility of establishing an independent permanent body to promote human rights in the Member States, in accordance with the provisions of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam and to also call for the elaboration of an OIC Charter for Human Rights. Introduce changes to national laws and regulations in order to guarantee the respect of human rights in Member States.
3. Mandate the OIC General Secretariat to cooperate with other international and regional organizations to guarantee the rights of Muslim Minorities and Communities in non-OIC Member States, and promote close cooperation with the Governments of the States hosting Muslim communities.

IX. Palestine and the Occupied Arab Territories

1. Make all efforts to end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, the Syrian Golan and the full completion of the Israeli withdrawal from all remaining Lebanese territories, in compliance with Security Council Resolution 425, and extend effective support for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

2. Maintain a united stand on the comprehensive resolution of the Palestinian question according to OIC resolutions, UN resolutions, including UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1515 and UN General Assembly

Resolution 194, the Arab Peace Initiative, and the Roadmap, in coordination and consultation with the UN, the Quartet, and other stakeholders, such as to make full withdrawal as a prerequisite for establishing normal relations with Israel, and for providing the OIC with a greater role in establishing peace.

3. Emphasize the central importance of the cause of Al-Quds for the Muslim Ummah, the need to establish the Palestinian rights in the city, preserve its heritage as well as its Arab and Islamic identity as a symbol of solidarity and the meeting point of divine religions; underline the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque and its premises against violations and the need to protect the other Islamic and Christian holy places, counter the judaization of the Holy City, and support the efforts of Al-Quds Committee under the chairmanship of His Majesty King Mohamed VI; call for support to Baytmal Al-Quds and Al-Aqsa Fund, support the steadfastness of Al-Quds population and institutions, and establish Al-Aqsa University in Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

4. Extend full support to the Palestinian Authority in its efforts to negotiate for the inalienable Palestinian rights and extend necessary assistance to ensure control of all Palestinian territories, international crossings, reopen Gaza airport and seaport, and connect Gaza with the West Bank in order to ensure free movement of the Palestinians.

5. Work together with the international community to compel Israel to stop and dismantle its settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories and the occupied Syrian Golan; remove the racist separation Wall built inside the Palestinian territories, including within and around the city of Al-Quds, in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and the Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

X. Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-conflict Peace Building

1. Strengthen the role of the OIC in conflict prevention, confidence-building, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation in OIC Member States as well as in conflict situations involving Muslim communities.

2. Enhance cooperation among the OIC Member States and between the OIC and international and regional organizations in order to protect the rights and interests of the Member States in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict peace-building.

XI. Reform of the OIC

1. Reform the OIC through restructuring, and consider changing its name, review its Charter and activities and provide it with highly qualified manpower, in such a manner as to promote its role, reactivate its institutions and strengthen its relations with the officially recognized NGOs in the OIC Member States; empower the Secretary-General to discharge his duties and provide him with sufficient flexibility and the resources that enable him to carry out the tasks assigned to him and strengthen

all OIC specialized and affiliated organs in order to allow them to play their aspired role, and reinforce coordination with the General Secretariat, and request it to review the activities of these organs and recommend the dissolution of those that prove to be inefficient.

2. Establish a mechanism for the follow-up of resolutions by creating an Executive Body, comprising the Summit and Ministerial Troikas, the OIC host country, and the General Secretariat. The Member States concerned should be invited to participate in the deliberations of these meetings.

3. Mandate the Secretary-General to prepare a study to strengthen the role of Islamic Solidarity Fund and develop it, and submit the study to the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

4. Urge Member States to pay in full and on time their mandatory contributions to the General Secretariat and Subsidiary Organs, in accordance with relevant resolutions, in order to enable Member States to avail themselves of the facilities and services offered by OIC subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated institutions.

2. DEVELOPMENT, SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC ISSUES

I. Economic Cooperation

1. Call upon the Member States to sign and ratify all existing OIC trade and economic agreements, and to implement the provisions of the relevant OIC Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among OIC Member States.

2. Mandate COMCEC to promote measures to expand the scope of intra-OIC trade, and to consider the possibility of establishing a Free Trade Area between the Member States in order to achieve greater economic integration to raise it to a percentage of 20% of the overall trade volume during the period covered by the plan, and call on the Member States to support its activities and to participate in those activities at the highest possible level with delegations possessing the necessary expertise.

3. Promote endeavors for institutionalized and enhanced cooperation between OIC and regional and international institutions working in the economic and commercial fields.

4. Support OIC Member States in their efforts to accede to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and promote concerted positions between the Member States within the WTO.

5. Call upon the OIC Member States to facilitate the freedom of movement of businessmen and investors across their borders.

6. Support expanding electronic commerce among the OIC Member States and call on the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry to strengthen its activities in the field of data and expertise exchanges between chambers of commerce of the Member States.

7. Call upon the Member States to coordinate their environmental policies and positions in international environmental fora so as to prevent any adverse effects of such policies on their economic development.

II. Supporting the Islamic Development Bank (IDB)

1. Establish a special fund within the IDB in order to help address and alleviate poverty, and provide job opportunities; and commission the IDB Board of Governors to establish this special fund, including mechanisms for its financing.

2. Mandate the Islamic Development Bank to coordinate with the OIC General Secretariat in order to make the necessary contacts with the World Health Organization and other relevant institutions to draw up a programme for combating diseases and epidemics, to be financed through the special fund that will be created within the IDB.

3. Commission the IDB Board of Governors to take necessary measures for ensuring a substantial increase in the Bank's authorized, subscribed, and paid-up capital, so as to enable it to strengthen its role in providing financial support and technical assistance to OIC Member States, and strengthen the Islamic Corporation for Trade Finance recently established within the IDB.

4. Urge the IDB to develop its mechanisms and programmes aimed at cooperation with the private sector and to consider streamlining and activating its decision-making process.

5. Urge the IDB and its institutions to promote investment opportunities and intra-OIC trade, and to conduct other feasibility studies to provide the necessary information to develop and promote joint ventures.

III. Social solidarity in the face of natural disasters

1. Islam advocates solidarity with, and assistance to, all the needy without discrimination, which requires the Islamic States to develop and adopt a clear strategy on Islamic relief action and support the trend towards cooperation and coordination between individual relief efforts of Islamic States and Islamic civil society institutions on the one hand, and international civil society institutions and organizations on the other hand.

2. Help countries affected by these disasters to rebuild their buffer stocks.

IV. Supporting development and poverty alleviation in Africa

1. Promote activities aimed at achieving economic and social development in African countries, including supporting industrialization, energizing trade and investment, transferring technology, alleviating their debt burden and poverty, and eradicating diseases; welcome the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), adopt to this end, a special programme for the development of Africa.

2. Call upon the Member States to participate in international efforts to support programmes aimed at alleviating poverty and capacity-building in the Least-Developed Member States of the OIC.
3. Urge donor Member States to cancel bilateral and multilateral debts to low-income Member States.
4. Urge international specialized institutions and organizations to exert greater efforts to alleviate poverty in the Least-Developed Member States and assist Muslim societies, the refugees and displaced in the OIC Member States, and Muslim Minorities and Communities in non-OIC Member States; urge States to contribute to the World Fund for Solidarity and Combating Poverty.

