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THE UMMAH AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES RE-ORGANIZING THE OIC

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PREFACE

The 'change' in global affairs is a continuous phenomenon. Thus, it is not new that centres of power have been changing from country to country and region to region. However, what is new is the velocity of this change. After the fall of the Soviet Union in general and the events of 9/11 in particular, the world has witnessed major changes within a short span of time. While on the one hand these changes have made the United States the sole super power of the world, on the other they have seriously affected the image, solidarity and integrity of the Muslim World. Therefore, in one way or another and directly or indirectly, this situation has adversely affected nearly five dozen Muslim countries and 1.5 billion Muslims all over the world. It is widely argued that the two major internal factors responsible for the sorry state of Ummatic affairs are underdevelopment and a lack of unity. Although, in this context, a lot has been written in the recent past, no comprehensive document has been produced so far covering all major challenges faced by the Ummah as well as their possible solutions. Thus, in this context, the present study is a unique effort.

By covering various aspects of the issues of Ummatic underdevelopment, globalisation, the geo-political and religio-cultural situation, Islamophobia, human insecurity and Ummatic defence, the report presents a comprehensive analysis of the situation. Apart from this, there are at least five major points which make this document a unique effort in this field. Firstly, the report is based on in-depth statistical and factual analysis. Secondly, data is acquired from a large number of authentic sources. Thirdly, it is designed in such a way that the spectrum of its audience is broad. Fourthly, it discusses the re-organisation of the OIC – an extremely important issue which has never been tackled in such a way as is discussed in this study. The last chapter presents a model and a long-term strategy to strengthen the OIC. Last, but not least, it must be mentioned that the analysis is based on the pre-situation of the recent economic blockade of the Palestinian government, devastating attacks on the Lebanon as well as a sea-blockade of this country - all committed by Israel. In this context, Muslim countries see themselves paralysed and the role of the OIC as shameful. In these circumstances, the conclusion of the present study suggests the pooling of Ummatic financial resources and the establishment of a joint security system for all Muslim countries.

I have known Dr Muhammad Ahsan for several years. He has extensive experience of research and teaching and is a Fellow of Royal Society of Art (UK). His main field of interest is the Muslim World in which he has

published extensively. Dr Ahsan is also an important contributor to IPRI Journal. We are thankful to him for offering this study to be published by IPRI. We hope that the present research will attract a variety of readers ranging from academicians to policy-makers. Furthermore, this thought provoking document will also provide a concrete base for discussion and research. From its readers, IPRI would like to receive any comment or suggestion in this regard.

Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema

September 27, 2006

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| ABM | Anti- Ballistic Missile |
| ACC | Arab Cooperation Council |
| ACM | Arab Common Market |
| AFTA | Arab Free Trade area |
| AMU | Arab Maghreb Union |
| ASEAN | Association of South East Asian Nations |
| BCCI | Bank of Credit and Commerce International |
| BJP | Bharatiya Janata Party |
| CAAT | Campaign Against the Arms Trade |
| CACEU | Central African Customs and Economic Union |
| CAFORD | Catholic Agency for Overseas Development |
| CAIR | Council on American-Islamic Relations |
| CAR | Central Asian Republics |
| COMCEC | Standing Committee for Commercial and Economic Cooperation |
| CPI | Corruption Perceptions Index |
| CTBT | Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty |
| D-8 | Developing Eight (Muslim Countries) |
| ECO | Economic Cooperation Organisation |
| EFF | Extended Fund Facility |
| ESAF | Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility |
| EU | European Union |
| FAS | Federation of American Scientists |
| FMA | Foreign Military Assistance |
| FMF | Foreign Military Financing |
| GATS | General Agreement on Trade in Services |
| GATT | General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs |
| GCC | Gulf Cooperation Council |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GNP | Gross National Product |
| GPRS | Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategies |
| G-8 | Group of Eight (Industrial Countries) |
| HDF | Human Development Fund |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| HIPC | Highly Indebted Poor Countries |
| HPI | Human Poverty Index |
| IAEA | International Atomic Energy Agency |
| IAIB | International Association of Islamic Banks |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| ICCI&CE | Islamic Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange |
| ICDT | Islamic Centre for Development of Trade |
| ICM | Islamic Common Market |
| IDB | Islamic Development Bank |
| IEU | Islamic Economic Union |
| IFSTD | Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development |
| IICJ | International Islamic Court of Justice |
| IINA | International Islamic News Agency |
| IISS | International Institute for Strategic Studies |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| IRCICA | The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture |
| ISOA | Islamic Ship-owners Association. |
| ISBO | Islamic States Broadcasting Organisation |
| ISESCO | The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| ITO | International Trade Organisation |
| MDF | Muslim Defence Force |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MFN | Most Favoured Nation |
| MMF | Muslim Monetary Fund |
| MNA | Muslim News Agency |
| MNCs | Multi-National Corporations |
| MSC | Muslim Security Council |
| MU | Muslim Union |
| NAFTA | North American Free Trade Agreement |
| NAMA | Non-Agricultural Market Access |
| NASA (USA) | National Aeronautics and Space Administration |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NPT | Non-Proliferation Treaty |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OIC | Organisation of the Islamic Conference |
| OICC | Organisation of Islamic Capital and Cities |
| PRGF | Poverty Reduction Growth Facilities |
| PRSC | Poverty Reduction Support Credit |
| PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers |
| PPP | Purchasing Power Parities |
| SAF | Structural Adjustment Facility |

| | |
|----------|---|
| SAP | Structural Adjustment Programme |
| SBA | Stand-By Arrangement |
| SDR | Special Drawing Right |
| SEC | Securities and Exchange Commission (U.S.) |
| SESRTCIC | Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries |
| SFISG | Sports Federation of Islamic Solidarity Games |
| TI | Transparency International |
| TNCs | Trans-National Corporations |
| UNCTAD | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children Fund |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WAEC | West African Economic Community |
| WFIAIS | World Federation of International Arabo-Islamic Schools |
| WTO | World Trade Organisation |

INTRODUCTION

*T*he contemporary globalised world is changing with such an incredible pace that the present national and international systems are finding it increasingly difficult to accommodate and adapt to the new shifting environments. In this context, the events of 9/11 were not only an attack on a country but also on one of the leading symbols of the global system. The attacks clearly indicate that despite the seemingly unstoppable march of corporate global capitalism, life for the present, and the foreseeable future, on this planet has become uncertain and insecure. Similarly, the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, the symbolic representation of US military power, was taken by many to be a militant and angry response to US military and foreign policy interference and exploitation of many countries in the developing world. The lack of concern by the major global players in eradicating the injustice and impoverishment that is a daily fact of life for the majority of the world's population, leads to feelings of dispossession, discontent and resentment. This resentment has often boiled over into anger and violent militant action that can act as a destabilising factor in world affairs, even in the heartland of the only existing military super power, and as a result, against which most of this anger is directed, the United States.

One way to analyse the contemporary wave of violence and suicidal attacks, is to place them within the context of many years of US biased foreign policy and its direct interference in the internal affairs of many developing countries in general and the Muslim countries in particular. In this situation, the question of global insecurity has become an important issue for the globalised world. This process has manifested itself in the social, economic and political arena. No doubt, to this development can also be attributed several positive aspects, many of which have contributed, and continue to contribute to the rapidly developing global system as a whole. For instance, in the historical perspective, during the nineteenth century, and in the first half of the twentieth century, scientific development benefited most of humankind all over the world. Inventions such as the aeroplane, motorcycle, railway, coaches, cars, telephone, refrigerator, radio, television, vaccines, antibiotics, vitamins, electricity and many other things, helped the working classes to improve their living standard. Prices were deliberately kept low to enable everyone to avail these new inventions. The trend, however, was to change after the Second World War. Today, the direction of this development is prefixed only by the pursuit of profit and greed. These modern developments are taking the place of the factory and office worker, and replacing workers with robotic machines and computers that are quicker and cheaper. Although, the results of these changes are obvious, they are not easy to analyse, particularly when one is talking about the measures for improvement.

One of the outcomes of the present global system is the establishment of the hegemonisation of a few countries (particularly the United States) which have enormous control over global affairs. On the basis of their military might and superiority in technology, these super powers exploit the global situation; resultantly, it has produced an unjust and imbalanced global economy and culture to the extent that according to the UNDP¹, a ‘fifth of humanity survives on less than \$1 a day and lives in countries where children die for want of a simple anti-mosquito bed-net.’ Moreover, for the past few centuries, international trade has been dominating the world’s politico-economic affairs. As the market economy and liberalisation gradually expand, through access to other economies, cultures are being encroached upon as the market expands. This occurs as a result of the emerging culture gaining more access to computer technology and the internet giving them the ability to compete and participate in the global market. Today, the main developments that have occurred in the West are, as a consequence of modernity, based mainly on scientific research and military superiority. Since the time of colonisation, the Western world has realised that advancement in the field of science and technology as well as military superiority are the only means, by which they can enhance their influence in global affairs.

In the present global scenario, the state of the Muslim World can best be described in the words of AbūSulaymān, who says: ‘Internally weak, relatively backward, frustrated, conflict-ridden, suffering from internal tensions, and often controlled and abused by foreign powers, the Muslim World is in a state of crisis. ... In Muslim countries, it is customary to blame external powers and imperialism for all manner of ills. Although this habit may point up many of the grievances and obstacles Muslims face, it cannot explain the internal cause of the ills. These ills put in motion a process of decay that dissipated the internal powers of the Muslim World. The resultant weakness brought external powers into the picture, complicating the difficulties.’² No doubt, the Muslim World as a whole faces a number of challenges as evidenced by the serious problems that beset individual Muslim countries. According to the *Human Development Report 2005*, as many as 40 Muslim countries have a lower value of Human Development Index (HDI) than of the world average.³ Furthermore, out of the top-30 HDI countries, none is Muslim. Even tiny, oil rich Brunei Darussalam, which was the top HDI Muslim country, was placed at 33rd position in world ranking. This is in contrast to the group of low HDI countries, where half are Muslims. Even

¹ UNDP (2005), *Human Development Report 2005*, New York: Oxford University Press.

² Abdul Hamid A. AbuSulayman, (1994), *Towards an Islamic Theory of International Relations – New Directions for Methodology and Thought*, Herndon: The International Institute of Islamic Thought.

³ UNDP (2005), *op. cit.*

within the category of medium HDI countries, several Muslim countries fall in its lower range. This situation can also be judged from the fact that the total GDP of all Muslim countries put together is less than five percent of the world's total.⁴

The intensity of the problems faced by the Muslim World can be realised in the words of Australian journalist, John Pilger⁵, who argues: 'The world is divided into two camps: Islam and "us." That is the unerring message from Western governments, press, radio and television. For Islam, read terrorists.' Similarly, Ernst (2000), an eminent American scholar also criticised the Western media for painting a negative picture of Islam and the Muslims. In his view: 'As there is very little knowledge about Islam in America, when news about Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban came into the media, Americans got an impression of Muslims based on extremism and antagonism. In reality, it is a political and sociological phenomenon and people believe what is being poured into their minds.' During 9/11 and its aftermath, the level of inaccuracy by the global media in reporting on the Muslim World, resulted in the portrayal of Islam in a highly negative and xenophobic fashion. The general public in the West are not spared the full brunt of 'Islamophobia'. This situation has created an environment of mutual distrust between the Muslim and the Non-Muslim worlds (particularly the Western World). The outcome of this situation is obvious. A report entitled: *Intolerance and Discrimination Against Muslims in the EU: Developments Since September 11*, published by the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights⁶, also highlights several problems faced by the Muslim minorities in the West European countries. It revealed the widespread negative attitudes towards Muslims as well as biased media coverage portraying Muslims as 'an enemy within'. In this type of environment, much of the energies of Muslim countries and communities are being spent on trying to prove that they are not intolerant and violent trouble makers.

The current global financial system has also played an important role in the enhancement of the problems of the Muslim World. IMF-World Bank strategies imposed on heavily indebted countries mainly benefit corporate interests, consequently reducing spending on domestic programmes. The impact of this situation can be felt in the form of a diversion of national resources to debt servicing and the maintenance of IMF-World Bank's programmes which are designed to transform local economies into a globalised model of production and export aimed at accruing the highest level

⁴ The World Bank (2005), *World Development Report 2006*, New York: Oxford University Press.

⁵ John Pilger (17th September 2004), 'Time to Recognize State Terror,' ANTIWAR.COM, <[http://antiwar.com/...](http://antiwar.com/)>.

⁶ International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (March 2005), *Intolerance and Discrimination Against Muslims in the EU: Developments since September 11*, Helsinki.

of hard currency. The conditionalities of both these institutions are meant to finance the redesigning of governmental, industrial and commercial systems, to enable countries to continue to pay debt servicing. Resultantly, this situation causes an increase in poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation which ultimately leads to an increase in the overall size of a country's multilateral debt. There is a direct correlation between the international debt burden and the gulf between rich and poor countries, as one supports other. A similar situation can also be seen in the case of international trade. According to People and Planet⁷: 'Trade is a matter of life and death for many of the world's poorest people. But the rich and the powerful are pursuing trade policies that put profits before the needs of people and the planet. ... Unfair Trade rules deny poor countries \$700 billion a year.' Christian Aid⁸ argues that trade liberalisation policies, as advocated by the WTO, harm the poor the most. This situation also reflects the poor position of Muslim countries in the global market.

Consequently upon the demise of the Soviet Union, the United States now stands alone as the world's only super power. The present situation has provided the country with many advantages, particularly in the economic, political and strategic arenas. However, the main negative aspect is that it has resulted in paralysing the United Nations on many occasions. Due to this skewed situation, most of the developing countries and the Muslim countries in particular, have no real say in global affairs or in the decisions that affect their legitimate rights. Palestine and Kashmir can be taken as examples where it has been shown that international problems and disputes relating to the Muslim World have been deliberately ignored due to the fact that their resolution was deemed not to be in the interests of the major global players or their allies. This is because the role of the Muslim countries in global geopolitical affairs, international trade, international finance and global security is practically zero. Similarly, when any incidence occurs in any part of the world, e.g., 9/11, the Madrid bombings (March 2004), the London bombings (July 2005) or the offensive cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Muslims all over the world are the real losers. No doubt, religion is a major factor in global politics, possibly not in the sense of spirituality but in terms of defining global alliances, along ideological lines.

In the modern world, advancements in the field of information technology have become an important instrument for Western industrial countries in their desire to control global affairs. However, more significant is the marriage between information technology and the global media system,

⁷ People and Planet (25 January 2006), 'World Trade Rules are Hunting the Poor,' <<http://www.peopleandplanet.org/tradejustice>>.

⁸ Christian Aid (24 November 2005), 'Christian Aid and the WTO', <<http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/campaign/wto/callingfor.htm>>.

which plays a critical role in forming and reforming international public opinion. In fact, this information technology and global media system is almost exclusively owned by a set of Multi-National Corporations (MNCs), which, in turn, all hold vested interests in the global capitalist system supervised by the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO (National Organisation for Women Foundation: 07 March 2006)⁹. Indeed, none of the major corporations in the business of information and news diffusion come from Asia, Africa, South or Central America, or any of the developing countries. Therefore, under the prevailing global situation, it is unclear as to how Muslim countries will be able to reduce this widening communication technology gap. The under-development in communication technology is a major factor in keeping the Ummah weak and vulnerable.

Today's Ummatic map has little ethnic, religious or socio-linguistic validity in the world since it arose merely as a result of colonial division. It seems that the major global players are still fearful of the fragments that emerged from the destruction of the vast Ottoman and Persian Empires. This can be cited as one of the reasons why they are still attempting to further disintegrate these pieces. Unfortunately, the activities of the major powers and the United States in particular, are not just limited to propagating anti-Muslim propaganda but are in fact dedicated to the reshaping and restructuring of the entire Muslim World. This is an alarming situation and the Muslim leadership needs to consider it very seriously and urgently. Here, the first and foremost important point is that rather than always complaining and blaming others for all their ills, the Muslim leadership needs to put its own house in order. It is their responsibility to curb widespread corruption and wastage of financial and human resources within the Ummah. If Muslim countries still fail to develop an appropriate and comprehensive strategy for their long-term socio-economic and strategic development, they will be further exploited by the major global players. It is noteworthy that after the demise of the Soviet Union, the ruling elite in the West, and particularly in the US, saw Islam as the new global enemy. It, then, began to instigate a programme that aimed to remove Muslims from having any role in global affairs. It blocked the ways and means for Muslim countries to acquire modern technology, particularly civilian nuclear technology. The denial of modern defence technology is another example of how the West intentionally wants to reduce the armed forces of the Muslim countries to local level militias.