V. Higher Education, Science and Technology

1. Effectively improve and reform educational institutions and curricula in all levels, link postgraduate studies to the comprehensive development plans of the Islamic World. At the same time, priority should be given to science and technology and facilitating academic interaction and exchange of knowledge among the academic institutions of Member States, and urge the Member States to strive for quality education that promotes creativity, innovation, and research and development
2. Assimilate highly-qualified Muslims within the Muslim World, develop a comprehensive strategy in order to utilize their expertise and prevent brain migration phenomenon.
3. Entrust the General Secretariat to study the creation of an OIC Award for Outstanding Scientific Achievements by Muslim scientists.
4. Call upon Islamic countries to encourage research and development programmes, taking into account that the global percentage of this activity is 2% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and request Member States to ensure that their individual contribution is not inferior to half of this percentage.
5. Take advantage of the important results of the World Summit on Information Society, held in Tunis, in which all Muslim States actively participated with a view to close the digital gap between the developed and developing States and request the General Secretariat to follow up these results in order to build the capacities of Member States to adhere to the information society which, in turn, will sustain development in Muslim States.
6. Encourage public and private national research institutions to invest in technology capacity-building, in areas of advanced technologies, such as the acquisition of nuclear technology for peaceful uses.
7. Review the performance of the OIC-affiliated universities so as to improve their effectiveness and efficiency, and call for participation in the two Waqfs (Endowments) dedicated to the two universities in Niger and Uganda, and provide support to the International Islamic University in Malaysia.

8. Call upon the Member States to extend enhanced support to the Islamic University of Technology in Bangladesh in order to enable it to contribute more towards capacity building of the OIC Member States through human resources development.

9. Urge the IDB to further enhance its programme of scholarships for outstanding students and Hi-Tech specializations aimed at developing the scientific, technical, and research capabilities of scientists and researchers in the Member States.

VI. Rights of Women, Youth, Children, and the Family in the Muslim World

1. Strengthen laws aimed at enhancing the advancement of women in Muslim societies in economic, cultural, social, and political fields, in accordance with Islamic values of justice and equality; and aimed also at protecting women from all forms of violence and discrimination and adhering to the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, in line with the Islamic values of justice and equality.

2. Give special attention to women's education and female literacy.

3. Expedite developing "The Covenant on the Rights of Women in Islam", in accordance with Resolution No. 60/27-P and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam.

4. Strive to provide free and quality basic education for all children.

5. Strengthen laws aimed at preserving the rights of children, enjoying the highest possible health levels, taking effective measures in order to eradicate poliomyelitis and protect them from all forms of violence and exploitation.

6. Encourage the Member States to sign and ratify the OIC Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child in Islam, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its annexed Optional Protocols, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol with regard to the Girl Child.

7. Call upon all Member States to support and promote youth programmes and youth forums.

8. Call upon the OIC to contribute towards projecting Islam as a religion that guarantees full protection of women's rights and encourages their participation in all walks of life.

9. Accord necessary attention to the family as the principal nucleus of the Muslim society, exert all possible efforts, at all levels, to face up to the contemporary social challenges confronting the Muslim family and affecting its cohesion, on the basis of Islamic values.

10. Establish a Division responsible for Family Affairs within the framework of the General Secretariat's restructuring.

VII. Cultural and Information Exchange among Member States

1. Call upon TV channels and the mass media to deal with international mass media effectively in order to enable the Muslim world to express its perspective on international developments. Call on the mass media in Member States, including satellite channels, to agree on a Code of Ethics that caters for diversity and pluralism and safeguards the Ummah's values and interests. Mandate the Secretary-General to prepare a report to evaluate the current situation of IINA, ISBO, and the OIC Information Department; consider ways and means to activate the role and mechanisms of the media within the framework of the OIC System; and submit proposals, in this regard, to the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers for consideration. Accord attention to Arabic as the language of Qur'an, develop programmes for translation between the languages of the Muslim Ummah, and implement programs of cultural exchanges among the OIC Member States, including Observer States.

2. Strengthen COMIAC in order to give more care to information and cultural issues in Member States. In this context, the Member States should voluntarily support digital solidarity and allow the OIC to actively participate in the efforts to reduce the digital gap.

APPENDIX- VI

6.a: MEMBER-STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

Sl.	Member State	Joined	Notes
1	 Afghanistan	1969	Suspended 1980 - March 1989
2	 Algeria	1969	
3	 Chad	1969	
4	 Egypt	1969	Suspended May 1979 - March 1984
5	 Guinea	1969	
6	 Indonesia	1969	
7	 Iran	1969	
8	 Jordan	1969	
9	 Kuwait	1969	
10	 Lebanon	1969	
11	 Libya	1969	
12	 Malaysia	1969	
13	 Mali	1969	
14	 Mauritania	1969	
15	 Morocco	1969	
16	 Niger	1969	
17	 Pakistan	1969	Blocking India from membership
18	 State of Palestine	1969	
19	 Saudi Arabia	1969	
20	 Senegal	1969	
21	 Sudan	1969	
22	 Somalia	1969	
23	 Tunisia	1969	
24	 Turkey	1969	
25	 Yemen	1969	From 1990 as Republic of Yemen united with People's Democratic Republic of Yemen
26	 Bahrain	1970	
27	 Oman	1970	
28	 Qatar	1970	
29	 Syria	1970	
30	 United Arab Emirates	1970	
31	 Sierra Leone	1972	

Sl.	Member State	Joined	Notes
32	 Bangladesh	1974	
33	 Gabon	1974	
34	 Gambia	1974	
35	 Guinea-Bissau	1974	
36	 Uganda	1974	
37	 Burkina Faso	1975	
38	 Cameroon	1975	
39	 Comoros	1976	
40	 Iraq	1976	
41	 Maldives	1976	
42	 Djibouti	1978	
43	 Benin	1982	
44	 Brunei	1984	
45	 Nigeria	1986	
46	 Azerbaijan	1991	
47	 Albania	1992	
48	 Kyrgyzstan	1992	
49	 Tajikistan	1992	
50	 Turkmenistan	1992	
51	 Mozambique	1994	
52	 Kazakhstan	1995	
53	 Uzbekistan	1995	
54	 Suriname	1996	
55	 Togo	1997	
56	 Guyana	1998	
57	 Côte d'Ivoire	2001	
Suspended or Withdrawn			
1	 Zanzibar	1993	Withdrew August 1993
Observer States			
1	 Bosnia and Herzegovina	1994	
2	 Central African Republic	1997	
3	 North Cyprus as 'Turkish Cypriot State'	1979	Designation changed in 2004
4	 Thailand	1998	

Sl.	Member State	Joined	Notes
5	 Russia	2005	
Observer Muslim Organisations and Communities			
1	Moro National Liberation Front	1977	Blocking membership of the Philippines
Observer Islamic institutions			
1	Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States	2000	
2	Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation	2005	
Observer International Organisations			
1	League of Arab States	1975	
2	United Nations	1976	
3	Non-Aligned Movement	1977	
4	Organisation of African Unity	1977	
5	Economic Cooperation Organisation	1995	

Source:

http://r.search.yahoo.com/_ylt=A0SO80Ryb5BT5gwAYFJXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTEzdnZqYTFmBHNIYwNzcgRwb3MDMQRjb2xvA2dxMQR2dGlkA1ZJUDI4MV8x/RV=2/RE=1402003443/RO=10/RU=http%3a%2f%2fen.wikipedia.org%2fwiki%2fOrganisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation/RK=0/RS=XqXBBBmfml3KKD6v.7nQEgU7ZYs

6.b: SECRETARY GENERALS OF THE OIC

No.	Name	Country of origin with flag	Took office	Left office
1	Tunku Abdul Rahman	 Malaysia	1971	1973
2	Hassan Al-Touhami	 Egypt	1974	1975
3	Amadou Karim Gaye	 Senegal	1975	1979
4	Habib Chatty	 Tunisia	1979	1984
5	Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada	 Pakistan	1985	1988
6	Hamid Algabid	 Niger	1989	1996
7	Azeddine Laraki	 Morocco	1997	2000
8	Abdelouahed Belkeziz	 Morocco	2001	2004
9	Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu	 Turkey	2005	2014
10	Iyad bin Amin Madani	 Saudi Arabia	2014

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation

6.c: ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCES:

Number	Date	Country with flag	Place
1 st	22–25 September 1969	 Morocco	Rabat
2 nd	22–24 February 1974	 Pakistan	Lahore
3 rd	25–29 January 1981	 Saudi Arabia	Mecca and Ta'if
4 th	16–19 January 1984	 Morocco	Casablanca
5 th	26–29 January 1987	 Kuwait	Kuwait City
6 th	9–11 December 1991	 Senegal	Dakar
7 th	13–15 December 1994	 Morocco	Casablanca
1st Extraordinary	23–24 March 1997	 Pakistan	Islamabad
8 th	9–11 December 1997	 Iran	Tehran
9 th	12–13 November 2000	 Qatar	Doha
2nd Extraordinary	4–5 March 2003	 Qatar	Doha
10 th	16–17 October 2003	 Malaysia	Putrajaya
3rd Extraordinary	7–8 December 2005	 Saudi Arabia	Mecca

11 th	13–14 March 2008	 Senegal	Dakar
4th Extraordinary	14–15 August 2012	 Saudi Arabia	Mecca
12 th	6–7 February 2013	 Egypt	Cairo

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation

6.d: COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS/ ISLAMIC CONFERENCES OF FOREIGN MINISTERS:

Council of Foreign Ministers	Place	Date and Year
39 th	Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti	15-17 November 2012
38 th	Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan	28 – 30 June 2011
37 th	Dushanbe – Republic of Tajikistan	18-20 May 2010
36 th	Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic	23-25 May 2009
35 th	Kampala, Republic of Uganda	18-20 June 2008
34 th	Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan	15-17 May 2007
33 rd	Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan	19-21 June 2006
32 nd	Sana'a, Republic of Yemen	28-30 June 2005
31 st	Istanbul, Republic of Turkey	14-16 June 2004
30 th	Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran	28-30 May 2003
29 th	Khartoum, Republic of Sudan	25-27 June 2002
28 th	Bamako, Republic of Mali	25-29 June 2001
27 th	Kualalumpur, Malaysia	27-30 June 2000
26 th	Ouagadougou – Burkina Faso	28 June - 1 July 1999
25 th	Doha, State of Qatar	15-17 March 1998
24 th	Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia	9-13 December 1996
23 rd	Conakry, Republic of Guinea	9-12 December 1995
22 nd	Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco	10-12 December 1994
21 st	Karachi, Islamic Republic of Pakistan	25-29 April 1993

ISLAMIC CONFERENCES OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

Conferences of Foreign ministers	Place	Year
20 th ICFM	Istanbul	1991
19 th ICFM	Cairo	1990
18 th ICFM	Riyadh	1989
17 th ICFM	Amman	1988
16 th ICFM	Fez	1986
15 th ICFM	Sana'a	1984
14 th ICFM	Dhaka	1983
13 th ICFM	Niamey	1982
12 th ICFM	Baghdad	1981
11 th ICFM	Islamabad	1980
10 th ICFM	Fez	1979
9 th ICFM	Dakar	1978
8 th ICFM	Tripoli	1977
7 th ICFM	Istanbul	1976
6 th ICFM	Jeddah	1975
5 th ICFM	Kuala Lumpur	1974
4 th ICFM	Benghazi	1973
3 rd ICFM	Jeddah	1972
2 nd ICFM	Karachi	1970
1 st ICFM	Jeddah	1970

EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCES

Extraordinary Conferences	Place	Date and Year
1 st	Islamabad, Pakistan	27-29 January 1980
2 nd	Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	11-12 July 1980
3 rd	Fez, Kingdom of Morocco	18-20 September 1980
5 th	Istanbul, Republic of Turkey	17 - 18 June 1992
6 th	Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	1 - 2 December 1992
7 th	Islamabad, Pakistan	7 - 9 September 1994
8 th	Doha, State of Qatar	26 May 2001
9 th	Doha, State of Qatar	10 October 2001
10 th	Doha, State of Qatar	10 December 2001
Extra	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	1-3- April 2002
Extra	Jeddah – kingdom of Saudi Arabia	18 November 2006
Extra	Jeddah – kingdom of Saudi Arabia	22 February 2007
Extra	Jeddah – kingdom of Saudi Arabia	3 February 2008

6.e: ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETINGS OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Annual Coordination Meetings	Place	Date and Year
„	New York	28 September 2012
„	New York	24 September 2011
„	New York	24 September 2010
„	New York	25 September 2009
„	New York	26 September 2008
„	New York	2 October 2007
„	New York	25 September 2006
„	New York	23 September 2005
„	New York	28 September 2004
„	New York	30 September 2003
„	New York	17 September 2002

6.f: THE CONFERENCE OF INFORMATION MINISTERS

Conference of Information Ministers	Place	Date and Year
9 th	Libreville, Republic of Gabon	19-20 April 2012
8 th	Rabat - Kingdom of Morocco	27-28 January 2009
7 th	Jeddah – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	13-1 September, 2006
6 th	Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt	10-11 March 2003
5 th	Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran	1-2 December, 1999
4 th	Dakar, Republic of Senegal	29-30 November 1997
3 rd	Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic	24-25 May 1995
2 nd	Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt	15-16 January, 1992
1 st	Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	11-12 October 1988

6.g: THE CONFERENCE OF CULTURE MINISTERS

The Conference of Culture Ministers	Place	Date and Year
3 rd	Doha, Qatar	29-31 December, 2001
2 nd	Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco	12-14 November, 1998
1 st	Dakar, Republic of Senegal	25-26 January 1989

6.h: THE CONFERENCE OF TOURISM MINISTERS

The Conference of Tourism Ministers	Place	Date and Year
7 th	Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran	28-30 Nov 2010
6 th	Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic	01-02 July 2008
5 th	Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan	11-12 September 2006
4 th	Dakar, Republic of Senegal	28-30 March 2005
3 rd	Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	7-9 October 2002
2 nd	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	12-13 October 2001
1 st	Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran	3-4 October 2000

Source: <http://www.oic-oci.org> (6.d-6.h)

APPENDIX-VII

SUBSIDIARY, SPECIALIZED, AFFILIATED INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

SUBSIDIAR ORGANS:

1. Statistical, Economic, Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC)
2. Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA)
3. Islamic University of Technology (IUT)
4. Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT)
5. International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA)
6. Islamic Solidarity Fund and its Waqf (ISF)

SPECIALIZED INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANS:

1. Islamic Development Bank (IDB)
2. Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)
3. Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU)
4. International Islamic News Agency (IINA)
5. Islamic Committee of the International Crescent (ICIC)

AFFILIATED INSTITUTIONS:

1. Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA)
2. Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities (OICC)
3. Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF)
4. World Federation of Arabo-Islamic International Schools (WFAIIS)
5. Organization of the Islamic Shipowners Association (OISA)
6. Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC)
7. International Union of Muslim Scouts (IUMS)
8. Federation of Consultants from Islamic Countries (FCIC)
9. Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS)
10. General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions (CIBAFI)
11. Federation of Contractors from Islamic Countries (FOCIC)
12. OIC Computer Emergency Response Team (OIC-CERT)
13. Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC)
14. Islamic Cement Association (ICA), Istanbul, Turkey
15. International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)
16. Association of Tax Authorities of Islamic Countries (ATAIC)

STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Al Quds Committee
Bayt Mal Al Quds Agency
2. Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC)
3. Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC)
4. Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH)

Islamic Universities Sponsored by the OIC:

1. Islamic University of Niger
2. Islamic University in Uganda

Source: <http://www.oic-oci.org>

APPENDIX-VIII



First Executive Council Meeting of Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami held at Baitul Maqdis in January 1931. From Right to Left: Raiz al Salah (Lebanon); Ibrahim Al-Waiz (Iraq); Shaikh Abdul Kadir Al-Muzaffar (Palestine); Dr. Mohammad Iqbal (Vice President); Mohummed Ali Aluba Pasha (Egypt); Grand Mufti of Palestine Mohammed Aminul Husseini (President); Sadge Mohummed Zabara (Yemen); Mujtahid Ziauddin Tabatibai (Secretary General); Shaikh Mohummed Adjani (Palestine); Rauf Pasha (Ceylon); Shaikh Izzat Darveza (Palestine) and Shakri Al-Qwatli (Syria).

Photo 8.a



Seen at the dinner given by the Motamar's President to Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah in Cairo 1946 are: (Sitting from Left) H.M. Assayed Idris Ansanusi (late) King of Libya; Mohammed Amin Al-Husseini Grand Mufti of Palestine and President of the Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami (World Muslim Congress); Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Founder of Pakistan; His Eminence Sheikh Al-Azhar, Mustaga Abdul Razzaq; H.E. Abdul Rahman Azzam, Secretary General of the Arab League; H.E. Makram U'baid, Secretary General of the Wafd Party in Egypt and Finance Minister in Egypt.(Standing from Left)His Eminence Shaikh Hasan Al-Banna, the Leader of the Ikhwan Al-Muslimeen Movement; H.E. Fawzi Al-Mulqi, the Ambassador of Jordan in Egypt; Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, (the First Prime Minister of Pakistan); H.E. Abdul Majeed Ibrahim Saleh, Minister of Communications in Egypt; H.E. Ebrahim Abdul Hadee, Prime Minister of Egypt; H.E. Shaikh Yusuf Yaseen, Adviser to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia; Haji Mohammed Salem, a famous industrialist of Egypt and H.E. Jamal Al-Husseini, Adviser to His Majesty King of Saudi Arabia.