It is noteworthy that the contemporary process of globalisation is not a natural phenomenon, rather it is an entity mainly driven by the major global powers through agencies such as the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO and the

⁹ National Organisation for Women Foundation (05 March 2006), 'Who Controls the Media?', <<http://www.nowfoundation.org/issues/communications/tv/mediaccontrol.html>>.

global media. The objective of these organisations and their activities is to control the world, particularly the Muslim World, economically, politically, culturally, ideologically and militarily. In this context, the Islamic approach to globalisation, stresses the need to promote cooperation among Muslim countries leading to their politico-economic integration. Such intra-Ummatic integration is extremely important in the perspective that unfortunately, the status and position of the Muslim World, is rapidly vanishing. If the present trends of decline continue, the Muslim World will face an extremely critical situation over the next few decades. What it, in fact, amounts to is a question of survival, and Muslim countries must realise that they have to take measures to protect themselves if they are not to become totally excluded from global affairs. This struggle for existence has to be conducted in several areas, i.e., the development and strengthening of the Islamic financial system, promotion of mutual trade, cooperation in the fields of science and technology, media and information, and most important of all, the creation of a system of common security. The key to the success of this whole programme lies with economic motives. It is, therefore, necessary that these countries seek to encourage the promotion of mutual trade through institutions such as the OIC and the Islamic Development Bank. This increase in cooperation would lead to a further promotion of mutual confidence within the entire Muslim World. The step by step nature of this development programme would enable them to solve their problems without external interference. So far, the OIC has totally failed to take a leading role in resolving Ummatic problems. Thus, there is an urgent need to re-organise this institution, to enable it to play its due role for the betterment of the Ummah.

In trying to explore the nature and causes of the under-development of Muslim countries, and in trying to explain why they have failed to learn from the bitter historical experience of colonisation as well as the contemporary economic stagnation, we must critically examine the current status of these countries in the globalised world. Furthermore, in order to find the Ummatic responses to modern global challenges and their impact on the Muslim countries, we also need to evaluate the state of the Muslim World in relation to the Non-Muslim World. Such analysis would lead us to suggesting possible remedies and solutions for the ills of the Muslim World as a whole. This is the undertaking of the present study. This book is partly based on our earlier research works (i.e., *Globalisation or Recolonisation? The Muslim World in the 21st Century*) and various research papers published in international journals. However, unlike previous research, in the present study, a new approach has been used to analyse the challenges faced by the Ummah. This study is based on a large number of recent reports and books published by several leading international institutions. The first chapter focuses on the issue of globalisation and under-development, in theory and action. It evaluates the state of the Muslim World in the context of globalisation and the prospect for success in the future struggle for development. The second chapter examines the issue of Islamophobia and how it has contributed to widening the gulf between the Muslim World and the West. It explores various dimensions of the situation and discusses the way in which Islam as a religion is portrayed in the West.

The third chapter looks at the state of human security particularly with its religio-cultural perspective in relation to its economic dimensions. It also discusses the current global financial system and its impact on the Muslim countries, especially with the question of debt burden. Chapter four explores the gap in international trade as well as prospects for the Islamic economic market. Chapter five discusses the implications of defence and strategic alliances at the dawn of the 21st century. It also provides a comparison of defence expenditure between Muslim and Non-Muslim countries. The discussions in these chapters show how a lack of solidarity and leadership has failed to unite the Muslim countries towards a system of mutual cooperation. By presenting a comprehensive future strategy, the final chapter explores the possible ways and means by which to improve the overall state of development in the Muslim World. In the context of the current global situation, the aim of this study is to contribute to promoting an understanding of the present politico-economic state of the Muslim countries and to suggest measures for improvement. ■

Professor Ali Mohammadi
London

July 2006

CHAPTER I

THE MUSLIM WORLD: GLOBALISATION AND UNDER-DEVELOPMENT

What is Globalisation?

Before we start our discussion, it is appropriate to briefly look at the concept of globalisation. There are various definitions of globalisation. But being an active agent of the globalisation process, the World Bank's definition can be considered the most authentic one. The Bank¹⁰ says that globalisation means: 'The growing integration of economies and societies around the world. Globalization is an inevitable phenomenon in human history that has been bringing the world closer together through the exchange of goods and products, information, knowledge and culture.' In the view of CAFOD, an eminent international charity¹¹: 'Globalisation describes the process whereby individuals, groups, companies and countries become increasingly interconnected. This interconnectedness takes place in several arenas.' Without reviewing the actual functions of the IMF and the World Bank, especially those that have occurred since the 1980s, defining the globalisation process and its impact becomes almost impossible. It arises from the fact that these two leading international financial institutions have played a crucial role in the whole process of the global transformation of capital.

Such a situation has become particularly acute since the collapse of the Soviet bloc, given the latter's position as the main rival ideological force in the international political economy. The conservative forces in North America and Western Europe have prepared public opinion for this transformation by controlling large sections of the mass media conglomerates, which, in turn, have actively pushed forward the idea of market deregulation in order to achieve the free flow of capital and the removal of government limitations to the expansion of global finance. Furthermore, the globalisation process has been implemented, strengthened and promoted through the support mechanism of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF.¹² This argument is further supported by Amory Starr¹³. In his view:

¹⁰ The World Bank (21 January 2006), 'Globalisation,' <[http:// youthink. worldbank. org/ issues/ globalization/...>](http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/globalization/...).

¹¹ CAFOD (21 January 2006), 'The Rough Guide to Globalisation,' <[http://www. cafod.org.uk/ policy_and_analysis/ policy_papers/...>](http://www.cafod.org.uk/policy_and_analysis/policy_papers/...).

¹² Fred Halliday (2002), 'West Encountering Islam: Islamophobia Reconsidered.' In Ali Mohammadi (ed.), *Islam Encountering Globalisation*, London: RoutledgeCurzon.

‘International financial institutions (IFIs), such as the World Bank and the IMF, do not exist to make a monetary profit, but a profit of *control* over the economies of the Global South, facilitating G-8 access to natural resources, land, labour and markets, just as in the colonial era. Meanwhile, foreign aid actually flows in reverse; there is a net outflow from South to North due to debt servicing.’ This situation reflects that globalisation is the outcome of deregulation in the economic market and the integration of information technology in trade, banking, broadcast media and telecommunications.

In fact, in every sphere of life, the twentieth century has brought rapid changes to the world, especially the present globalisation process involved in the geographical extension of economic activities in general and the functional integration of internationally dispersed activities in particular. Consequently, the degree of interdependence and interconnection within the world economy has increased dramatically. In this situation, it is important to understand the overall impact of globalisation upon the lives of millions of poor spread all over world. Joseph Stiglitz, winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2001, worked as Chairman of President Clinton’s Council of Economic Advisors and later as Senior Vice President of the World Bank. He says: ‘[W]hile I was at the World Bank, I saw firsthand the devastating effect that globalisation can have on developing countries, and especially the poor within those countries.’ Furthermore, ‘globalisation today is not working for many of the world’s poor. It is not working for much of the environment. It is not working for the stability of the global economy’¹⁴. Similar views are also expressed by Amory Starr¹⁵, who says that ‘globalisation works only for the rich. ... The economic and political system promoted by globalisation is not only morally bankrupt; it is no longer credible as economics.’

Around four decades ago, Marshall McLuhan (1964) argued that ‘man now lives in a global-sized village, and is returning to the values and perceptions of a preliterate culture.’ At the dawn of the third millennium, we are actually experiencing a situation where peoples and their cultures are exhibiting increasingly hybrid characteristics. Although, it can be argued that much of this is not new, as human beings have always been engaged in a process of interaction throughout history, today’s ‘globalisation’ is different, primarily because of the speed with which it is taking place. It is driven by new forms of connectivity, such as the internet, and is governed by different rules, or, in many cases, by no rules at all. At present, we are unable to assess the impact of instant communication across national borders or its effect on culture, politics, economy, finance, ecology and human socio-psychological

¹³ Amory Starr (2005), *Global Revolt: A guide to the Movements Against Globalisation*, London: Zed Books.

¹⁴ Joseph Stiglitz (2002), *Globalisation and its Discontents*, London: The Penguin Press.

¹⁵ Amory Starr (2005), *op. cit.*

environment. This is due to the fact that the history of this phenomenon is not of substantial length to be able to accurately measure its impact on mankind. However, one factor has emerged that holds significant repercussions for us all, and that is the fact that, the rapid changes which have occurred in the last decade of the twentieth century, have all arisen as a result of the modernisation process and its consequent destabilisation effects.

At the eve of the 21st century, Hobsbawm¹⁶ argued that: ‘Globalisation means wider, but not necessarily equal, access for all and will lead to an increase in disparity between “the haves and the have nots.” For many, there is an urge to resist the process and take refuge in the illusory comforts of nationalism, fundamentalism or other such “isms”. As a result of the rapidly growing market, huge potential benefits are on offer for some, whilst at the same time incredible perils befall many nations of the developing world.’ As mentioned above, globalisation is not a new phenomenon but what is new is the extent and pace at which global integration has taken place, particularly during the last two decades.¹⁷ This trend has been most evident in the post-war era, but can be seen to have existed even before that in the early period of the twentieth century. The process of globalisation has accelerated with the restructuring of the global capital economy but the present struggle can be understood as a resumption of previous trends that ended abruptly with the First World War and the great depression. The creation of the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT), in the early post-war period, was an institutional attempt to begin negotiations, aimed at lowering tariff and trade barriers¹⁸. This institution was eventually replaced by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995, which continued to operate with the same remit. In this context, globalisation has restructured the role of the state, which has become merely a vehicle for transmitting global market discipline onto the domestic economy. It has given increased power to capital investors, multinational firms and global financial institutions.

In addition, the imposed privatisation and deregulation policies that are pursued through structural adjustment programmes, under the dictates of the IMF and the World Bank, have led to socio-political destabilisation in many countries. Consequently, states are unable to deliver on the promises and expectations of the masses because they have lost control over their national economies. In the absence of domestic cultural economic cohesion, the forces of internal disintegration intensify, thus threatening the very existence of the state itself. This discussion reflects the fact that globalisation has many

¹⁶ Eric Hobsbawm and Antonio Polito (1999), *The New Country*, London: Little Brown and Company.

¹⁷ The World Bank (21 January 2006), *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Grahm Bannock (1992). In R.E. Baxter and Evan Davis, *Dictionary of Economics*, London: Penguin Books.

dimensions, in much the same way as different people have different opinions. A few years ago, Sachs¹⁹, a modern Western thinker, argued that the world was divided not by ideology but by technology. A careful consideration highlights that he was partially right. Nowadays, this is because technology is closely associated with global finance, trade, politics and culture, which ultimately impinge upon different national ideologies. The current global situation indicates that the Western industrial countries, which monopolise these technologies, are the actual global players controlling global politics, finance and strategic situations around the world. They are the major suppliers of arms across the world and are the ‘draftsmen’ of global maps as well as the makers and breakers of developing countries. In such circumstances, one of the main problems for developing countries in general, and Muslim countries in particular, is how to integrate these changes into their own political, economic and cultural systems. In the chapters that follow, we will attempt to explore various dimensions of this issue.

From Colonisation to Globalisation

This chapter can be considered as a self-reflective narrative and a personal dialogue in the context of the globalisation paradigm. In this context, to get a clearer insight into today’s traumatic and troubled world, especially with reference to the developing countries, it is vital to look at the phenomenon of the modern European colonisation process, which began in the fifteenth century and has continued to evolve into a more sophisticated form, up to the present day. This process has resulted in the emergence of certain patterns and forces that have re-moulded the entire world over the last few centuries. The developing countries, which, prior to the demise of the Soviet bloc, were also referred to as the Third World, consist of the bulk of the earth’s population, as well as the bulk of its miseries and deprivations. This part of the world reflects various common characteristics. These include political turmoil and instability; perpetual economic crises and poverty; lack of resources for the adequate implementation of justice, illiteracy, armed conflicts, short life expectancy, high population growth, cultural and identity crises, weak and scarce public institutions, massive corruption, and above all crippling debts. Besides these factors, they also suffer from a general inability to put their own house in order and effectively manage their own resources, assets and problems, by themselves. Regardless of their respective national status, they remain, for all practical purposes, colonies of one imperialist power or the other.

¹⁹ Jeffery Sachs (24 June 2000), ‘Sachs on Globalisation: A New Map of the World’, *The Economist*.

The global expansion of Western Europe between the 1760s and 1870s differed in several ways from the expansion and the colonialism of the previous centuries. Concurrent with the rise of the Industrial Revolution (1760s), and the continued spread of industrialisation in the empire-building countries, came a shift in the strategy of trade across the colonial world. At the heart of this Western expansionism, laid the growing disparity in technologies between those of the leading European nations and those of the rest of the world. Indeed, at the outset, the difference between the level of technology in Europe and some of the regions on other continents was not especially great in the early part of the eighteenth century. Later on, the gap between the technologically advanced countries and the rest of the world began to increase rapidly, despite the diffusion of modern technology by colonial powers. Apart from their superiority in terms of armaments, weaponry and military expertise, advances in communications and transportation also became important tools for consolidating foreign rule over extensive territories. Indeed, it was communication technologies and the production of armaments that were to have the most significant impact on the way the British managed distant colonies, such as India.

From 1876 to 1914, there were six great powers in the world; Great Britain, Russia, France, Germany, USA and Japan, as well as two secondary powers, Holland and Belgium. These powers succeeded in dividing the world, according to their military might, into zones of influence²⁰. Furthermore, there also existed a number of semi-colonised countries such as Iran, Turkey and China. These semi-colonised countries, often found themselves in a worse situation than those countries that had been directly colonised. Their political leaders, if they had not been hand picked by the colonial masters, had to operate under a policy of bribery and intimidation, a situation that always proved more beneficial to the colonial powers than the national interests of the colonised. Iran was a case in point. The signing of the Reuter's agreement in the nineteenth century proved more beneficial to British colonial interests than Iranian national interests in that it gave the former more control over India via telegraphic lines that ran through Iran. Naturally, events differed from territory to territory and from time to time, being influenced by conditions unique to each area, but the drive for expansion remained persistent, as were the pressures to achieve the greatest possible advantages out of the resulting opportunities. By the early twentieth century, the colonial powers had succeeded in extending their colonies to cover over 85 percent of the earth's surface. Economic and political control by the leading powers stretched almost across the entire globe. In addition to direct rule, other means

²⁰ Serge Latouche (1996), *The Westernisation of the World*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

of domination were also exercised in the form of spheres of influence, special commercial treaties and the subordination of debtor nations.²¹

The question that emerges is one of how to assess the impact of colonisation and the various strategies of subjugation used by the colonisers? It is important to mention here that in 1813, the British Parliament passed a 'Charter Act' which proved of great significance in the history of India. One of this Act's three main elements was to teach Christianity and Western culture to the Indians.²² This Act was passed after a long debate in the British Parliament and was initiated into law as result of a document presented by Charles Grant (member of parliament) who was also the Chairman of the Board of Directors for the East India Company. Nurullah and Naik²³ argued that during his (Grant's) career with the East India Company, and throughout his tenure as a parliamentarian, he tried his utmost to convince the English people of 'the utterly *immoral* and wretched conditions of Indian society.' In his opinion, it was in the interest of Britain to change, in piecemeal fashion, the ideological basis of life in India and the religion of its people. Towards this end, he proposed a strategy of 'silent evolution' that began by teaching English to the Indians, then changing their culture and finally their religion. In his view, this evolution 'would have great and happy effects upon them [Indians], and effects honourable and advantageous for us'.²⁴ For this reason English was introduced to privileged Indians, and led Lord Macaulay to declare, in his famous 'Minutes on Education', that: 'We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect'.²⁵ The primary aim of this undertaking was

²¹ The history of South Asia reveals that the interest of Western countries in the vast Mughal empire in India was mainly due to its wealth. The British arrived in India as traders and then in December 1600, the East India Company was established, initially as a commercial organisation but later on it began to take part in the local politics of the sub-continent. The actual foundations of the British Empire were laid with Clive's victory in the Battle of Plassey (1757).

²² Syed Nurullah, and J.P. Naik (1951), *A History of Education in India*, Bombay: Macmillan.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Jamil Ahmad Jalebi, (1953), *A History of Education in India*, Madras: J.S. & Co. In fact, culture and language were the most important factors in the colonisers' drive to influence and dominate a nation. The French and British always used language as the first tool with which to divide and rule their colonies.

²⁵ Nurullah and Naik, *op. cit.*, p. 113. Similar views have also been expressed by a former French Governor General of French Africa, who clearly described the goals of the colonial powers. He said: 'Political and economic interests have imposed a two-fold task on our work in education. On the one hand, we must train indigenous cadres to become our auxiliaries in every area and ensure ourselves of a meticulously chosen elite. We must also educate the masses to bring them closer to us and transform their way of life. From the political standpoint we must make

therefore to filter the colonial ideology down through this class of persons to the general masses.²⁶ Habibi²⁷ argues that a crucial part of this policy was the fact that the teaching of science, technology, economic and politics was not introduced in the educational system of the colonies, rather the emphasis was laid on English literature, philosophy and culture. As a result, students were able to recite the history of colonial kings but learned nothing of their own background or culture and knew even less about science and technology.