Photo 8.b



Photo 8.c

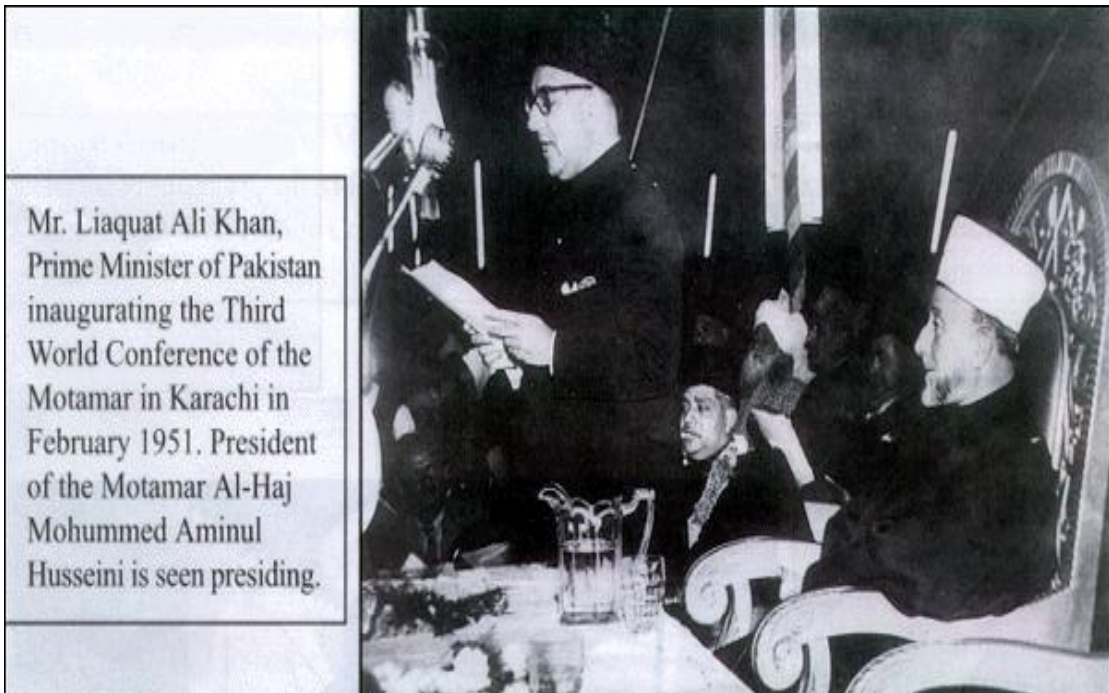


Photo 8.d

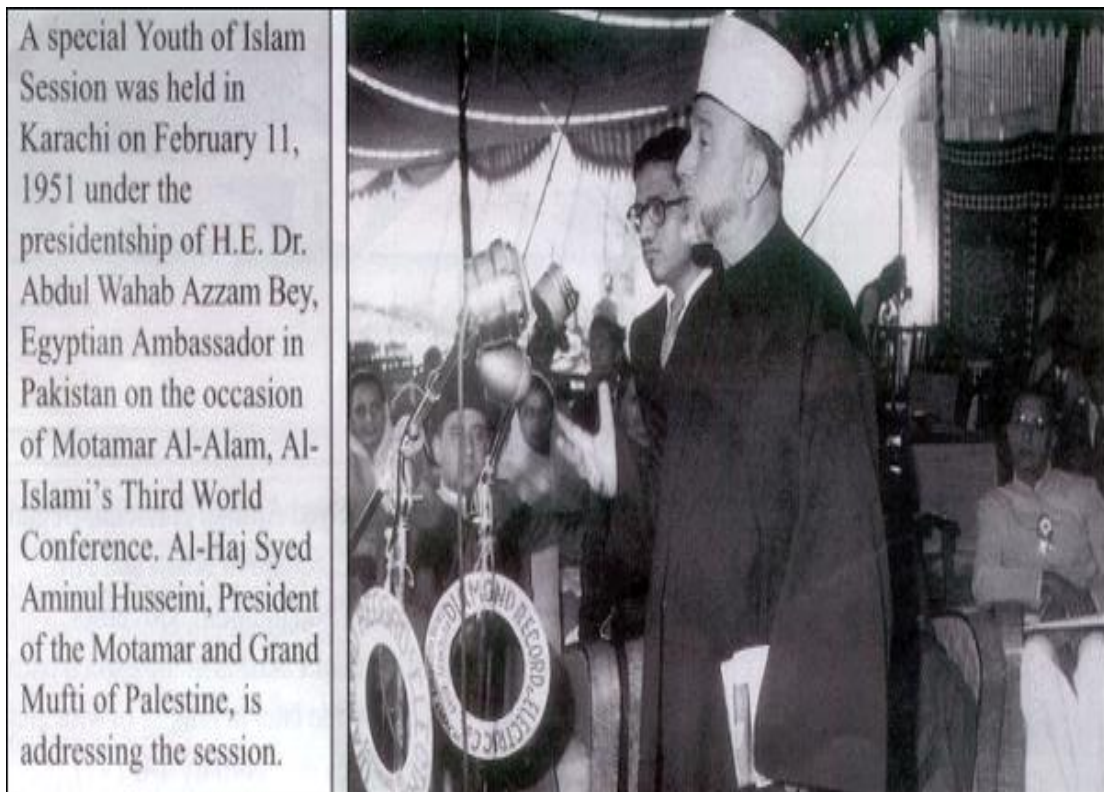


Photo 8.e

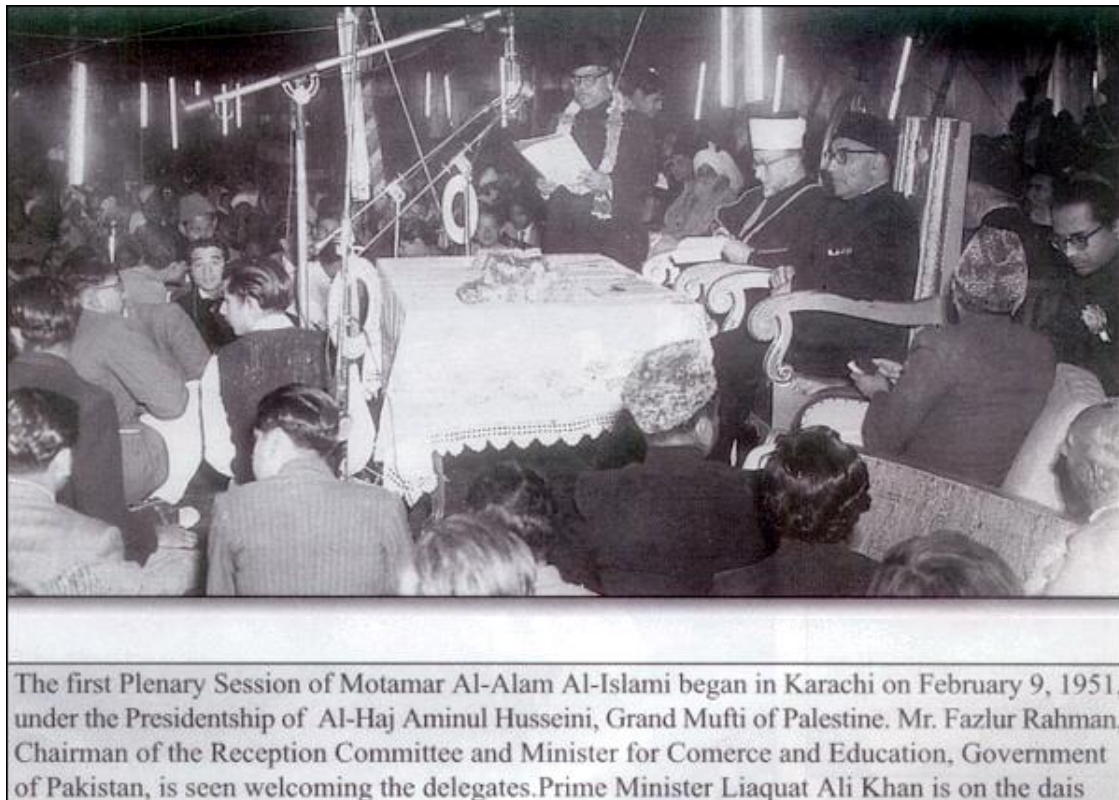


Photo 8.f



Photo 8.g



Photo 8.h



Photo 8.i



Photo 8.j



Photo 8.k



Photo 8.l



A delegation of Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami at Al-Aqsa mosque in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in early 60's when it was in Jordanian control.

Photo 8.m



A memorable picture of President of Motamar Al-Haj Syed Aminul Husseini and Secretary General Dr. Inaullah Khan in Karachi in 70s.

Photo 8.n



H.E. Dr. Rauf Denktash, President of the Turkish Federated State of Kibris, opening the 8th session of the Motamar at Slamis Hotel in Famagusta, March 23-28, 1980.

Photo 8.o



Photo 8.p



Photo 8.q



Photo 8.r



Photo 8.s



Photo 8.t



Photo 8.u



Sheikh-ul-Azhar Imamul Akbar, Dr. Mohammad Syed Tantawi, being received at the Motamar's International Headquarters in Karachi by Mr. Abdullah Dadabhoy Secretary Finance during the former's visit to Pakistan in October 1996.

Photo 8.v



Secretary General Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami, Sen. Raja Muhammad Zafarul Haq presiding over the concluding session of International Conference "Muslim Ummah in the Next Century" in Islamabad in 1997

Photo 8.w



The first Plenary Session of Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami began in Karachi on February 9, 1951, under the Presidentship of Al-Haj Aminul Husseini, Grand Mufti of Palestine. Mr. Fazlur Rahman, Chairman of the Reception Committee and Minister for Commerce and Education, Government of Pakistan, is seen welcoming the delegates. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan is on the dais

Photo 8.x

Source: <http://www.motamaralalamalislami.org/images/pic-1.gif> (8.a - 8.x)

APPENDIX-IX
(Photographs showing different programmes of OIC and Bangladesh)



Photo 9.a: Saudi Arabian King Faisal and Jordan King Hussein with Shah of Iran: Kuwait's Ruler Emir Sabah Es Salim Es Sabah in 1969 OIC Summit.
Source: <http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1208779>



Photo 9.b: Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (left) welcomes Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the airport.



Photo 9.c: Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto welcomes Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (wearing a scarf), Prime Minister of Bangladesh during Lahore Summit 1974



Photo 9.d: Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman shakes hand with Chief of Army Staff General Tikka Khan (known as ‘the Butcher of East Pakistan’), Pakistan President Fazal Elahi Chaudhury (left) and PM Zulfikhar Ali Bhutto (centre)

Source:

<http://www.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&STID=2S5RYD1PKTHR>
(9.b –9.d)



Photo 9.e: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with Pakistan Premier Z. A. Bhutto and Algerian President Houari Boumedienne at a reception in Lahore during OIC Conference in 1974

Source:

<http://archive.thedailystar.net/suppliments/2006/15thaugust/bangabandhuandtheworld.htm>