The above discussion reflects the fact that the primary objective of colonisers was to spread their own culture and, to secure properly trained public servants who would work obediently for their colonial master. The impact of the imposition of foreign culture is well described by Cabral (1997, 171) who states that ‘the experience of colonial domination shows that in their effort to perpetuate exploitation, the colonizers, not only create a system to repress the cultural life of the colonised people, they also provoke and develop the cultural alienation of a part of the population. Thus a considerable part of the population assimilates the coloniser’s mentality, considers itself culturally superior to its own people and ignores or looks down upon their cultural values.’ Similar views have also been expressed by Weiner²⁸ who argued that ‘colonial governments paid no attention to the teaching of a national language or culture. We are all familiar with the fact that educated Vietnamese, Indonesians, Nigerians, Indians, and Algerians were educated in French, English, and Dutch, rather than in their own languages and traditions.’

In the current era, the important issue to note from the developing countries’ point of view, is the fact that the original colonisers are back, with arrogance and a renewed sense of purpose that has become strengthened and accelerated following the demise of the Soviet bloc. As a result, most of the serious crises that have emerged in the world, involve either the direct or

known our intention of bringing people to the French way of life’ (Rahnema and Bawtree: 1997, 153). J.B. Say (1968: 311) is of the opinion that enlightened nations possess a superior civilisation and savage civilisations possess an inferior one. Therefore, the inhabitants of the latter were somewhat passive and resigned, had a marked preference for leisure and were incapable of any rational reflection and scientific activity. In his words: ‘It is in the interest of the human species that the advanced European nations must keep, and even increase, their influence in Asia. ... It is evident that with its despots and superstitions, Asia has no good institutions to lose but she could gain many good ones from the Europeans.’

²⁶ H. Sharp (ed.) (1922), *Selections from Educational Records: Part-II*, Calcutta, Government Printing Press.

²⁷ Habib Ullah Habibi (1967), *Education and National Development*, New York, J.L. Publishers.

²⁸ Myron Weiner (1974), ‘Political Integration and Political Development.’ In Frank Tachau, *The Developing Nations: What Path to Modernization?* New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

indirect interests of these same colonial powers. This discussion of historical background shows that, depending on the context, there is a variety of meanings for catchwords like terrorism, war on terrorism, democracy, human rights, justice and environmental preservations. Certain events such as the Gulf War (including its ecological damage, mass-killings, the ethnic cleansing in Eastern Europe and continued sanctions and later occupation Iraq and Afghanistan), the collapse of the BCCI,²⁹ the war in Bosnia, and most recently, the nuclear issue in the case of Pakistan and Iran, all take on different meanings when seen from this perspective. The most devastating global events of the last century – World War I and II, the only nuclear attacks on civilians in the history of warfare – were all caused by colonial powers. By widening the gulf between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots, these past events and the contemporary process of globalisation have left serious influences on global peace and prosperity. Maddison³⁰ argues that ‘inequalities have been rising steadily for nearly two centuries. An analysis of the long term trends in world income distribution between countries shows that the distance between rich and poor countries was around 3 to 1 in 1820; 11 to 1 in 1913; 35 to 1 in 1950; 44 to 1 in 1973, and, 72 to 1 in 1992’. Similar trends can also be seen at an individual level, where this gap is increasing even faster.

The Past and the Present

Before proceeding further, it is appropriate here to quote *Time* magazine³¹. It reveals that in 756, Cordoba was the capital of Muslim Spain. ‘Over the next 200 years, it becomes the largest and the most cultured city in Europe. In the 9th century, the library at the monastery of St Gall in Switzerland, which holds only a few hundred volumes, is said to be the largest in Christian Europe. At the same time, that of Cordoba contains over 400,000 volumes.’ Similar views are also expressed by Philip Hitti³², an eminent British historian. His book entitled *History of the Arabs* highlights the fact that Muslims left a deep imprint on learning in medieval Europe, which led to a glorious era of knowledge and civilisation. Ahsan³³ reveals that Muslims made enormous contributions to the physical sciences. They measured the circumference of the equator and radius of the earth. They had unravelled the fact one thousand

²⁹ This was one of the most successful financial institutions in the world, and one in which investors from the Muslim World owned the bulk of shares.

³⁰ UNDP (1999), *Human Development Report 1999*, New York: Oxford University Press.

³¹ Hugh Porter (24 December 2001), ‘A History of Islam in Europe,’ *Time*.

³² Philip K. Hitti (1968), *History of the Arabs from the Earliest Times to the Present*, London: Macmillan.

³³ Muhammad Ahsan (2002), *Globalisation or Recolonisation? The Muslim World in the 21st Century*, London: TaHa Publishers.

years ago, that the earth revolves around the sun. For eight centuries, they not only maintained supremacy in the medical world but many Muslim medical authorities also served as teachers in European universities. They were pioneers in agricultural technologies and they wrote a lot on artificial insemination of animals and plant grafting. They manufactured high quality paper which was used for disseminating works of leading scholars, writers and teachers. As in other disciplines, they were accomplished masters in shipbuilding and navigation. In the early Islamic period, the Muslim fleet had 1700 ships. This number increased and played an important role in the expansion of global trade. Montgomery Watt (1972, 15, 23) reveals: ‘The religion of Islam was first and foremost a religion of traders,... Not surprisingly there were in Islamic Spain various industries producing luxury goods both for the home market and for export.’

However, the above is the ‘past’ and that is a totally different story from the ‘present’. The present state of the Muslim World can best be described in the words of AbūSulaymān³⁴. ‘Internally weak, relatively backward, frustrated, conflict-ridden, suffering from internal tensions, and often controlled and abused by foreign powers, the Muslim World is in a state of crisis. ... In Muslim countries it is customary to blame external powers and imperialism for all manners of ills. Although this habit may point up many of the grievances and obstacles Muslims face, it cannot explain the internal cause of the ills. These ills put in motion a process of decay that dissipated the internal powers of the Muslim World. The resultant weakness brought external powers into the picture, complicating the difficulties.’ Another Muslim thinker, Ahmad³⁵ revealed a decade ago that: ‘The Muslim World which has suffered at the hands of the West in the past and which remains even today weak materially, economically, technologically and militarily, is now being projected as a threat to the West. Their efforts to rediscover their identity and set their own house in order are looked upon as a challenge to the West. The Frankenstein of “Islamic fundamentalism” is being seen in the innocuous efforts of the Muslims to activate the democratic process and seek self-reliance. From former presidents Richard Nixon (*Seize the Moment*) and Ronald Reagan (*An American Life*) to intellectuals like Francis Fukuyama (*The End of History and the Last Man*) and columnists like Richard Pfaff and others are playing on the theme of Islam’s threat to the West. They are all drum-beating as if a spectre is haunting Europe and America, the spectre of Islamic fundamentalism. This is a one sided war. Yet, politicians, journalists and media men, even some scholars are party to the projection of this scare-mongering

³⁴ AbūSulaymān, *op. cit.*

³⁵ Salman Ahmad (1995), *A General Equilibrium Model of Custom Unions Among Islamic Countries*, Islamabad: International Islamic University.

scenario.’ The situation of post-9/11 Ummah³⁶ reflects that Ahmad’s statement is even truer today.

Even in the pre-9/11 period, Ernst (2000), an eminent American scholar shared Ahmad’s view and criticised the Western media for painting a negative picture of Islam and the Muslims. He states that: ‘As there is very little knowledge about Islam in America, when news about Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban came into the media, Americans got an impression of Muslims based on extremism and antagonism. In reality, it is a political and sociological phenomenon and the people believe what is being poured into their minds.’ In the events of 9/11 and its aftermath, the level of inaccuracy by the global media in reporting on the Muslim World, resulted in the portrayal of Islam in a highly negative and xenophobic fashion. The general public in the West is not spared the full brunt of ‘Islamophobia’.³⁷ Despite common theological roots and centuries of interaction, Islam’s relationship with the West has often been marked by ignorance, stereotyping, contempt and conflict. Ancient rivalries and modern day conflicts have so accentuated differences as to completely obscure the shared theological roots and visions of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition³⁸.

The overall outcome of this discussion reflects that the Muslim World is internally weak, unstable, and dependent on the major global players. This situation can be judged from the fact that the total GDP of all Muslim countries put together is even less than five percent of the world’s total³⁹. This is in spite of the fact that Muslim countries produce most of the world’s oil and minerals. In addition to accusing others, Muslim leaders and scholars have been misleading themselves by constant reference to a magnificent past and a utopian future which fails to confront the realities of the modern world, where

³⁶ Abdullah Al-Ahsan (1992, 3) says: ‘The Islamic concept of *Ummah* originated under the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the seventh century of the Common Era. Those who believed in the Prophet’s message and migrated from Makkah to Madinah with the Prophet, formed a closely-knit group. This group later came to be known as *Ummatul Muslimin* or the *Ummah*. In time, membership of the *Ummah* replaced tribal loyalty and in so doing the supreme identity of an individual in society. This change was of major significance, for in pre-Islamic Arabia, tribal identity had always enjoyed the supreme loyalty of the individual.’ Therefore, it can be argued that in Islamic philosophy, ‘Ummah’ is a community of faith and is composed of all the followers of the Prophet Mohammad. In this piece of research, the terms ‘Ummah’ and the ‘Muslim World’ are used interchangeably.

³⁷ Mohammed Mujeeb, a former Lord Mayor of Bradford (UK), was sent a gruesome letter stating that the solution to the ‘problem’ of Muslims was gas chambers. This particular episode serves as a potent reminder of the religious intolerance and the anti-Semitism suffered by the Jews at the hands of the Nazis.

³⁸ John L. Esposito (ed.) (1995), *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World* (Vol. 3), New York: Oxford University Press. p. 25.

³⁹ The World Bank (2005), *World Development Report 2006*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 296-297.

rational and national considerations leave little room for sentimental responses. The present Muslim states have also failed in their efforts to create credible and inspiring role models. The ruling authorities of the Muslim World often misinterpret the realities of the situation by ignoring the vital issues of poverty, hunger, inadequacy and widespread illiteracy that limit social justice and economic progress. Therefore, in many Muslim countries social problems are so deeply rooted as to leave the state in a position of complete vulnerability. The ultimate impact of such social weaknesses is not only internal, but also adversely affects the overall global position of these countries' standing in the world.

Here, it may also be mentioned that it is widely considered in the Western world that religion is a private matter rather than a collective issue of concern. This view is partially true, however, it can be argued that throughout human history, religion and religious symbolism have always played an important role in the national pride and in shaping global affairs. In the contemporary global situation, although it is commonly believed that religious symbolism is generally associated with the Muslim countries and communities, the major industrial countries are no exception in this regard. Their national symbols, particularly flags reflect the nation's religious roots. The adaptation of various shapes of the cross (e.g., in the case of Britain, Switzerland, Greece, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland) and colours on the flags of major global players' reflect their Christian background⁴⁰. For instance: i) the British flag contains a two coloured cross, i.e., red and white which represent St Andrew's Cross and St George's Cross, ii) the sub-national flags of England, Scotland, Guernsey and Jersey also contain the cross, iii) the highest military honour in Britain is called the Victoria Cross, iv) with the red base and white cross, the Danish flag is considered to be a sign from heaven and it is believed that during the Crusades, the flag was gifted by the Pope, v) in the Dutch flag, the blue and white strips are the sign of faith in God, vi) the green and orange colours in the Irish flag represent the Catholic and Protestant faiths, respectively, vii) the middle white strip represents faithfulness in the Hungarian flag, viii) in the Greek flag, the white cross represents the Orthodox faith, ix) along with the Star of David in the centre, the blue and white colours reflect the Jewish prayer shawl in Israel's flag, x) the bottom green strip in the Indian flag reflects faith while the central Dharma Chakra is the Buddhist spinning wheel, xi) the white strips highlight the purity of the Buddhist religion in the Thai flag, and, xii) the Japanese red 'sun disc' is associated with their faith. The same is also true for the Red Cross and the 'Order of Saint Andrew', Russia's highest decoration. Needless to say that in one way or another, and directly or indirectly, all these symbols have their role in the contemporary globalised world.

⁴⁰ Siobhan Ryan (ed.) (2002), *Complete Flags of the World*, London: Dorling Kindersley.

The Ummah: Integrated-Disintegrated

Historically, until the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Muslims remained, more or less, united under the umbrella of the Caliphate. After its collapse, the vast Muslim empires disintegrated and new independent states emerged on the global map. In this changed environment, a series of efforts were made by these states to establish a central institution to fill the resultant gap. In August 1969, the arson damage to the *Al-Aqsa* mosque in Jerusalem outraged Muslims all over the world. Two months after this incident, a conference, attended by 24 of the 55 Muslim countries, was held in Rabat (Morocco). Shortly afterwards, in March 1970, a meeting of the foreign ministers of all Muslim countries was held in Jeddah, resulting in the creation of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC)⁴¹. In principle, the OIC's charter is based upon the concept of Ummah, while in reality it operates under the idea of national sovereignty, borrowed from Western secular thought. The concept of Ummah is limited to the level of mutual cooperation among Muslim countries. This contradiction in its Charter is in itself a sign of the organisation's weakness, which has resulted in its failure to solve the various political and economic problems that beset the Muslim World. However, in spite of this weakness, it is a well-established institution and provides a base, and a sense of solidarity in the fragmented Islamic bloc. Muslims all over the world feel strengthened when they see their leaders sitting together to discuss the contemporary challenges faced by the Ummah.

It should be emphasised here that the globalisation phenomenon relies on three crucial factors, i.e., i) international politics, ii) international trade and financing; and, iii) the media. In this context, and under the framework of the OIC, there are two top-level political institutions, the Islamic Summit Conference and the Foreign Ministers Conference. Two other important commercial institutions – the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), based in Jeddah, and the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT), located in Casablanca, - were established in 1973 and 1981, respectively. With regard to the media, once again, two main institutions dominate – the International Islamic News Agency (IINS) and the Islamic States Broadcasting Organisation (ISBO). The question remains as to how effective these institutions are in their designated roles. Unfortunately, Muslim political and economic institutions have not been successful in solving major problems befalling Muslims. From the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan to its current crises, from the Iran-Iraq War to the Gulf War, from the problems of the Southern Filipino Muslim community to the Kosovo crises and most recently, from the contemporary situation of Iraq to Iran's nuclear crises; no effective measures have been

⁴¹ Abdullah Al-Ahsan, (1988), *OIC: The Organisation of Islamic Conference*, Herndon: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, p. 18.

implemented in order to solve these problems. The same is also true of trade among Muslim countries, which only amounts to some 13 percent of total world trade⁴².

Furthermore, the improving trends that have been observed in the real per capita GDP of Muslim countries, and generally heralded as a sign of economic improvement, have been neutralised by their dependence on foreign loans. The media, which is a major component of globalisation and plays a key role in moulding global opinion for a particular cause, has completely neglected the Muslim World. This is one of the reasons given for the narrow spectrum of activities covered by the news agencies of the Muslim World and why they have failed to establish a common network. This is only one dimension of the reality, the more important factors, such as the huge discrepancies in living standards, wide-spread poverty, illiteracy, hunger, famine, human insecurities and instabilities, form the dominant characteristics of the gap between the Western Industrial countries and the Muslim countries as seen in any global report emanating from the World Bank or UNDP. A careful examination of the present division of the world, arising as a result of the globalisation process, makes it clear that cultural identity has become one of the most critical issues of debate. Furthermore, it is necessary to add here that the above global division ignores the 'developing world' in general and the Muslim World in particular. But does this situation help in promoting development and global peace and prosperity?

The global map indicates that the Muslim World stretches from North West Africa (Morocco) to South East Asia (Indonesia). It ranges from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean, and Muslims control the main gateways of the world's trade and commerce arteries, such as the straits of Gibraltar, Bosphorus, Hormuz, Malaka and the Suez Canal. Geographically, these countries occupy the most strategically important areas in the world with nearly, 60 percent of the Mediterranean Sea surrounded by Muslim countries, and with the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf exclusively located within the Muslim region. It was further estimated that Muslim countries produce more than two third of the world's oil, 70 percent of its rubber, 75 percent of its jute, 67 percent of its spices, two-thirds of all palm oil, and half of all tin and phosphate. In addition to having a vast number of gas reserves, they also produce a large quantity of the world's cotton, tea, coffee, wool uranium, manganese, cobalt and many other commodities and minerals.⁴³ Unfortunately, in spite of these advantages, the role that Muslim countries play in global affairs is none what so ever.

⁴² Islamic Development Bank: (April 2005), *Annual Report: 2004-2005*, Jeddah: pp.72-73.

⁴³ Ghulam Sarwar (2003), *Islam – Belief and Teachings*, London: Muslim Educational Trust.