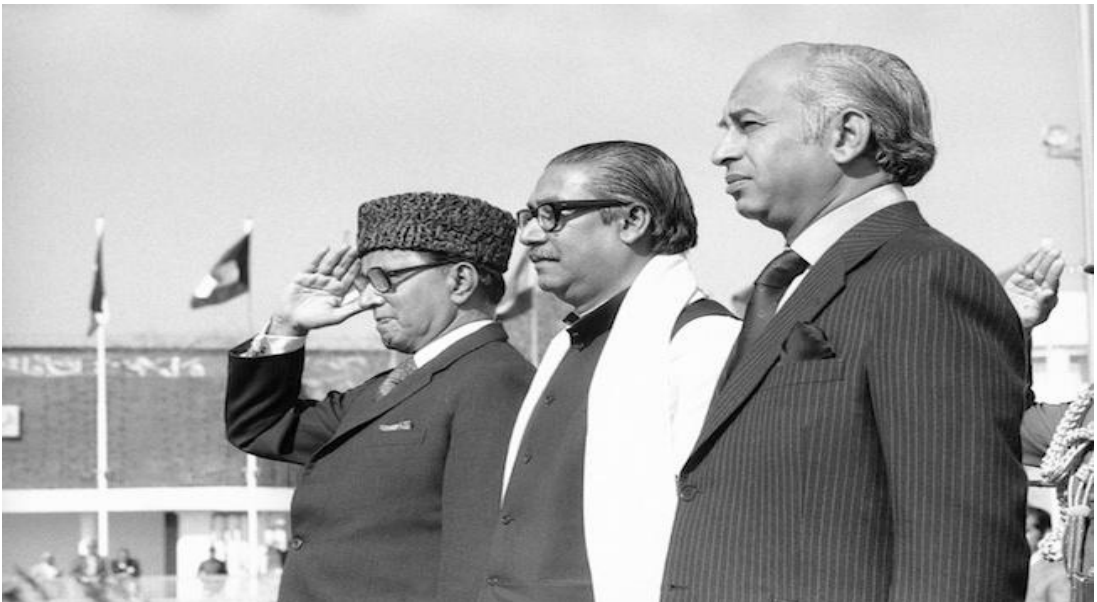


Photo 9.f: Pakistan President Fazal Elahi Chaudhury, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (left to right) stand at attention during playing of both countries' national anthems after Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's arrival in Lahore, Feb. 23, 1974 during Lahore Islamic Summit Conference.

Source:

<http://www.anorak.co.uk/353221/news/hifazat-e-islam-v-the-bloggers-a-fight-for-the-soul-of-bangladesh-photos.html/>



Photo 9.g: Foreign Minister Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq presided at a session of the Ninth ICFM (Senegal, 1978). OIC Secretary General Karim Gye seated to his right

Source: Muhammad Shamsul Huq. *Bangladesh in International Politics; The Dilemmas of the Weak States*, University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1993, p. 244



Photo 9.h: Muslim world Kings, Sultans, Prime Ministers, Presidents in Makkah during 10th OIC Summit in Putrajaya,

Source: <http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1208779>



Photo 9.i: Malaysian P.M Dr.Mahathir (centre) welcomes Bangladesh P.M Khaleda Zia to the 10th OIC summit in Putrajaya, as his wife Siti Hasmah (left) looks on.
Source: <http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1208779>



Photo 9.j: Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed during the opening session of the 11th OIC Summit held in Senegalese capital Dakar in 2008 gives vote of thanks on behalf of the Asian group.
Source: http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=27678



Photo 9.k: Foreign Minister Dipu Moni in the 37th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers

Source: <http://www.oic-oci.org/37cfm/en/>



Photo 9.l: Foreign Minister Dipu Moni in the 38th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers

Source: <http://www.oic-oci.org/38cfm/en/>



Photo 9.m: Bangladesh delegation chief Foreign Minister Dipu Moni stands with other leaders of Islamic nations for a group photo before the opening of the 12th OIC summit in Cairo February 6, 2013.

Source:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/06/us-syria-crisis-islamic-idUSBRE9150VN20130206>



Photo 9.n: Secretary General of OIC Iyad Ameen Madani called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 9 March 2014 to take initiatives for the repatriation of Myanmar refugees from Bangladesh.

Source: <http://unbconnect.com/pm-oic-sg/#&panel1-3>

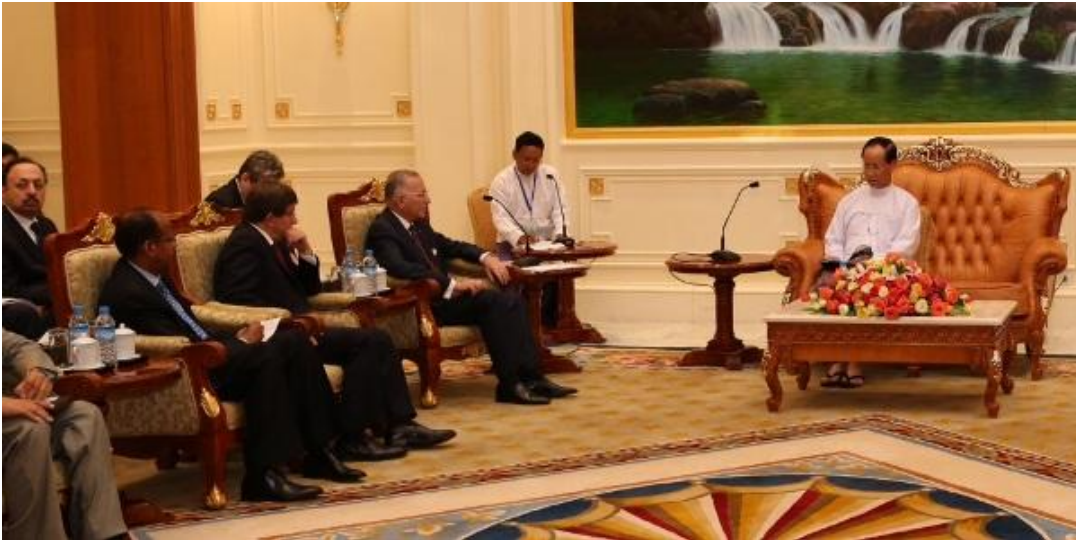


Photo 9.o: Representatives of the Member States of the OIC Contact Group on Rohingya Muslims, including Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu held contacts in Naypyidaw on November 14, 2013.

Source

<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/oic-contact-group-on-rohingya-muslims-holds-contacts-in-naypyidaw.en.mfa>



Photo 9.p: OIC Secretary General Iyad Ameen Madani met with students and staff members in the Auditorium of IUT on 10 March 2014 and exchanged views on various issues in a congenial atmosphere.

Source:

<http://www.iutoic-dhaka.edu/virtual%20iut/index.php?level=picture&id=4488>

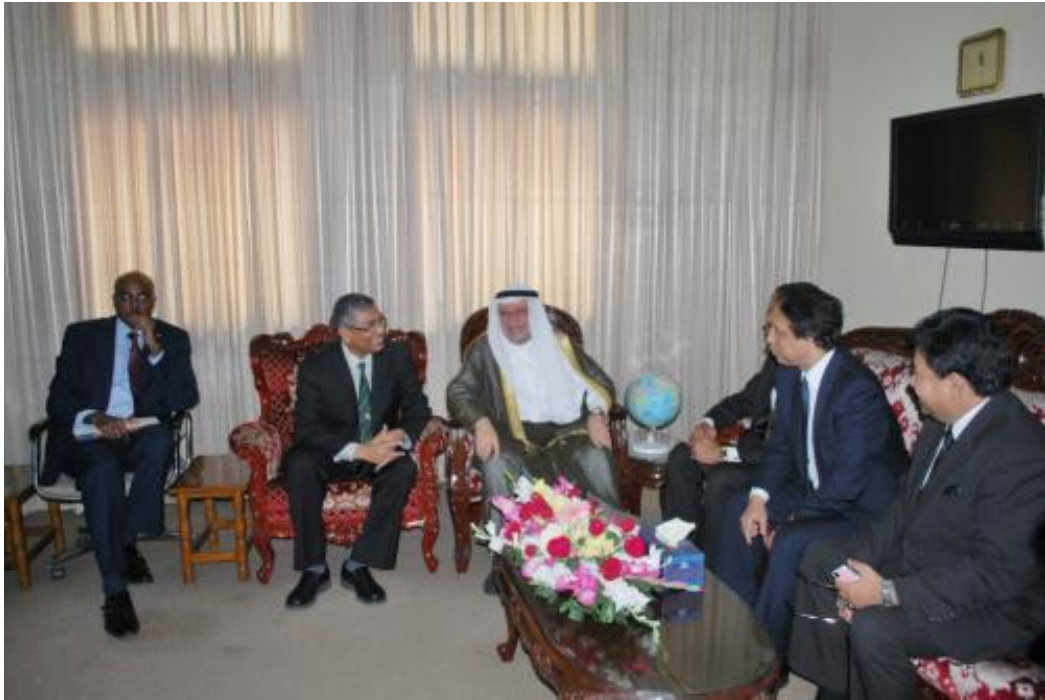


Photo 9.q: OIC Secretary General Iyad Ameen Madani, visited the IUT campus on 10 March 2014 and was received by the Vice-Chancellor of IUT Prof. Dr. M. Imtiaz Hossain and Heads of the Departments