According to CIA⁴⁴ estimates, out of a total global population of 6.44 billion some 20 percent were Muslims.⁴⁵ Similarly, out of the 149 million km² of geographic area that covers the world, Muslims occupy some 23 percent. But according to another source⁴⁶ the overall proportion of Muslim population in the world is 23 percent. There are 57 countries of the world which are members of the OIC⁴⁷ and the total population of these countries is around 1.44 billion. With regard to the proportion of population, the membership of the OIC is quite diverse. For instance, on the one hand, there are some member countries such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Morocco with over 99 percent Muslim population while on the other, in Gabon, Guyana and Mozambique the same figures are only one, 10 and 18 percent respectively⁴⁸. However, in contrast, some countries such as Bosnia Herzegovina, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Macedonia have a significant proportion of Muslim population (i.e., 40%, 50%, 47% and 30% respectively), but are not members of the OIC.⁴⁹

It may be mentioned that for the simplicity of analysis, irrespective of the proportion of population, here the term 'Muslim World' is mainly used for those countries, which are members of the OIC. Demographically, the overall growth rate of Muslims population, is higher than the followers of other major faiths. Ksenia Svetlova⁵⁰ reveals that: 'Islam is by far the fastest-growing religion on the planet, with a growth rate estimated at 2.8%-2.9% per year.' These views are also shared by another source⁵¹, which quotes the figure of 2.9

⁴⁴ CIA (2005), *World Fact Book 2005*, <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/...html>>.

⁴⁵ This population includes only the Muslim people, irrespective of their place of residence (i.e., Muslim or Non-Muslim countries).

⁴⁶ Answers.com (19 February 2006), 'Islam By Country,' <<http://www.answers.com/topic/islam-by-country>>.

⁴⁷ OIC member countries are: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brunei-Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

⁴⁸ CIA (2005), *World Fact Book 2005*, <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/...html>>.

⁴⁹ *CIA Factbook* can be considered as one of the most reliable sources of data. However, with regard to the Muslim population, on some occasions it neither provides complete information nor is it consistent with other sources. For this reason, alternative sources are also used in the discussion.

⁵⁰ Ksenia Svetlova (24 November 2005), 'True Believers' *Jerusalem Post*.

⁵¹ Muslim-Canada.org (19 January 2006), 'Muslim Population Statistics,' <<http://muslim-canada.org/muslimstats.html>>.

percent per year.⁵² This growth rate is far higher as compared to the population growth rate of world average, developing countries average and the least developed countries, where the respective figures are, 1.1, 1.3 and 2.3⁵³. Such a high Muslim population growth rate can be considered as an asset if it is harmonised with the well-planned process of human development. However, unplanned population growth can cause serious problems as can be witnessed in the present day Muslim World.

Table: 1.1. Population Growth Rates for Various Countries and Regions

| Muslim | | Non-Muslim | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Countries/ Region | Population Growth Rate (%) | Countries/ Region | Population Growth Rate (%) |
| Nigeria | 2.2 | China | 0.6 |
| Pakistan | 2.1 | India | 1.5 |
| UAE | 4.4 | Israel | 1.8 |
| Albania | 0.5 | Germany | 0.0 |
| Uganda | 3.5 | Tanzania | 1.9 |
| Arab States | 2.1 | Europe | 0.0 |
| World Total: 1.2 % | | | |
| More Developed Regions: 0.3 % | | | |
| Less Developed Regions: 1.4 % | | | |
| Least Developed Regions: 2.4 | | | |

Source: United Nations Population Fund: 2005, 111-114.

Note: It should be noted here that in this piece of research, the division of countries into Muslim and Non-Muslim categories is not aimed at establishing two blocs of the world on the basis of their faith, rather it attempts to highlight the widespread human under-development across the Muslim World, which is an important cause of global insecurity and instability.

Human (Under-) Development in the Muslim World

The first *Human Development Report 1990* of the United Nations Development Programme was the brainchild of the late Mahbub ul Haq.⁵⁴

⁵² The Muslim-Canada.org reveals that:

‘Estimates of the total number of Muslims in the world vary greatly, e.g.:
0.700 billion or more: Barnes & Noble Encyclopaedia (1993);
0.951 billion: The Cambridge Factfinder (1993);
0.817 billion: The Universal Almanac (1996);
1.100 billion: The World Almanac (1997); and,
1.200 billion: Council on American-Islamic Relations (1999).’

⁵³ UNDP (2005), *Human Development Report 1994*, *op. cit.* pp. 232-235.

⁵⁴ Mahbub ul Haq (1934-98) first introduced this concept in 1980 when he was working for the World Bank (1970-82). Later, during his work for the UNDP

Today, this conceptual framework has gained a special place at global level, exerting enormous influence on decision-makers, researchers, academicians and ordinary citizens. Amartya Sen⁵⁵ also contributed to the development of this framework. He underlined the fact that achieving a better life has more to do with nurturing and expanding human potentialities and capabilities than constantly promoting consumption of more goods and services⁵⁶. Although, it can be argued that in its *World Development Report 1980*, the World Bank was the first institution to use the term ‘human development’,⁵⁷ the concept was adopted by the UNDP in 1990 when it published its first global report based on this concept. The report argued that: ‘Human development is a process of enlarging people’s choices. The most critical of these wide-ranging choices are to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and personal self-respect’⁵⁸.

The *Human Development Report 1995* supports this concept by arguing that it ‘brings together the production and distribution of commodities and the expansion and use of human capabilities’⁵⁹. The latest *Human Development Report 2005* says: ‘The most basic capabilities for human development are leading a long and healthy life, being educated and having adequate resources for a decent standard of living.’⁶⁰ It is noteworthy that since 1990, when the first human development report was published by the UNDP, human development has been measured in terms of ‘human development index’ (HDI). The invention of the HDI is based on various efforts made in the past.⁶¹ ‘The HDI

(1989-95), he took the initiative to publish the first *Human Development Report 1990*. In 1995, he established the Human Development Centre in Islamabad (Pakistan) and published the first report on South Asia, entitled, *Human Development in South Asia 1997*.

⁵⁵ Amartya Sen (1992), *Inequalities Re-examined*, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* (1999), *Development as Freedom*, New York: Alfred Knopf. *Ibid.* (1999), *Consequential Evaluation and Practical Reason*, Cambridge: Trinity College

⁵⁷ The World Bank (1980), *World Development Report 1980*, New York: Oxford University Press. p. 32.

⁵⁸ UNDP (1990), *Human Development Report 1990*, New York: Oxford University Press. p. 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* (1995), *Human Development Report 1995*, pp. 11-12.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* pp.18-193

⁶¹ The problem of using per capita income as a measure of development is a matter of common knowledge among academicians and thus social indicators are considered as an additional or alternative measure of development. The use of these indicators (e.g., life expectancy at birth, literacy rate, primary and secondary enrolment ratio, per capita consumption of protein, per capita energy consumption and average number of persons per room, etc.) related to the quality of life was highlighted by Adelman and Morris in 1967, and then the United Nations in 1970. Later, in 1979, another scholar, Morris D. Morris computed the ‘Physical Quality of Life Index’ which was composed of three indicators, i.e., life expectancy at age

is a composite of three ingredients: longevity, knowledge and standard of living. Longevity is measured by life expectancy at birth. Knowledge is measured by a combination of adult literacy (two-third weight) and mean years of schooling (one-third weight). Standard of living is measured by purchasing power, based on real GDP per capita adjusted for the local cost of living (purchasing power parity, or PPP).⁶² With respect to the quantitative value of HDI, the report ranks all countries of the world and categorises them into: i) high human development countries, ii) medium human development countries, and, iii) low human development countries.

Today, the Muslim World as a whole faces a number of challenges, as evidenced by the serious problems that beset individual Muslim countries. According to the *Human Development Report 2005*, as many as 40 Muslim countries have a lower value of HDI than of the world average⁶³. Further to say that out of the top-30 HDI countries, none is Muslim. Even tiny, oil rich Brunei Darussalam, which was the top-HDI Muslim country, was placed at 33rd position in world ranking. With respect to the overall situation, Brunei cannot be considered a true example of the Muslim World. In the list of 57 high HDI countries, there are only five countries from the Muslim World. This was in contrast to the group of low HDI countries, where half were Muslims. Even within the category of medium HDI countries, several Muslim countries fall in its lower range. This situation reflects that with regard to the basic indicators, Muslim countries lag far behind Non-Muslim countries. It is worth noting that during the period 2001-2005, out of 53 OIC member countries for which data were available, 47 countries (89%) have fallen with

‘one’, infant mortality and the literacy rate. These attempts to measure social development provided a foundation for the discovery of the future HDI.

⁶² UNDP (*Human Development Report 1994*, p. 91). Choudhury (1998, 152-53) challenges the comprehension of the HDI by emphasising that it (HDI) lacks the concept of social welfare and thus it presents only a partial picture. He stressed the point of institutional change and in his opinion, rather than HDI, a Social Well-being Index (SWI) should be constructed. He argues that the stock market situation is an actual reflection of socio-economic stability in a country. Thus, as much as the stock market is stable, there will be more investment and social well-being. A careful consideration of HDI and SWI indicates that, SWI is not able to present an accurate picture of human development because here the actual emphasis is on economic growth. Haq argues that economic growth is not an end but merely a means to development because this growth does not necessarily translate into human development. It is particularly true for various Muslim countries where in spite of reasonable economic growth in the past few decades, its benefits have been hijacked by politically influential and wealthy people. Therefore the gap between the different social classes has widened. Thus, it can safely be said that HDI is a useful tool for understanding and ordering the level of human development of different countries. It has a stronger impact on readers’ minds and attracts attention more powerfully than simply a long list of social indicators.

⁶³ UNDP (2005) *Human Development Report 2005*, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-222.

respect to their HDI ranking.⁶⁴ For instance, Egypt, Lebanon, Malaysia and Nigeria were on 105th, 65th, 56th and 136th position in 2001 but fell to 119th, 81st, 61st and 158th position in 2005, respectively. Although it can be argued that some of the high HDI Non-Muslim countries have also fallen in world ranking, they still remain among the top of the list⁶⁵ and.⁶⁶ This situation reflects that in the present globalised world, where in every sphere of life, competition between countries is on the rise, it is a major challenge to the overall development of the Ummah.

The above fact is also confirmed by Mahbub ul Haq. In 1999, he pointed out that: ‘The development ranks of Islamic countries are generally lower than per capita ranks, showing that their income has not been fully translated into the lives of their people. The overall Human Development Index (HDI) for 49 Islamic countries is only 0.393, placing the Islamic World in the low human development category’.⁶⁷ After several years of the issuance of his statement, unfortunately, the situation of human development of the Ummah, has declined even further. In the following table, data indicates that within the group of high HDI countries with ‘similar income’, UAE holds 41st position as against New Zealand which enjoys 19th position. Similarly, in low HDI countries, Guinea occupies 156th position in comparison to Viet Nam which ranked 108th. The literacy rates in New Zealand and Viet Nam were 99 and 90 percent as compared to UAE and Guinea where the figures were only 77 and 41 percent, respectively.

Table: 1.2. Comparison of the Muslim and the Non-Muslim Countries with Similar Income but Different Levels of Human Development

| Country | HDI Ranking | GDP per capita (US\$) | Life expectancy (Years) | Literacy rate (%) |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| High-income | | | | |
| •New Zealand | 19 | 22,582 | 79.1 | 99.0 |
| •UAE | 41 | 22,420 | 78.0 | 77.3 |
| Low-income | | | | |
| •Viet Nam | 108 | 2,490 | 70.5 | 90.3 |
| •Guinea | 156 | 2,097 | 53.7 | 41.0 |

Source: UNDP: 2005, 219-222.

⁶⁴ Data were not available for Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Somalia. While Oman and Tunisia retained their respective positions, Albania, Libya, Qatar and UAE slightly improved their HDI ranking.

⁶⁵ UNDP (2005), *op. cit.*, pp. 219-222

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 141.144

⁶⁷ Mahbub ul Haq (1999), *Reflections on Human Development*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, p. 105.

‘Education for All’: A Reality or Just a Slogan?

Education is at the heart of humanistic development. The goals of future-oriented education are defined by the development process as the collective vision of society. Education as knowledge is one of the creative elements in the formation of that collective vision and is also one of the important means for realising the agenda of human ascent from the shadows out. It has a catalytic role in each element as well as the human development process as a whole⁶⁸. In Islamic literature, there is enormous emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge. Unfortunately, these teachings are widely neglected and thus are limited only to the extent of theory. In the practical sense, the Muslim World is far behind in this field. It is noteworthy that these religious teachings are also supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, which considers education as a basic human right⁶⁹ (United Nations Centre for Human Rights: 1988; UNO: 1966).⁷⁰ Similarly, the ‘World Conference on Education for All’ (jointly sponsored by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank), held in 1990 at Jomtien (Thailand), adopted the ‘World Declaration on Education for All’. It called on all countries to provide basic education to all their citizens by the end of the twentieth century⁷¹. In April 2000, as many as 188 countries (including all the Muslim countries) joined ‘The World Education Forum’ in Dakar. The Dakar Conference was held to review progress after the ‘World Conference on Education for All’ (1990) and to reaffirm their commitment to basic education.

In fact, in spite of the above emphasis, in several Muslim countries the situation of the education sector is quite discouraging. For instance, in Pakistan (the only nuclear power in the Ummah),⁷² statistics indicate that the country’s literacy rate was only 49 percent. This literacy rate varies in the country, across the provinces and rural and urban areas. It is quite discouraging that after more than half a century of independence, this country is still among the countries of the world, which has the lowest literacy rates. Further to say that the bottom-six and the most illiterate countries in the world’s list of human development also belong to the Ummah. Sadly, the

⁶⁸ Raja Roy Singh, (1991), *Education for the Twenty-First Century: Asia Pacific Perspectives*, Bangkok: UNESCO Principal Regional Office.

⁶⁹ United Nations Centre for Human Rights (1988), *Human Rights: Fact Sheet No. 2*, Geneva: The United Nations.

⁷⁰ UNO (1966), *Report of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*, New York: United Nations.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, UNESCO, UNDP, and The World Bank (1990), *World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs (World Conference on Education for All, 5-9 March 1990, Jomtien, Thailand)*, New York and Bangkok: UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP and The World Bank.

⁷² The World Bank (2005), *op. cit.* pp. 292-293.

literacy rate for Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali are only 12.8, 14.4 and 19.0, respectively⁷³. Similarly, table: 1.3 which indicates a cross-country comparison of high and low-income Muslim and Non-Muslim countries also reflects a discouraging picture. As is discussed above, here too, it is obvious from the figures that in spite of having the same level of per capita income, in the context of human development, Saudi Arabia and Mauritania are far below Argentina and Mongolia in the respective categories. The literacy rates of both these Muslim countries are also far lower than their Non-Muslim counterparts. Interestingly, even Mongolia, which has only one-seventh of per capita income compared to Saudi Arabia, is more advanced with respect to its literacy rate. This situation raises concern as to how Muslim countries can make progress in the modern world?

Table: 1.3. Cross Country Comparison of Educational Achievement

| Country | HDI Ranking | GDP Per capita | Adult Literacy rate |
|--------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
| High-income | | | |
| • Argentina | 34 | 12,106 | 97.2 |
| • Saudi Arabia | 77 | 13,226 | 79.4 |
| Low-income | | | |
| • Mongolia | 114 | 1,850 | 97.8 |
| • Mauritania | 152 | 1,766 | 51.2 |

Source: As table: 1.2.

Human Deprivation

The notion of ‘human deprivation’ can be considered a sub-component of the concept of human development. As against income poverty in which only income is considered a parameter for judging the level of poverty, human poverty is described as human deprivation by the UNDP. Human deprivation is composed of ‘the percentage of people expected to die before the age of 40, the percentage of adults who are illiterate, and the overall economic provisioning in terms of the percentage of people without access to health services and safe water, and the percentage of underweight children below five’⁷⁴. This definition is also supported by the World Bank⁷⁵ and according to the *World Development Report 2000/2001*: ‘Poverty is pronounced deprivation in well-being. But what precisely is deprivation? The voice of poor people bears eloquent testimony to its meaning. To be poor is to be hungry, to lack shelter and clothing, to be sick and not cared for, to be illiterate and not

⁷³ UNDP (2005), *Human Development Report 1998*, *op. cit.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* (1997), *Human Development Report 1997*, *op. cit.*

⁷⁵ The World Bank (2000), *World Development Report 2000/2001*, *op. cit.*

schooled. But for poor people, living in poverty is more than this. Poor people are particularly vulnerable to adverse events outside their control. They are often treated badly by the institutions of state and society and excluded from voice and power in those institutions.’ A similar view has also been expressed by Robert McNamara, former president of the World Bank.⁷⁶

In table 1.4, where two Muslim and two Non-Muslim countries are selected for comparison from high and low-income categories, the cross-country comparison highlights some important points. With respect to HDI ranking, both Venezuela in the high-income category and Nicaragua in the low-income category, are lower than their Muslim counterparts, Malaysia and Algeria. Similarly, both these Muslim countries also enjoy almost double per capita income as compared to their respective Non-Muslim counterparts. Furthermore, figures show that the proportion of population below the income poverty line is also nearly half in the case of Malaysia and one quarter in the case of Algeria as compared to Venezuela and Nicaragua, respectively. However, the negative side of the picture is that this betterment is not translated into the elimination of human deprivation. Statistics show that Malaysia was on 16th position in the global ranking of ‘human poverty index’ (HPI) as compared to Venezuela where the figure was 14. A similar situation can be seen in the case of Algeria and Nicaragua. For this reason, the percentage value of HPI was higher in both Muslim countries as compared to their counterparts. This situation also reflects inefficient utilisation of resources due to which Muslim countries are facing serious problems of human deprivation.

Table: 1.4. Human Poverty – Cross Country Comparison of Low and High Income Muslim and Non-Muslim Countries

| Country | HDI ranking | GDP per capita (US\$) | HPI | | Popu. below income poverty line (%) |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | Ranking | Value (%) | |
| High-income | | | | | |
| • Venezuela | 75 | 4,919 | 14 | 8.8 | 31.3 |
| • Malaysia | 61 | 9,512 | 16 | 8.9 | 15.5 |
| Low-income | | | | | |
| • Nicaragua | 112 | 3,262 | 40 | 17.7 | 47.9 |
| • Algeria | 103 | 6,107 | 48 | 21.3 | 12.2 |

Source: UNDP: 2005, 219-222, 227-229.

Human Capital

⁷⁶ Andy Crump and Wayne Ellwood (1998), *The A to Z World Development*, London: New International Publications. p. 169.

There are various types of capital: physical capital, financial capital, social capital, and human capital to name a few. Physical capital includes all physical facilities, infrastructure, fixtures and tools available for a specific cause while the concept of financial capital is associated with the stock and supply of money. The analogy between the notions of physical capital and human capital can be considered the tools and the training which enhance the productivity of an individual⁷⁷. The concept of social capital refers to the features of social organisations such as networks, norms and the trust that facilitates cooperation among various individuals for the purpose of mutual benefits. In this context, social capital enhances the benefits of investment in physical and human capital⁷⁸. A comprehensive definition of human capital is given in a Government of Pakistan's report⁷⁹ which states: 'Human capital development which is the product of education and improvement in health and nutrition, is both a part of and a means of achieving this goal. Human capital is critical in raising the living standards of the poor.' In the following lines, only human capital is briefly discussed in the context of the overall situation of the Ummah.

For comparison, it is appropriate to look at the situation of human capital formation in Muslim and Non-Muslim countries. In the following table, four countries (i.e., Bulgaria, Kuwait, South Africa and Pakistan) are selected for analysis in high and medium HDI categories. Although, the notion of human capital is much broader in scope, due to limited available space, only education, health and, research and development are taken into account. It should be noted that according to the UNDP report⁸⁰ Kuwait enjoys more than double per capita income and a considerably better HDI ranking as compared to Bulgaria, and, ii) the same is also true of South Africa which has five times higher income and better human development record than its Muslim counterpart, Pakistan. But when it comes to the matter of human capital, then irrespective of their income or HDI ranking, Non-Muslim countries focus far more on education, health and, research and development sectors. The figures in the following table show that public expenditure on education, health and research and development are significantly higher in Non-Muslim countries, compared to the respective Muslim ones. Consequently they have a far higher number of professionals to contribute to the development of their nations. No doubt, educated and healthy people are

⁷⁷ Robert D. Putnam (1993), 'The Prosperous Community: Social Capital and Public Life', *American Prospect*, Vol. 13, pp. 35-42.

⁷⁸ Louis Putterman (1995), 'Social Capital and Development Capacity: The Example of Rural Tanzania', *Development Policy Review*, Vol. 13, pp. 5-22.

⁷⁹ Government of Pakistan (15 July 2001), *Economic Survey 2000-2001*, <<http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/main.html>>.

⁸⁰ UNDP (2005), *Human Development Report 2005*, *op. cit.*

an asset to their countries and in contrast to Muslim countries, this fact is well recognised by the Non-Muslim countries. This situation also highlights that the Non-Muslim countries have a clear future vision and better strategies to achieve their objectives of development. Surely, they are also in a better position to face the challenges of globalisation.

Table: 1.5. Human Capital – Cross Country Comparison of Muslim and Non-Muslim Countries with Respect to Education, Health and Research and Development

| Country | HDI ranking | Public expenditure on education (% of GDP) | Health | | Research and Development | |
|----------------|-------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | Public expenditure (% of GDP) | Physicians per 100,000 people | Expenditure (% of GDP) | Researchers (per million people) |
| High HDI | | | | | | |
| • Bulgaria | 55 | 5.2 | 4.0 | 338 | 0.5 | 1158 |
| • Kuwait | 44 | 4.4 | 2.9 | 153 | 0.2 | 73 |
| Medium HDI | | | | | | |
| • South Africa | 120 | 5.9 | 3.5 | 69 | 0.7 | 192 |
| • Pakistan | 135 | 2.6 | 1.1 | 66 | 0.2 | 88 |

Source: UNDP: 2005, 219-222, 254-257, 236-239 and 262-265.

This situation indicates that in addition to other factors, the mismanagement and inefficiency of resource utilisation in Muslim countries are important causes for their human under-development. In fact, the elements of mismanagement and inefficiency of resource utilisation are closely related to the internal politico-economic instability, lack of democratic norms, weak institutional setup as well as high levels of widespread corruption in several Muslim countries. Transparency International (TI) is a German based leading NGO with over 85 offices in various countries. It is a specialised institution set up for combating corruption throughout the world. Similar to the UNDP's approach, it regularly calculates Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) and ranks the respective countries in accordance with their prevailing level of corruption. For the year of 2005, TI surveyed 159 countries of the world and sadly, Turkmenistan, Bangladesh and Chad with their respective positions of 157th, 158th and 159th, were the most corrupt countries of the world⁸¹. It is not only these three countries, a majority of the members of the OIC, can be seen at the bottom of this list, e.g., Indonesia (140), Uzbekistan (143), Pakistan (146), Tajikistan (150) and Nigeria (154). In the context of the process of

⁸¹ Transparency International (15 February 2006), 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2005,' <http://www.transparency.org/policy_and_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2005>.

globalisation, a simple question arises that if the present trends continue, what will the state of human capital in the Muslim World in the years to come? No doubt, the present alarming situation of the Ummah demands urgent measures for improvement. Muslim countries seriously need to think on an individual basis as well as on the platform of the OIC, about what measures they can adopt to encounter these challenges. ■

CHAPTER II

ISLAMOPHOBIA: ANOTHER COLD WAR

The World Guide 2005/2006 argues that: ‘Globalisation is not just economic but also cultural and ideological. ... Globalisation as a cultural phenomenon occurs, like the economy, as a result of the expansion of capitalism. ... Globalisation is, essentially, a model created by Northern cultures’.⁸² Needless to say that cultural and ideological aspects are closely associated with religion as the *World Guide* says that: ‘The US government of George W Bush seems to be increasingly dominated by a fundamentalist Christian agenda that believes America to be doing God’s will.’ It also quotes Florence Toussaint (professor at a Mexican university), who says that: ‘People are caught in a whirlwind, not knowing when they will get out – or even if they want to. In many instances, they are not aware of where they are headed’.⁸³ Toussaint’s argument is strong especially in the context of the role of the media after 9/11. This chapter attempts to analyse the role of the global media with regard to Islamophobia and global (in-)security.⁸⁴ The discussion reflects that the global media is an important source of informal education. But unfortunately it is dominated by major global players and they use it to influence global opinion by defaming Islam and the Muslims. Although the chapter acknowledges some pro-Islamic views reported in the media, they are well in the minority and thus do not influence global opinion. Unfortunately, this strategy is not helpful in promoting global peace when on several occasions, Islam has been branded a violent religion while Muslims are labelled as terrorists.

Needless to say, the events of 11 September 2001, have changed the course of history. This transformed global situation in general and that of the Muslim World in particular, raises various questions, e.g., what is the way forward to initiate a process of mutual trust and stability in order to overcome the current crises? How can Muslim countries play an effective role in global peace and prosperity? Can the major global players help the Muslim World in the promotion of peace and prosperity? The following discussion attempts to explore possible answers to these and similar questions. The discussion also reflects the importance and the role of the global media with regard to the process of informal mass education and maintenance of global peace. In this

⁸² New Internationalist Publications (2005), *The World Guide 2005/2006*, Oxford: New Internationalist Publications, p. 37.

⁸³ *Ibid.* p. 71.

⁸⁴ This chapter is based mainly on Muhammad Ahsan (2005), ‘Post 9/11 Islamophobia: Promoting Interfaith Harmony and Global Peace’, *IPRI Journal*, Vol. V-1, pp. 1-26.

context, as argued by Fred Halliday,⁸⁵ it is particularly true that ‘no subject in contemporary public discussion has attracted more confused discussion than that of relations between “Islam” and the “West”.’ Such confusion promotes mistrust, which leads to instability in the world.

Clash of Civilisations or Promotion of Global Instability?

It needs to be emphasised that the above and hundreds of similar views expressed by a large number of Western politicians and intellectuals are based upon misunderstandings about the Muslim World and are gross distortion of realities. Here the question that begs an answer is whether such views are part of a process to promote a clash of civilisations in the contemporary globalised world? With reference to the context, the works of two famous American intellectuals, Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington, are discussed here briefly. Both were given enormous coverage by the global media, due to which their books received extensive publicity all over the world. In 1992, after the demise of the Soviet Union, Fukuyama (a former US State Department official) presented the concept of the end of history. His book entitled *End of History and the Last Man*⁸⁶ is mainly a supremacist declaration of triumph. His argument is that after the fall of communism, capitalist liberal societies are the end-product of the historical process of humankind. In other words, it is now only Western socio-cultural and politico-economic liberty that will prevail in the world. He also believes that the days of Islam are over. It must be mentioned here that in spite of extensive discussions in his book, Fukuyama did not elaborate as to which strategy should be adopted to attain and maintain a stable global society through the political and economic liberty of the ‘last man’? And also, how this ‘last man’ will enjoy the fruit of this newly discovered heavenly plant? This issue is ‘skilfully’ tackled by Samuel Huntington. His book *Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*⁸⁷ warns that the point of the ‘end of history’ is the beginning of the civilisational war to dominate the world. He predicts that future wars will not be fought between nation states, but between civilisations. He has written extensively and lectured to promote his ideas. His emphasis is: i) ‘civilisational consciousness is on the rise’, ii) ‘conflicts between civilisations will replace ideological and state conflict’, iii) ‘conflicts between groups from different civilisations will be more violent than those between groups within

⁸⁵ Fred Halliday (2002), ‘West Encountering Islam: Islamophobia Reconsidered.’ In Ali Mohammadi (ed.), *Islam Encountering Globalisation*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, p. 14.

⁸⁶ Francis Fukuyama (1993), *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin Books.

⁸⁷ Samuel P. Huntington (1997), *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*, London: Simon & Schuster.

civilisations’, iv) ‘political, economic and security relations will develop within civilisations rather than cross civilisations’, and v) ‘the paramount axis of world politics will be the “West” and the “rest”.’

In Huntington’s view, besides the ‘West’, there are six or seven other civilisations in the world. However, he warns that in the future, only the Chinese and Islamic civilisations are a challenge to the ‘West’. He is very apprehensive of the two-digit economic growth rate of China. Due to his West-centric views, Huntington totally ignores the facts that do not fit in his ‘clash of civilisations’ frame. For instance, he warns of the growing military power of China but ignores the fact that statistics indicate that in contrast to the United States, Chinese military spending with respect to its GNP has gone down in the past two decades. Furthermore, it is now a member of the WTO and has attracted huge foreign investment particularly from Europe and the United States. Huntington further accuses China of arming Muslim countries, ignoring world statistics that the major source of arms for them are the United States and Europe. Another important point is that he is totally silent with regard to the root causes of the ‘clash of civilisations’. He is particularly unable to highlight the unjust global system which is the most important reason of global instability.

Specifically, with regard to Islamic civilisation, Huntington suggests that the under-developed, over-stretched and unstable Muslim World stretching from Indonesia to Morocco fails to pose a collective threat to the West. However, in his view, the real threat from the Muslim World is its rising human capital, i.e., the growing proportion of young people in the Islamic civilisation. Directly or indirectly, he attempts to warn the West that the troubles in the former Yugoslavia, Kashmir, Palestine or in various other regions are caused by this segment of Islamic civilisation. Huntington is unable to answer the question why these young people pose a threat to the West. Interestingly, while Huntington warns of the ‘rising’ human capital of Islamic civilisation, Fukuyama warns of the ‘declining’ human capital of the West, or in other words, the proportionate increase of the ageing population in Western civilisation. Indirectly, both warn of the rising migration of Muslim youth to Western countries, which is rapidly changing the demographic balance. This fact was also highlighted by the BBC⁸⁸ in a report that: ‘Islam is widely considered Europe’s fastest growing religion, with immigration and above average birth rates leading to a rapid increase in the Muslim population.’ Unfortunately, instead of exploring the nature and root causes of major global problems, both Huntington and Fukuyama spend their energies on synthesising a conceptual and ideological network to provide a base to

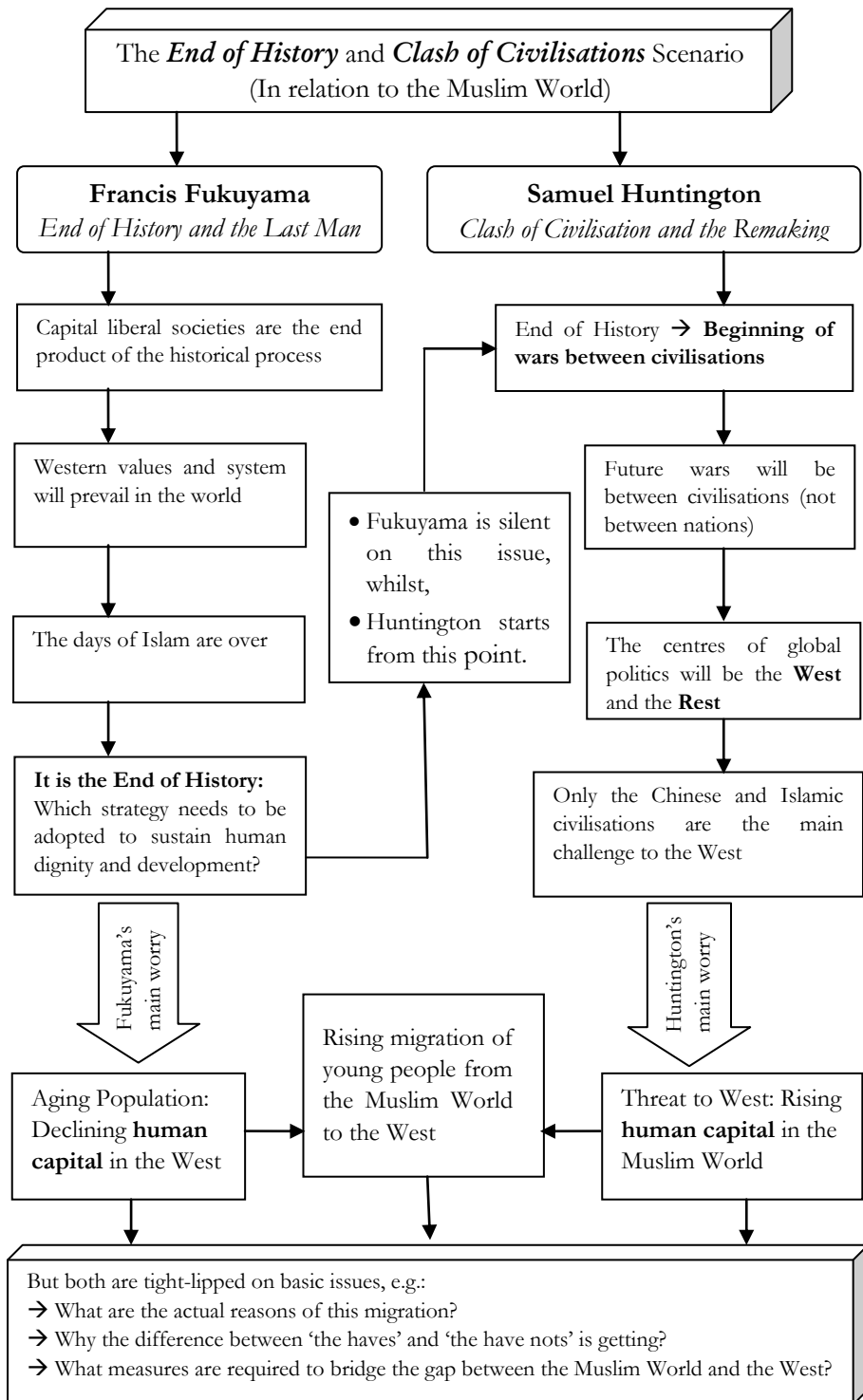
⁸⁸ BBC (23 December 2005), ‘Muslims in Europe: Country Guide,’ <<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/...>>.

promote misunderstandings and troubles between faiths and ideologies, particularly with reference to the Muslim World.⁸⁹

With regard to the concept of ‘clash of civilisations, it is also important to mention here the views of an eminent Turkish scholar⁹⁰. He says: ‘Regarding Huntington’s claim about the clash of civilisation, I think that rather than realistic evaluations about the future, these types of claims seem to be determining new goals in an attempt to influence public opinion within the framework of these goals. Until the disintegration of the Soviet bloc, there was the idea of a clash between the ‘East’ and ‘West’, or between NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries. This time, by creating new enemy fronts, a clash between civilisations mainly based on religio-cultural differences is being perpetuated and a new foundation is being laid for the continuation of the rule of the power blocs. Actually, until now, conflict is something that is desired by certain power centres. The masses have been put on alarm against a frequently conjectured and feared enemy, which is more imaginary than real. It is in this manner that the masses have been prepared for a kind of a war. In truth, no divine religion has ever been based on conflict, whether it be the religions represented by Moses and Jesus, or the religion represented by Muhammad, upon them be peace. On the contrary, these religions, especially Islam, strictly forbids disorder, treachery, conflict and oppression. Islam means peace, security, and well being.’ This situation reflects that the promotion of clash of a civilisation is an artificial process not a natural phenomenon. This discussion can better be illustrated by the following diagram.