Source:

<http://www.iutoic-dhaka.edu/virtual%20iut/index.php?level=picture&id=4500>



Photo 9.r: Campus of Islamic University of Technology (IUT), Board Bazar, Gazipur
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:IUT_entrance.JPG

APPENDIX-X

[This is relevant to Chapter No. III of the thesis (Chart 10.a-10.h)]

Number of Labor Migration

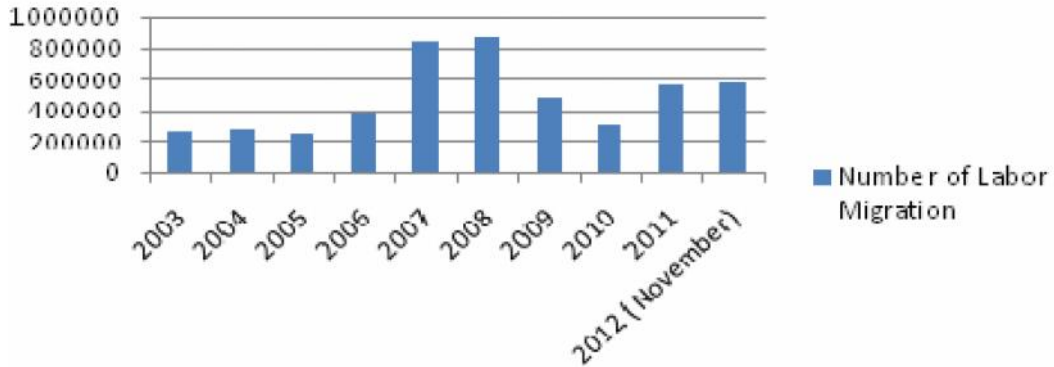


Chart 10.a: Flow of Labour Migration in Bangladesh (2003-2012, November)

Edition	Number of Labor Migration
2003	254190
2004	272958
2005	252702
2006	381516
2007	832609
2008	875055
2009	475278
2010	300702
2011	568062
2012 (November)	575389

Chart 10.b: Flow of Labour Migration in Bangladesh (2003- 2012, November)

Remittance (B.D in Billion USD)

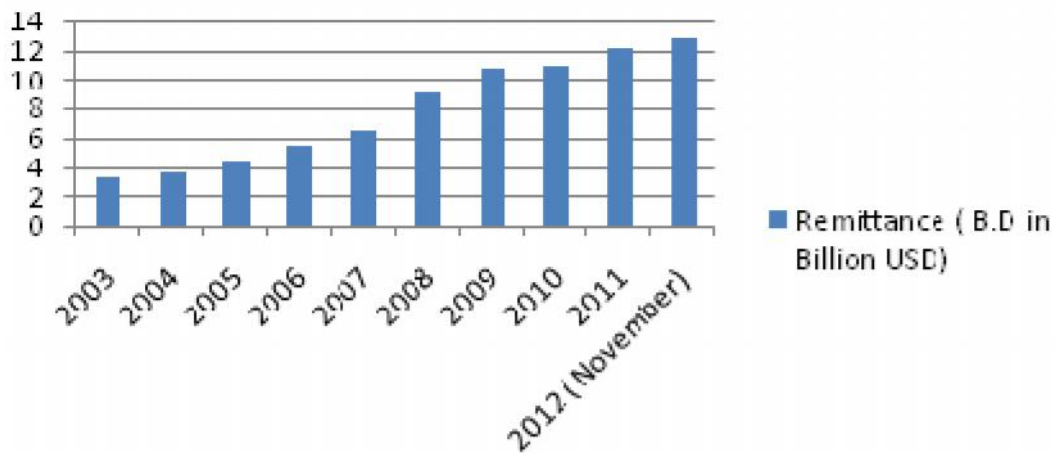


Photo 10.c: Flow of Remittance Income in Bangladesh (2003- 2012, November)

Edition	Remittance (B.D in Billion USD)
2003	3.18
2004	3.56
2005	4.25
2006	5.48
2007	6.57
2008	9.01
2009	10.72
2010	11.00
2011	12.17
2012 (November)	12.87

Photo 10.d: Flow of Remittance in Bangladesh (2003-2012, November)

Source (10.a-10.d): Sheikh Abdur Rahim & Md. Asrafal Alam, 'Foreign Remittance Income in Bangladesh: Opportunities and Challenges', *Asian Business Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2/2013 (Issue 4) ISSN 2304-2613 (Print); ISSN 2305-8730 (Online)

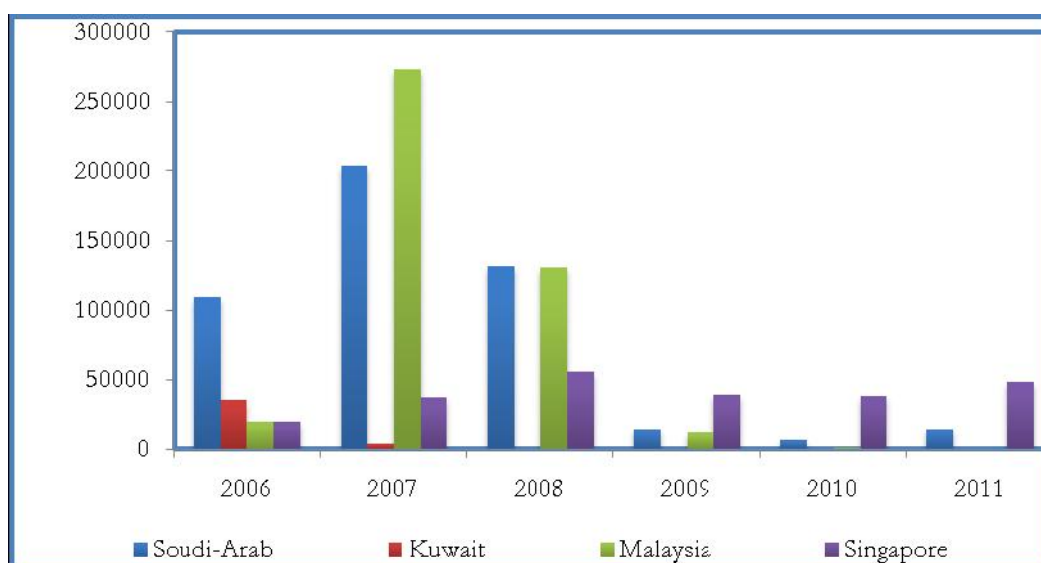


Photo 10.e: Yearly flow of Remittance (*Over the years, the flow of remittance in Bangladesh is increasing in volume, but the rate of growth in remittance has decreased since FY 2008-09 except in 2011-12.*)