⁸⁹ M.H. Farooqi (10 October 2001) ‘A Terrorist Disaster and the Warmongers Takeover,’ *Impact International*, Vol. 31, No. 10, pp. 6-12. With regard to ‘war for civilisation’ and ‘war on terror’, see: Rahul Mahajan (2002), *The New Crusade: America’s War on Terrorism*, New York: Monthly Review Press.

⁹⁰ M. Fethullah Gulen (2004), *Towards a Global Civilisation of Love and Tolerance*, Somerset: The Light Inc. p. 256.



In fact, a creation of the above type of environment, promotes global instability and global injustice. The global injustice itself is based on three factors: i) *economic*: injustices of the global capitalist system which has caused a huge gulf between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', ii) *political*: application of double standard in foreign policies by the major global players, and, iii) *biased media*: which portrays a negative image of the developing countries in general and the Muslim World and Islam in particular. In the present day world, where 'global injustice' is common, global instability leads to global violence. A careful consideration of the post-9/11 situation with regard to the Muslim World reflects that global injustice, global instability and global violence make a vicious circle which keeps the cycle in rotation. In the context of the Muslim World, the intensity of the problem can be realised in the words of the Journalist, John Pilger.⁹¹ He argues: "The world is divided into two camps: Islam and "us." That is the unerring message from Western governments, press, radio and television. For Islam, read terrorists."

With regard to the contemporary situation of 'global terrorism' as well as the 'war on terrorism', it is important to look at the definition of terrorism. There is no single and specific definition of terrorism and one person's terrorist may be another person's freedom fighter. According to the US Department of State report entitled *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001*: "The term terrorism means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience"⁹². In the view of the US Congress: "Act of terrorism means an activity that – (A) involves a violent act or an act dangerous to human life that is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any State, or that would be a criminal violation, if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or of any State; and (B) appears to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping"⁹³. A careful consideration of this definition reflects that it is quite flexible and can be moulded as and when required to include countries hostile to US policy. Possibly this is the main reason that the 'war on terror' is not producing results. George Naggiar (06 December 2001) from Georgetown University Law Centre is considered an authority in international law. In his view: "Military occupation is terrorism. It targets not merely combatants, but civilian populations. Its maintenance is a wilful act, not one that is committed by

⁹¹ John Pilger (17th September 2004), 'Time to Recognize State Terror,' ANTIWAR.COM, <[http://antiwar.com/...](http://antiwar.com/)>.

⁹² US Department of State (May 2002), 'Pattern of Global Terrorism,' <<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrtp/2001/...>>.

⁹³ US Code Congress (19 October 1984), *Admin News, 98th Congress, 2nd Session*, Vol. 2, par. 3077, 98, STAT, Washington DC: US Congress.

accident.’ Naggiar’s definition reflects the extent and the nature of the problem of global instability and insecurity.

It must be mentioned here that neither any government from a Muslim country nor the OIC itself has been able to present a clear definition of terrorism. In spite of having various high level conferences under the auspices of the OIC in the post-9/11 period, the Muslim leadership has merely been able to issue a few press statements and communiqué. It is disappointing that in the global media, they have also failed to address the negative impact of the ‘war on terror’ by which the Muslim communities all over the world have been badly affected. It is noteworthy that the ill-advised strategy of ‘war on terrorism’ is highlighted by Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Conner,⁹⁴ the Archbishop of Westminster. He argues: ‘What a terrible thing it is that billions – and I mean billions of pounds – are being spent in war in the Middle East which could have been spent bringing people out of dire poverty and malnourishment and disease.’ Possibly, for this reason,⁹⁵ Krishnadeve Calamur an ex-CIA official said: ‘We will lose the terror war’. Calamur’s view was already endorsed by President Bush as in an interview with NBC, he admitted that the war on terror could not be won.⁹⁶ In fact, everyone is aware of the US government’s official story of 9/11 which on the one hand, the tragedy of 9/11 has caused huge destruction and has changed the course of history, while on the other, it has left several points and unanswered questions in the minds of people, particularly in the Muslim World. For instance:

- ‘Eight hours after terrorists struck Manhattan’s tallest skyscrapers, police in Bergen County detained five men who they said were found carrying maps linking them to the blast. [They]...were being questioned by police but had not been charged with any crime’.⁹⁷
- Seven out of the nineteen identified hijackers were found alive after the attacks on the WTC.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Conner (The Archbishop of Westminster) (03 December 2004), ‘Archbishop Criticises Billions Spent on War,’ *Telegraph*, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk...>>.

⁹⁵ Krishnadeve Calamur (Ex-CIA Official: 03 December 2004), ‘We Will Lose Terror War,’ United Press International, <<http://www.washtimes.com/...>>.

⁹⁶ *Herald Sun* (31 August, 2004), ‘War on Terror is a Losing Battle’; (18 February 2006), ‘US to Finance Syrian Opposition’ <<http://www.heraldsun.news.com.au/...>>.

⁹⁷ Paulo Lima (12 January 2003), ‘Bergen Record (New Jersey) - Five Men Detained as Suspected Conspirators,’ <<http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/forgot.html>>.

⁹⁸ Dick Fojut (12 January 2002), ‘7 out of 19 FBI Identified Hijackers Located Alive after WTC Attacks,’ <<http://www.rense.com/general20/alive.htm>>.

- According to Michael Meacher⁹⁹, Britain's Former Minister for the Environment: 'America deliberately let September 11th happen to launch Bush's master-plan for world domination.'
- Russian Air Force Chief ¹⁰⁰ argued: 'It is impossible to carry out an act of terror on the scenario which was used in the USA.'
- Another source reveals: 'Former German Defence Minister [Andreas Von Buelow] confirms CIA involvement in 9/11'.¹⁰¹
- Morgan Reynolds,¹⁰² quotes Michael Henderson's statement (General Manager, Marine Terminals, Metal Management) who says: 'It [unanticipated free-fall collapses of WTC's twin towers] didn't seem real... There are thousands of these steel beams that just fell like pickup sticks.' Reynolds also quotes, John Albanese, a volunteer fire fighter and amateur photographer. In the words of Albanese: 'It was just unbelievable.'
- Why the breadth of investment trade in pre-9/11 was far greater than ever seen in the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). According to Jonathan Winer, ABC News: 20 September 2001): 'It's absolutely unprecedented to see cases of insider trading covering the entire world from Japan, to the US, to North America to Europe.'
- 'Why was America and the rest of the world not shown the video footage and the photographs of the Pentagon, BEFORE the outer wall had collapsed? Many people do not realise that the outer wall of the Pentagon did not collapse until 20 minutes after the initial impact of what we were told was a Boeing 757' (William Lewis: 24 December 2005)

On its website, with the title: *20 Reasons to Question the Official Story of 9/11*, Channel 4 (30 January 2006) challenged the very foundations of these events. It argued: 'The 9/11 Commission refused to examine the vast majority of evidence about 9/11, and even the former director of the FBI says there was a cover up by the 9/11 Commission. ... USA Today stated that the FBI believed that bombs in the building brought the buildings down.' In fact, these are only a few common points and questions; there are several others which

⁹⁹ Michael Meacher (UK's Former Minister for the Environment) (6 September 2003), 'America Deliberately let September 11th Happen to Launch Bush's Master-plan for World Domination,' *Guardian*.

¹⁰⁰ Emperors-Clothes (13 September 2001), 'Russian Air Force Chief Says Official 9-11 Story Impossible,' <<http://emperors-clothes.com/news/airf.htm>>.

¹⁰¹ Alex Jones (interviewer) (16 August 2005), 'Former German Minister Confirms CIA Involvement in 9/11,' *Prison Planet*, <<http://www.prisonplanet.com/021104vonbuelow.html>>.

¹⁰² Morgan Reynolds (Professor Emeritus at Texas A&M University) (quoted by) (09 June 2005), Lew Rockwell, <<http://lewrockwell.printthis.clickability.com/...>>.

are not mentioned here. A lot of work has been done by various analysts to explore the mysteries of 9/11. A book worth reading, entitled *The New Pearl Harbour: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11* is written by David Ray Griffin. In fact, the tragedy of 9/11 was unanimously condemned all over the world. Even Osama Bin Laden disliked this act. In one of her articles, Carol Valentine quotes Bin Laden where he says: 'I have already said that I am not involved in the 11th September attacks in the United States. As a Muslim, I try my best to avoid telling a lie. I had no knowledge of these attacks, nor do I consider the killing of innocent women, children and other humans as an appreciable act. Islam strictly forbids causing harm to innocent women, children and other people. Such a practice is forbidden even in the course of a battle'.¹⁰³

It should be noted that the actions of an individual or a small group do not necessarily represent the belief of a particular religion, nor is that religion responsible for such actions. Sadly, in the Western World, Islam is judged by the conduct of a minority of its people. With regard to violence, such behaviour is clearly not objective and seeks to distort the reality of Islam. For this reason, the word 'jihad' sends shivers down the spines of many people in the Western World. Unfortunately, the term Jihad is one of the most misinterpreted terms in the global media. As a matter of fact, the term 'holy war' was coined in Europe during the medieval crusades which meant war against Muslims and in reality, it does not have a parallel term in Islamic literature.¹⁰⁴ This argument is also supported by Karen Armstrong, a famous writer who has authored several books and articles on the Abrahamic religions, particularly Islam. In one of her articles, entitled, *The True, Peaceful face of Islam*¹⁰⁵ she says: 'Islam is not addicted to war. ... The primary meaning of the word jihad is not "holy war" but "struggle." It refers to the difficult effort that is needed to put God's will into practice at every level – personal and social as well as political.' With regard to the Prophetic approach to peace, Armstrong writes: 'A major part of his [Muhammad] mission was devoted precisely to bringing an end to the kind of mass slaughter we witnessed in New York City and Washington. ... He devoted his attention to building up a peaceful coalition of tribes and achieved victory by an ingenious and inspiring campaign of non-violence.'

¹⁰³ Carol A. Valentine (23 July 2004), 'Bin Laden: Authentic Interview', <<http://www.public-action.com/911/casting.html>>.

¹⁰⁴ For further study, see: Jamilah Kolocotronis (1990), *Islamic Jihad: An Historical Perspective*, Indianapolis: American Trust Publications.

¹⁰⁵ *Time Magazine*, (01 October 2001), 'The True, Peaceful Face of Islam,' Vol. 158, No. 15.

Global Informal Education: The Media and the Promotion of (In-) Tolerance

Informal education refers to learning, taking place outside of a formal educational organisation. It is a life-long process by means of which an individual acquires knowledge and skills through day-to-day experience, educative influences and other available resources within his or her reach¹⁰⁶. In recent years the mass media has become the most important source of informal education as well as a force for bringing political change through propaganda. The massive advances in communications, brought about by the use of satellite and computer technology, has made the ‘mass’ media what it is; information accessible by all. Sophisticated technology has now made it possible to send a message not only to hundreds or thousands, but also to millions of people all over the globe¹⁰⁷.

No doubt, education is at the heart of humanistic development. In the modern age, the goals of future-oriented education are defined by the development process as the collective vision of the ‘global village’. In Islamic literature, there is enormous emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge. The first verse of the Quran was a command to the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) to read, learn and understand (Quran, 96: 1-4). According to Quranic teachings, God gave human beings the ability to observe, think and to write so that they could circulate knowledge broadly and preserve their cultural heritage for coming generations. The World Conference on Education for All (jointly sponsored by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank) held in Jomtien (Thailand), adopted the ‘World Declaration on Education for All’ (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and The World Bank: 1990). Although in this conference the emphasis was only on the provision of formal basic education to the masses in the developing countries, in the contemporary age of globalisation, the importance of informal education cannot be underestimated. Unfortunately, whether it is formal or informal education, in the post-9/11 era, there is widespread propaganda about the Muslim World. For instance, with regard to the promotion of religious extremism for the politico-strategic interests of the United States through supplying jihad schoolbooks in Afghanistan, Jared Israel¹⁰⁸ uncovered an important point. In his words:

¹⁰⁶ R.A. Farooq (1998), *Orientation of Educationists*, Islamabad: Asia Society for Promotion of Innovation and Reforms in Education, p. 123.

¹⁰⁷ Shahida Kazi (1995), ‘The Role of the Mass Media in Creating Awareness about Women’s Literacy in Pakistan.’ In Tahera Aftab (ed.), *Challenge for Change: Literacy for the Girls of Today, the Women of Tomorrow*, Karachi: Centre of Excellence for Women’s Studies, pp. 96-102.

¹⁰⁸ Jared Israel (15 April 2002), *Bush and the Media Cover-up the Jihad Schoolbook Scandal*, <<http://www.emperors-clothes.com/articles/jared/jihad.htm>>.

Have you heard about the Afghan Jihad school-book scandal? Because it has been unreported in the Western media that the US government shipped millions of Islamist (that's short for Islamic fundamentalist) textbooks into Afghanistan. According to *Washington Post* investigators, over the past twenty years the US has spent millions of dollars producing fanatical schoolbooks, which were then distributed in Afghanistan. The primers which were filled with talk of jihad and featured drawing of guns, bullets, soldiers and mines, have served since then as the Afghan school system's core curriculum. Even the Taliban used American-produced books.

During mid-2002, BBC Television in its regular news bulletin strongly criticised the Taliban for using these books in schools. However, it was not disclosed who supplied these books to them. Possibly this is part of the systematised campaign to keep Islam and Muslims out of the circle of any goodwill. This argument is also shared by the Times Weekend.¹⁰⁹ In an article entitled 'The West is Still Demonising Islam,' it writes that: '...one religion seems excluded from this circle of goodwill. For nearly a thousand years, the Western world has cultivated a distorted vision of Islam which bears little relation to the truth but which shows no sign of abating, even in the more tolerant climate of today's world. ... The distortions, cultivated by the West, do not reflect the fact that Islam had for centuries a better record of tolerance.... Yet Western people are reluctant to accept this, because their view of "Islam" is bound up with their perception of themselves. ... If Western secularists cannot transcend the negative portrait of Islam that they have inherited, they too, will have failed to live up to their highest ideals.' Marcel Boisard¹¹⁰ argued: 'The matter in which the Prophet [Mohammad] and his successors addressed the kings and leaders of non-Muslim people shows that they treated them as equal. ... History shows that Muslim authorities, without renouncing the universality of Islam, were bound by a certain number of specific legal obligations in their dealings with foreign nations.' Prince Charles¹¹¹ also agrees with Boisard. In his lecture at Oxford, he said: 'Medieval Islam was a religion of remarkable tolerance for its times, allowing Jews and Christians the right to practice their inherited beliefs, and setting an example which was not unfortunately, copied for many centuries in the West.'

¹⁰⁹ *The Times Weekend*, (27 May 2000).

¹¹⁰ Marcel Boisard (1986), *Humanism in Islam*, Indianapolis: America Trust Publications.

¹¹¹ Prince Charles (1995), 'A lecture delivered on 27 October, 1993 at Oxford University.' Quoted in S.M. Koreshi, *New World Order: Western Fundamentalism in Action*, Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, pp. 204-05.

Thus, is Islam a religion of tolerance or terror? The study of Islamic literature reflects that ‘tolerance’ is the basic pillar of Islam. ‘The Arabic word *Islam* simply means “submission,” and is derived from a word meaning peace’¹¹². It strongly condemns aggression and terrorism. According to Islamic philosophy, peace is at one and the same time, an achievement of human beings and a gift of God. It means that human beings have to bring their thoughts and actions into harmony, thus in this way integrity develops, which is fertile soil for the germination and growth of peace. It can be argued that this stage is the salvation of every human being.

In the context that the global media is an important source of informal education, it is appropriate to quote Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn¹¹³ who says: ‘Such as it is, the press has become the greatest power within the Western World, more powerful than the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. One would like to ask; by whom has it been elected and to whom is it responsible?’ It is beyond doubt that in the current age, the news media, particularly the electronic media, is the most important as well as the most effective source of (dis-)information. But does the media present a clear and correct picture of day-to-day global events? In the views of Johann Galtung, a distinguished academician, the answer is ‘no’¹¹⁴. With regard to the coverage of violence, Danny Schechter also quotes Galtung’s 12 important points of concern where the impartiality of the media is in question. He highlights irrational media focusing without looking at the root cause of the problem, e.g., poverty, social injustice, unjust global system, direct or indirect involvement of major global players in the conflict, the adverse outcome of policies of international financial institutions etc. He further says that ignoring the potentialities of peace agreements between the parties involved in conflict, the media gives the impression that the bloodshed was inevitable. Whether it is the post-9/11 situation, or the Gulf War, Palestine-Israel conflict, dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, Afghanistan, the Balkan region, Western Sahara or East Timor, careful consideration highlights the validity of Galtung’s points. Several examples can be quoted in this regard. For instance, in an article in *The Independent* (04 August 2001), Middle East correspondent Robert Fisk, says:

In a major surrender to Israeli diplomatic pressure, BBC officials in London have banned their staff in Britain and the Middle East

¹¹² Embassy of Saudi Arabia, (Washington) (1989), *Understanding Islam and Muslims*, Cambridge: Islamic Text Society.

¹¹³ Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (15 December 2001) (quoted in David Duke), ‘Who Runs the Media?’ <http://www.duke.org/awakening/chapter19_01.html>.

¹¹⁴ Jonann Galtung (cited in Danny Schechter: 28 May 2002), ‘Covering Violence: How Should Media Handle Conflicts?’, <<http://www.mediachannel.org/views/dissector/coveringviolence.shtml>>.

from referring to Israel's policy of murdering its guerrilla opponents as "assassination". BBC reporters have been told that in future they are to use Israel's own euphemism for the murders, calling them "targeted killings". ... Up to 60 Palestinian activists – numerous civilians, including two children killed last week – have been gunned down by Israeli death squads or missile-firing Israeli helicopter pilots. The White House has gently chided Israel about these attacks, but already this week, the BBC has been using the phrase "targeted attacks" for the policy of murder. Palestinian killing of Israelis, however, is regularly referred to – accurately – as "murder" or "assassination".

Unfortunately, the image of Muslims as projected by the media is often distorted, fragmented and clouded by fast changing global events. 'Sometimes, a selective and unfamiliar aspect of a particular Muslim country's social behaviour is projected as if it were a universally practiced tradition of Islam. The entertainment industry, especially film-makers in Hollywood, with very few exceptions, have shown deep bias, presenting Arabs or Muslims of the Third World countries as uncouth, uncivilised and rogues' (*True Islam*: 23 May 2002).

Propaganda Model

Kevin Doyle¹¹⁵, in his article entitled 'Anyone for a Brain Wash?', quotes the theory of the 'propaganda model' presented by Herman and Chomsky. According to this concept, instead of producing the required facts about the global situation, modern media shapes and reshapes news through a systematised doctoring process in which some of the facts are under-reported or misreported while others are totally ignored. This is a completely unjustified approach to the informal education of the global masses. This situation promotes division within the 'global village', which enhances global human insecurity and instability, and can be observed more clearly after the events of 9/11. Unfortunately, in the contemporary uni-polar world, without any independent and impartial enquiry, the US government and its intelligence agencies, which have a strong influence on global media, are blaming Islam and Muslims for the events of 9/11. If some Arab Muslims are branded terrorists, it does not prove that over a billion Muslims of the world are responsible for this tragedy. Charley Reese¹¹⁶ supports this idea and argues that: 'I wish more Americans had an opportunity to get to know Muslims.

¹¹⁵ Kevin Doyle (22 May 2002), 'Anyone for a Brainwash?', <http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/ws98/ws_media.html>.

¹¹⁶ Charley Reese (22 May 2002), 'Muslims are Good Folks', <<http://www.shi.aneews.com/hi/articles/politics/0000234.php>>.

Then they would not be susceptible to the silly anti-Muslim propaganda. ... Muslims are good folks.' This view is also shared by the 'Stockholm International Forum on Combating Intolerance', held in January 2001. The Forum 'condemned prejudice against Muslims and called on governments to combat it just as they often have committed themselves to fighting racism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia'¹¹⁷.

Noam Chomsky is a famous American scholar. 'No one disputes that Chomsky revolutionised the study of languages more than 40 years ago. The rich and powerful have no quarrel with his work as the world's most significant linguist. But as a political analyst, he is pretty much persona non grata at big US networks and influential dailies. At major media outlets, most editors seem far more interested in facile putdowns of Chomsky than in allowing space for his own words. Since September 11, the distortions have been predictable. Although, he is an unequivocal opponent of terrorism in all its forms, he is portrayed as an apologist for terrorism'¹¹⁸.

Distortion of Realities

The above discussion reflects that, with few exceptions, the global media presents a distorted picture of Islam and Muslims. Much of the energies of Muslim countries and communities are being spent on trying to prove that they are not intolerant, violent and trouble creators. The destruction of the centuries old Babri Mosque by Hindu extremists in India can be presented as an example in this regard. Although the attainment of peace and human security should be of prime importance, how can it be justified that millions of Muslims should forget this incident by giving up their legal and moral demand for the restoration of the Mosque. It is noteworthy that rather than highlighting the root cause of the trouble,¹¹⁹ projected a so-called 'compromised offer on Indian temple' made by an extremist Hindu leader in which he says: 'I appeal to Muslim brothers to stop raising objections about the undisputed land that VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] wants. The solution to end the hatred between the two communities is to hand over the Ram Janambhomi [birthplace of Lord Rama] to Hindus.' One may wonder whether

¹¹⁷ Paul Goble (23 May 2002), 'World: Analysis from Washington – Combating Islamophobia', *Radio Liberty – Radio Free Europe*, <<http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/02/01022001111334.asp>>.

¹¹⁸ Arab Media Watch (28 May 2002), 'Noam Chomsky: Saying What Media Don't Want Us to Hear,' <<http://www.arabmediawatch.com/reports/reading/art7.htm>>.

¹¹⁹ CNN (06 March 2002), 'Compromise Offer on Indian Temple,' <<http://www.worldnews.clickability.com/...>>; (29 October 2005), 'Security Council Condemns Anti-Israel Words,' <<http://edition.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/10/28/iran.un.reaction/...>>.

it is an offer of compromise or continuation of oppression. From the above discussion, it is not difficult to judge how the media distorts and keeps the global masses ignorant of ground realities. Similar views are also presented by the former president of CBS News, former president of NBC and former chief of staff of the *New York Times*. In their own words quoted in 'What Really Happened'.¹²⁰

Our job is to give people not what they want, but what we decide they ought to have (Richard Salent, Former President CBS News).

News is what someone wants to suppress. Every thing else is advertising (Rubin Frank, Former President NBC).

There is no such thing, at this date of the world's history, as an independent press. You know it and I know it. There is not one of you who dare to write your honest opinions.... We are the tools and vassals of the rich men behind the scenes. We are jumping jacks, they pull the strings and we dance. Our talents, our possibilities and our lives are all the property of other men. We are intellectual prostitutes (John Swinton, Former Chief of Staff, *New York Times*).

The above statements are also supported by an American writer, Carol Valentine. In her article entitled 'Press Uses Actors in War on Islam'¹²¹, she reveals: '*The Washington Times* had faked two photos in its coverage of the War on Islam. One actor was used twice: first as an enemy of America, then nine days later, as a friend of America. ... On October 20, 2001, *The Washington Times* ran an 8x6 inches colour photo above the fold on the front page. The caption under the photo reads: "Face of hate: a Muslim man looks up at the stage as he prays at an anti-America rally in Peshawar, Pakistan. ... On October 29, *The Washington Times* featured the same photograph [8x5 inches].... The caption under the photo reads: Friends and relatives of Afghan military opposition commander Abdul Haq prays at a gathering at his home in Peshawar, Pakistan yesterday. The legendary mujahideen leader was captured and executed by the Taliban in southern Afghanistan. ... This shame illustrates the contrived nature of the War on Islam. It indicates that those who run the press in America are those who designed this war. ... This country is slaughtering thousands of Afghans who have committed no crimes against us,

¹²⁰ What Really Happened (06 May 2002), 'Media Distortions', <[http:// www.whatreallyhappened.com/RANCHO/LIE/ lie.html](http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/RANCHO/LIE/lie.html)>.

¹²¹ Carol A. Valentine (02 April 2002), 'Press Uses Actors in War on Islam', <[http://www.public-action.com/911/ casting.html](http://www.public-action.com/911/casting.html)>.

in order to steal Afghani mineral and oil wealth, to trigger a larger war against other Islamic nations.’

Islam or ‘Islamophobia’?

What is Islamophobia? The Runnymede Trust¹²² defines this concept as the ‘unfounded hostility towards Islam. It also refers to the practical consequences of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities, and to the exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs.’ William Dalrymple¹²³ argues that ‘such prejudices against Muslims – and the spread of idiotic stereotypes of Muslim behaviour and beliefs – and anti-Muslim racism now seems in many ways to be replacing anti-Semitism as the principal Western expression of bigotry against the other.’

The above discussion highlights the fact that the misunderstandings concerning Islam and the Muslim World, and the barrage of global propaganda, have created an environment of mutual distrust between the Muslim and the Non-Muslim worlds (particularly the Western World). The Western press, especially American and European newspapers, play a leading role in presenting a negative image of Islam. In 1992, a ‘London *Times* cartoon showed a Muslim wiping a blood-stained sword on a union flag, with a murdered woman behind him’.¹²⁴ In its report on Islamophobia, The Runnymede Trust’s¹²⁵ comments about this cartoon is as follows: ‘A further stock image is the evil Muslim. He appears in cartoons not to raise a laugh but to send a shiver down the spine. He is shown here shortly after committing an unusually brutal murder. The accompanying article [Bernard Levin, *The Times*, 13 January 1992, © Peter Brookes] makes it clear that he is wiping his crescent-shaped sword clean with a Union Jack because he is contemptuous of British hospitality, yet also confident that liberal do-gooders and multiculturalists in Britain will not pursue him with all the rigour of law, since he committed the murder for the believers; good Muslim reasons.’

¹²² Commission on British Muslims and Islam, The (November 1997) *Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All*, London: The Runnymede Trust. p.4.

¹²³ William Dalrymple (29 September 2001) (quoted in Jeremy Henzell-Thomas), ‘The Language of Islamophobia.’ Paper presented in a Conference on *Exploring Islamophobia*. Jointly organised by FAIR, City Circle and Ar-Rum at the University of Westminster, London.

¹²⁴ Robert Fisk (03 November 1999), ‘The West’s Fear of Islam is no Excuse for Racism’; (04 August 2001), ‘BBC Staff are Told Not to Call Israeli Killings ‘Assassination’; (04 February 2006), ‘Don’t be Fooled: This is not an Issue of Islam versus Secularism.’ All in: *The Independent*.

¹²⁵ Runnymede Trust (1997), *op.cit.*, p.3.

Another cartoon appeared in a September 2002 issue of the *Economist*¹²⁶ in which a skeleton-shaped person, fully covered with traditional Islamic dress was holding a crescent like blade of a sword, tied with a rotten stick. The person is throwing darts at the American map. A careful consideration of this cartoon reflects that Islam is an outdated, horrible and violent religion. It further indicates that Muslims are a bad flock and the only enemy of America. Unfortunately, even children's entertainment does not escape from hostility against Islam. M.A. Siddiqi,¹²⁷ a distinguished professor of journalism and public relations in the United States, argues: 'Muslims were shocked and surprised to note that in one of the most popular Disney movies for children, *The Lion King*, when the evil-natured hyenas were shown, a crescent appears on the horizon. The crescent has been used as an Islamic symbol in many Muslim arts and paintings. Equating darkness and evil with Islam is yet another way to dehumanise Muslims and portray them as enemies.' Is this the picture of Islam, which the press wants to project? The Muslim World is particularly irritated by the global media's use of certain terms of categorisation such as, fundamentalism, terrorism, isolation and rogue state etc. In many cases the governments of most Muslim countries spend an inordinate amount of their time and energy, trying to prove that they are not supporting fundamentalism and terrorism.

Terms such as 'isolation' and 'sanctions' are not only harmful to the Muslim World but also to humankind in general. The economic deprivation and sufferings imposed upon a country through the policies of containment, isolation and sanctions are bound to result in frustration and disparity. Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan and Afghanistan are only a few examples in this regard. In referring to the Western media image of Islam, Abdul Qader Tash¹²⁸, editor in chief of the *Arab News*, put it rightly when he said: 'A distorted image of Islam and the Arabs has unfortunately been a feature of the American media for over a century. According to Professor Jack Shaheen of the University of Southern Illinois, (author of *The TV Arab* and internationally recognised authority on the subject of anti-Arab and anti-Islam stereotypes in the US), in the past 100 years, Hollywood has produced more than 700 films whose contents vilify Islam and the Arabs.' Tash further argued that: 'The religion [Islam] and its followers are being maligned. The systematic distortion of their image is no longer a minor irritant that can be ignored. Some of those who have made a study of this phenomenon call it 'Islamophobia', indicating

¹²⁶ *The Economist* (31 December 1999; 20 October 2001; 29 June 2002; 14 September 2002; 03 February 2006); *Economist Intelligence Unit* (various country reports). p. 52.

¹²⁷ M.A. Siddiqi (1997) *Islam, Muslims and Media: Myths and Realities*, Chicago: Naamps Publications. p.38.

¹²⁸ Abdul Qader Tash, (Editor-in-Chief: *Arab News*: 22 June 1997), 'The West's Clouded View of Arabs and Islam,' *Arab News*, <<http://www.arab.net/arabview/articles/tash27.html>>.

thereby that the campaign has its roots in a morbid fear of Islam and that in the course of time, it will arouse the same fear in the public mind. The end result they believe will be the creation of a climate of hatred and distaste in these societies for everything Islamic.’

Anti-Islamic sentiments have increasingly become more publicly pronounced following the global resurgence of Islam. The above discussion reflects the real picture of the global situation in which a negative picture of Muslims and Islam is being painted. This is one of the main reasons that the Muslim population all over the world suffers more than any other religion. This situation can also be seen in *The Economist – Millennium Special Edition* (31 December 1999, 135), in which a picture of God was published along with the following comments: ‘After a lengthy career, the Almighty recently passed into history. ... Few ordinary folk, though they had different names for him, doubted the reality of God. He was up there somewhere (up, not down; in his long career, no one ever located him on the seabed), always had been, and always should be. ... Out there were the gentiles, Saracens and such. But did not they too say, “There is no God but God”?’ Anybody having even the slightest knowledge of Islam can clearly understand the meaning of this statement, the last sentence in particular. Is this a direct attack on Islam or merely a polite way to insult the second largest religion in the world?

In his article published on 11 February 2002 in *Newsweek*, Kenneth Woodward tries to prove that Islam is a religion of violence, and the Quran is full of confusion and repetition. He challenges the Muslim belief of whether the Quran is really the word of God. However, in contrast, he praises Christianity and Jesus Christ. He writes: ‘Muhammad was not only a prophet but also a military commander who led Muslim armies into battle. Jesus, on the other hand, refused even to defend himself against the Roman soldiers who arrested him in the Garden of Gethsemane after he was betrayed with a kiss by Judas, one of his own disciples. The difference helps explain the contrasting attitudes towards war and violence in the Quran and the New Testament.’ Similarly, in an interview, the US Attorney General, John Ashcroft (07 March 2002) said: ‘Islam is a religion in which God requires you to send your son to die for Him. Christianity is a faith in which God sends His son to die for you.’ Due to ignorance of history and Muslim civilisation, similar views have also been expressed by Reverend Jerry Falwell (07 October 2002), a leading member of the Southern Baptist Convention. He said: ‘I think Mohammed was a terrorist. ... He was a violent man, a man of war. ... In my opinion, Jesus set the example for love, as did Moses, and I think Mohammed set an opposite example.’ This is not a unique example of its kind as an even harsher view is presented by a journalist – Rich Lowry of the *National Review Online* in which he introduces the idea of ‘Nuking Mecca’, the holiest place in

Islam. On its website, The Council on American Islamic Relations¹²⁹ quotes his following statement:

Lots of sentiment for nuking Mecca. Moderates opt for something more along these lines: Baghdad and Tehran would be the likeliest sites for a first strike. If we have clean enough bombs to assure a pinpoint damage area, Gaza City and Ramallah would also be on list. Damascus, Cairo, Algiers, Tripoli and Riyadh should be put on alert that any sign of support for the attacks in their cities will bring immediate annihilation. ... This is a tough one, and I don't know quite what to think. Mecca seems extreme, of course, but then again few people would die and it would send a signal. Religions have suffered such catastrophic setbacks before... And, as a general matter, the time for seriousness – including figuring out what we could do in retaliation, so may be it can have some slight deterrent effect – is now rather than after thousands and thousands more American casualties.