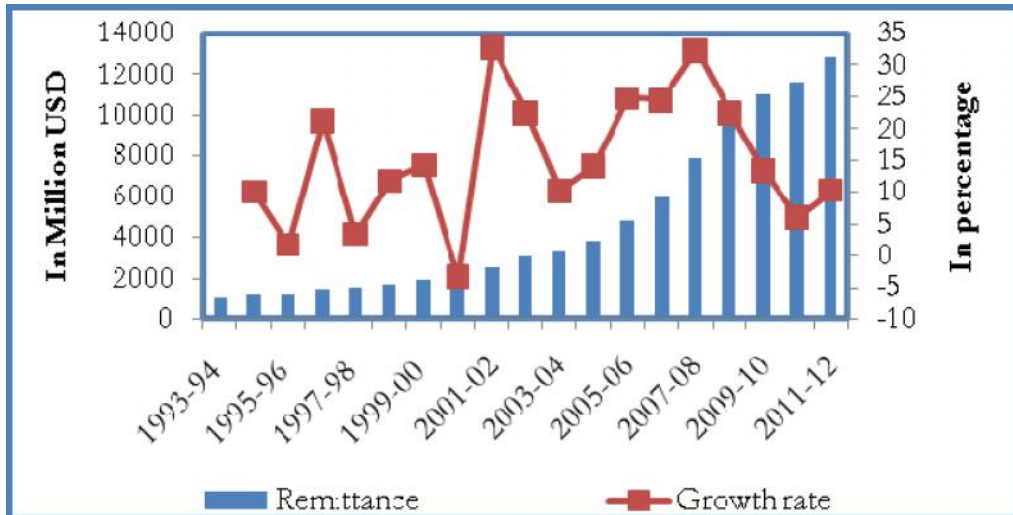


Photo 10.f: Decreasing growth of remittance

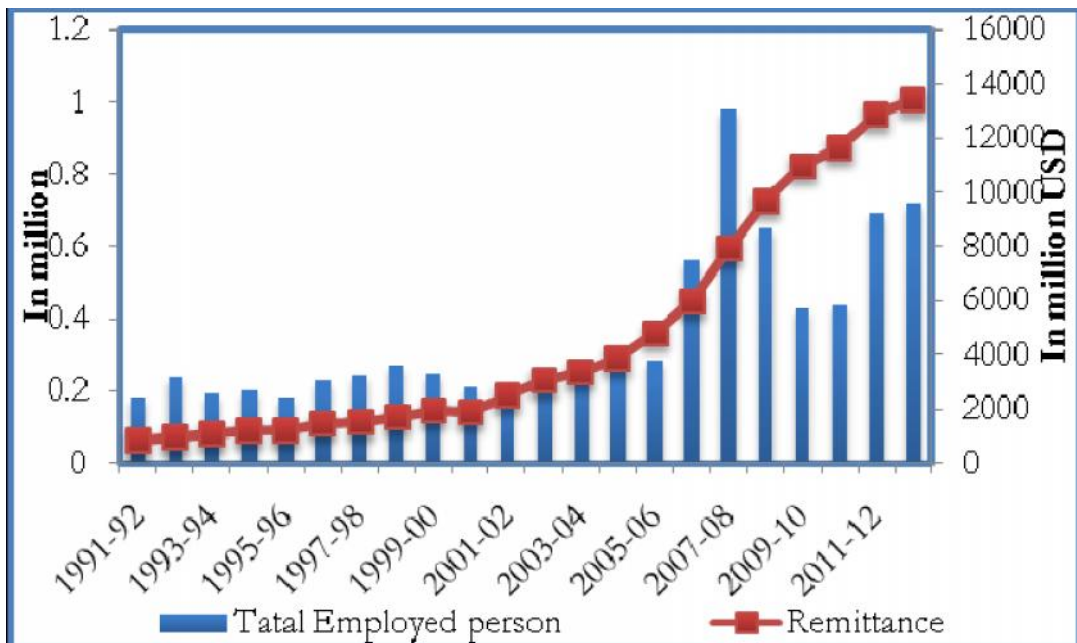


Photo 10.g: Flow of labour migration and remittance over the years

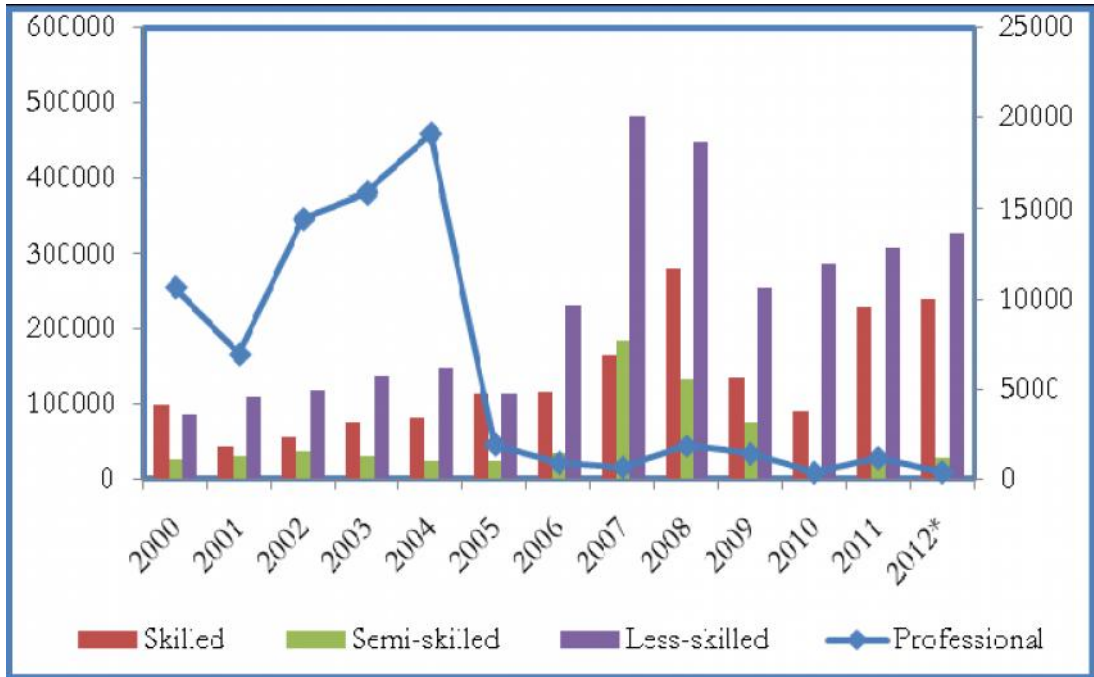


Photo 10.h: Type of labour migration over the years

Source (10.e-10.h): *Bureau of Manpower, Employment & Training*, Bangladesh Bank, 2012

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Pakistan Times

People

Saudi Gazette

Star

The Dawn

Times

Times of India

American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences

Arts Faculty Journal

Asian Affairs

Asian Business Review

Asian Recorder

BIISS Journal

British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies

Current History

The Dhaka University Studies

Foreign Affairs Journal

India and Foreign Review

India Quarterly

Islam and the Modern Age

Islamic Review

Islamic Review and Arab Affairs

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Middle Eastern Studies

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