It is noteworthy that in spite of the protests and condemnations of various Muslim organisations and leaders all over the world, US mainstream leaders remained more or less silent on these statements. The outcome of such irresponsible statements is obvious. The BBC¹³⁰ revealed that: 'There has been a marked increase in racial incidence in Wales following the 11 September attacks, according to the Commission for Racial Equality. Speaking to the Welsh Assembly on Wednesday, the commission's Dr. Mushuq Ally said, school bullying incidents had trebled and children – particularly members of the Muslim community – had been abused in the streets. Added to that, he said, nearly all the country's mosques had either been attacked or received abusive mail.' Realising the intensity of the problem, in his statement, the then British Home Office Minister John Denham (29 September 2001) said that the government will act to cut out the 'cancer of Islamophobia. He further stated that 'real Islam is a religion of peace, tolerance and understanding.'

Unfortunately, this is not only a post-9/11 situation; Islamophobia had been on the rise during the pre-9/11 period. According to a report entitled *Accommodating Diversity* published in August 2001, the incidents of discrimination against American Muslims rose 15 percent during March 2000 – March 2001. The report quoted over 360 cases of violence, bias,

¹²⁹ CAIR – Council on American-Islamic Relations: (23 May 2002), 'Accommodating Diversity – The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States 2001,' <http://www.cair-net.org/civilrights/body_index.html>; (07 September 2002), *Editor Suggests 'Nuking Mecca'*, <<http://www.cair-net/asp/article.asp?articleid=687&articletype=>>.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* (01 November 2001), 'Rise in Racist Attacks Reported,' <*op. cit.*>.

discrimination and harassment of Muslims¹³¹. Similarly, in November 1997, the Commission on British Muslims and Islam published its report entitled *Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All*. The Commission chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sussex, consisted of seventeen members out of which six were Muslims. In almost every sphere of life, the report clearly highlighted discrimination against Muslims as a religious group and not as an ethnic minority. Such an unfortunate situation raises various questions. For example, in the words of Nusrat Khawaja¹³²:

Why can a nun be covered from head to toe and be respected for devoting herself to God but not a Muslim woman? She's 'oppressed' when she does that. Why can a Jew grow a beard and be described as practicing his faith but when a Muslim does so, he's an extremist? When a western woman stays at home to look after the house and children she is sacrificing herself and doing good for the family, but when a Muslim woman does so, she 'needs to be liberated.' Why is that when a child dedicates himself to a subject, he has potential but when a child dedicates himself to Islam, he is hopeless? When a killer happens to be Christian, religion is not mentioned – such as the IRA and Serb nationalists but when a Muslim is charged with the crime, it's Islam that goes on trial. Why? But then again, why is it after all that Islam is still the fastest growing religion in the World?

These views are also confirmed by a report entitled: *Intolerance and Discrimination Against Muslims in the EU: Developments Since September 11*, published by the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights in March 2005. The report covered 11 EU member states (i.e., Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Holland, Spain, Sweden and Britain). It revealed the widespread negative attitudes towards Muslims as well as biased media coverage portraying Muslims as 'an enemy within'. Being an independent organisation, the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, also expressed its concerns with regard to the developments which enhanced the vulnerability and marginalisation of Muslims and violation of human rights against them. The report highlighted another important fact that in most of the above countries, there were no organisations to systematically monitor discrimination against European Muslims. It may be mentioned here that the International Helsinki Federation of Human Rights is right in pointing its finger at the global media. A special edition of *Newsweek* (February, 2004, 79) reads: 'An American reporter interviews a man who has just saved a little

¹³¹ *Ibid.* (23 May 2002), *op.cit.*

¹³² Nusrat Khawaja (June 2001), 'Ever Wonder Why?' *Impact International*. p. 5.

girl from a vicious dog. When the reporter learns the man is Muslim, he scraps his “Dog Bites Girl” headline for “Muslim Man Attacks Dog”.¹³³ According to Fritz Bolkestein, European Single Market Commissioner¹³³: “The European Union would “implode” in its current form if 70 million Turkish Muslims were allowed to join’.

Beyond Islamophobia: Muslims and Christians Worship Different Gods?

A further unfortunate situation associated with Islamophobia is that it adopts the shape of extreme hate where even a universal truth is totally misinterpreted. In October 2001, Rev. Franklin Graham, the president of a Christian charity of the United States, made disgraceful comments about Islam and said that Muslims believe in a different God. According to *The New York Times*¹³⁴: ‘Mr. Graham said Islam had attacked the United States on September 11. He said that Muslims worshipped a different God to Christians and that he believed Islam to be “a very evil and wicked religion”.’ Similar, insulting remarks about Islam were also used by French writer, Michel Houellebecq¹³⁵. In his words, Islam is ‘the most stupid religion’ and the Quran is ‘badly written.’ While defending his views in a court, he further added: ‘There is no point in asking me general questions because I am always changing my mind.’ This type of thinking reflects the ignorance regarding Islam and the Muslim belief. Such views are also projected by the global media. Possibly for this reason, when on the 11th September, three planes hit US buildings, Muslims were immediately branded terrorists and Islam a violent religion. However, on the 5th January 2002, when a 15-year old boy crashed his plane into the 42-story Bank of America Plaza in downtown Tampa, neither his ‘religion’ was mentioned nor was he branded a ‘terrorist’. This was in spite of the fact that in his hand-written note left behind; he supported 11th September attacks and expressed his solidarity with Osama bin Laden¹³⁶. British journalist Karen Armstrong rejects this type of attitude. She argues that: ‘... Koran, the inspired scripture that he [Prophet Mohammad] brought to the Arabs, condemned aggressive warfare and permits only warfare of self-defence. ... In the Islamic empire, Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians enjoyed religious freedom. This

¹³³ Ambrose Evans-Pritchard (quoted by) (08 September 2004), ‘Turkey’s Muslim Threaten EU Values, Says Commissioner’, *Telegraph*.

¹³⁴ Gustav Niebuhr (20 November 2001), ‘Muslim Groups Seek to Meet Billy Graham’s Son’, *The New York Times*, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/11/20/national/20GRAH.html?TodaySheallines>>.

¹³⁵ Paul Webster (18 September 2002), ‘Calling Islam Stupid Lands Author in Court’, *Guardian* <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,794047,00.html>>.

¹³⁶ Fox News (07 January 2002), ‘Police: 15-Year-Old Suicide Pilot Not a Terrorist’ <<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,42334,00.html>>.

reflected the teaching of the Koran, which is a pluralistic scripture, affirmative of other traditions. Muslims are commanded by God to respect the “people of the book”, and reminded that they share the same beliefs and the same God. Mohammad had not intended to find a new religion; he was simply bringing the old religion of the Jews and the Christians to the Arabs¹³⁷.

Unfortunately, the voice of Karen Armstrong and of other likeminded people does not make a significant difference. In 2002, an Italian American journalist, Oriana Fallaci wrote a book entitled *La rabbia e l'orgoglio* in which she made every attempt to defame the entire Muslims World. In her book, her hatred of Muslims is described in *The Economist* (29 June 2002). The magazine quotes her as: “‘Sons of Allah’, who ‘breed like rats’ invade Europe to soil the piazzas and bridges of the author’s native Florence with their ‘shit and piss’ (‘God, they piss a long stream, these sons of Allah’), and where-ever they may be, from Morocco to Afghanistan, Kenya to Saudi Arabia – revere as a hero Osama bin Laden.’ Needless to say, the book itself reflects the thinking of its author which is purely based on hate, prejudice and ignorance of Muslim history and culture. This view is also shared by Rana Kabbani¹³⁸, a famous British historian. In her view: ‘The popularity of a virulent new book shows how deeply Islamophobia has taken root in Western Europe. ... Had this book’s victims been anyone other than Muslims, it would not have been published, and certainly not by a self-respecting house. But Muslims are fair game now and to defame them has become not only respectable, but highly profitable. The defamer has nothing to fear, as there are no laws to check such vitriolic prejudice.’ Kabbani is not wrong in her argument as politicians go a step further. It was around the same period when the book was published, the Italian Prime Minister, Berlusconi said that Western civilisation is superior to Muslim civilisation¹³⁹. In the Middle East, in October 2001, in the West Bank town of Hebron, Jewish settlers took-up arms to expel Muslims from the area. A 42-year old settler said: ‘We are doing what Sharon (prime minister) promised but failed to do: drive these sons of Arab whores from the Land of Israel. If he won’t get rid of this Muslim filth, then we will.’¹⁴⁰ Similarly, a hard liner Indian Hindu leader advised his co-religious to kill at least one Muslim in his lifetime¹⁴¹. Does this type of prejudice help in promoting global peace and prosperity?

¹³⁷ *Guardian*. (20 June 2002), ‘The Curse of the Infidel’,

¹³⁸ Rana Kabbani (11 June 2002), ‘Bible of Muslim Hater’, *Guardian*.

¹³⁹ *Impact International* (October 2001), London.

¹⁴⁰ Jack Kelly (05 October 2001), ‘Vigilant take-up Arms - Vow to Expel Muslim Filth’, *USA Today* <[¹⁴¹ *Milli Gazette* \(June 2002\), Vol. 3, No. 11 <<http://www.milligazette.com/ archive/ 01062002/ 0106200225. htm>>; \(1-15 August 2002\), ‘Gujarat Riots: Was an Israeli Connection?’ \(Vol. 3, No. 15, MG-61\).](http://www.C:\ Documents% 20 %20 Settings| All% 20Users\...>.</p>
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Why is Islamophobia so Fashionable?

It can be argued that the culturally biased, Palestine-Israel dispute and dominance of the pro-Israel lobby in the United States as well as the lack of information about Muslim history and culture are the major reasons for widespread Islamophobia. The massive and systematised propaganda campaign by the global media, and the weakness of Muslim institutions in general and the Muslim media in particular, are the other major causes of this sorry state of affairs¹⁴². This situation is exacerbated by the fact that because of their own weak media and information technology, Muslim countries are totally dependent upon the Western World, not only to communicate with 'them' but also to communicate among themselves. The situation is now such that the power of the global media unleashed against Muslim countries is posing an unprecedented danger to their stability, security and self-respect. To overcome this malaise, the Muslim World needs to take stock of this deteriorating situation and evolve measures for putting its own house in order. This situation demands a common strategy for the development and formation of a powerful media system specifically designed for the Muslim World. This will not only help to project the Muslim cause to the world but will also counter the misinformation being unleashed by a hostile global media. At present, there are only two Islamic news agencies, i.e., International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic States Broadcasting Organisation (ISBO), both established by the OIC. The question remains as to what constitutes the output of these institutions.

The IINA was established in 1970, and its main objectives were to promote close relations and technical cooperation among the news agencies of member states, and to create an environment of better understanding among Muslim peoples of their common politico-economic and social problems. Due to a series of financial crises, the IINA failed to establish its own communication network and has had to sign a contract with a Rome-based company to broadcast its news through a high frequency radio transmitter. Unfortunately, these news broadcasts are not directly accessible to either the public or the news agencies of the member states. The ISBO was established in 1975, with similar objectives to the IINA. This agency does not broadcast but produces a limited number of radio programmes for its member states¹⁴³. In fact, the spectrum of activities of both these agencies is extremely limited and they have no impact on global opinion with relation to the Muslim World. This situation demands that urgent and concrete measures are required to establish a sound Muslim news agency and a network of allied institutions, particularly academic institutions.

¹⁴² M.A. Siddiqi (1997), *op. cit.* p. 40.

¹⁴³ Abdullah Al-Ahsan (1988), *op. cit.*, pp. 38-40.

Islamophobia is a major obstacle in the promotion of interfaith understanding. Unfortunately, the global media is an important agent in developing and furthering this problem. This problem is encouraged by a negative approach towards informal education adopted by the global media. Thus under the prevailing system, a totally negative image of Islam and Muslims is being presented at a global level. This approach deepens the division between the Muslim and the Western world and encourages a clash of civilisations. A careful consideration of this situation indicates that in this process, both the worlds are losers as the hostility and conflict between them are beneficial to none. Thus this path must be avoided and adequate measures be taken to avoid the problems that would result. Furthermore, simultaneous and integrated efforts are required on two fronts, i.e., at global and Ummatic levels. At a global level, the governments of major technologically advanced countries have to realise that partial views and an imbalanced approach projected by the global media is not of any help in promoting global peace. Various human and civil rights NGOs can also put pressure on their governments to bring about change in the prevailing situation. Here, the main emphasis should be on the promotion of interfaith harmony and developing mutual trust.

At Ummatic level, Muslim governments and Islamic academic institutions across the world should make maximum efforts to influence the global media. They must try their best to avoid confrontation with the West. They need to evolve and reshape policies in a manner that promotes a spirit of mutual understanding and goodwill. This is a very challenging task but they have to accomplish it, as it is a question of their survival. The areas of convergence need to be emphasised and carefully worked-upon, whereas the areas of divergence need to be seriously looked into, in order to defuse tension. The Muslim World is lagging behind in every sphere of life, particularly in the field of science, technology and the media. This is the outcome of its underdevelopment and that the Muslim World is totally dependent upon the major global players. This is one of the main reasons why Muslim countries have no voice and weightage in global affairs. It can be argued that to overcome this problem, there are various institutions working under the auspices of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. But the real problem is that the weaknesses and the limited spectrum of the activities of these institutions have made them ineffective.

Muslim countries must have more than one well-established common news agency, not less than the level of the BBC, Voice of America or CNN. This institutional development requires the availability of satellites in space¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴⁴ Fasahat H. Syed (1997), 'A Pragmatic Approach to Ensure Progress of the Muslim World.' In Ghulam Sarwar (ed.), *OIC: Contemporary Issues of the Muslim World*,

Some Muslim countries have gained the necessary technological skills in this area but are unable to launch a programme due to financial constraints. However, this hurdle can be removed by initiating joint ventures with the richer Muslim countries which do not possess such skills. The Muslim media must embark upon a campaign of truth to impress upon the world that the cause of peace in the world is achievable through cooperation and communication. This programme is essential if Muslims want to assume an important role in global affairs. Equally important is the strengthening of Muslim academic institutions all over the world. Their intra and inter activities should be linked with the Muslim and the global media. It can be hoped that such coordinated efforts would have a significant influence in shaping global opinion about prevailing issues. It can also be hoped that this approach would not only be an important instrument to curb Islamophobia but would also be an invaluable source of informal education for the global masses. Furthermore, these efforts will not only help to project the true and a balanced approach, but would also be beneficial for the Western World to better understand the Muslim World.■

CHAPTER III

HUMAN (IN-)SECURITY AND THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL SPIRAL

In earlier discussions, we reviewed the situation of overall underdevelopment within the Ummah and widespread misunderstandings about Islam and Muslims all over the world. However, these are not the only two challenges to be faced. The role of the Muslim World in global affairs and its attempts to progress are further undermined when it faces global economic and security challenges. All these elements are part and parcel of the overall process of globalisation which play their part to keep the Muslim World underdeveloped. How to come out of this vicious cycle and what measures are required to put the Muslim World on road to development is another challenge. To explore the possible answer(s) to this question, we need particularly to analyse at least three major factors, i.e., i) state of human (in)security in the Muslim World in relation to the global financial system, ii) international trade, and, iii) defence and the global strategic situation. This chapter focuses on the first issue while the remaining two are discussed in the following chapters. But before starting these discussions, it is appropriate to mention here that in 1999, the members of the United Nations General Assembly admitted that the existing efforts for poverty reduction were unable to meet the desired objectives. Thus, in the year 2000, they (United Nations: 2005) unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration and established eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). By adopting this declaration and fixing the MDGs, the member governments committed themselves to working together to achieve these goals. What are the MDGs? The following eight MDGs are international targets, aimed to lift around 500 million people of the world out of poverty by the year 2015.

- i) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- ii) Achieve Universal primary education
- iii) Promote gender equality and empower women
- iv) Reduce child mortality
- v) Improve maternal health
- vi) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- vii) Ensure environmental sustainability, and,
- viii) Develop global partnership for development

A careful consideration of these goals reflects that the first seven goals are mainly the responsibility of developing countries to ensure that enough progress is being made to achieve these objectives. It is only the eighth goal

which asks to develop a global partnership for development. In the words of Nelson Mandela¹⁴⁵: ‘Poverty is not natural. It is man-made and can be overcome and eradicated.’ No doubt, Nelson Mandela is right in his argument. But one may ask, with the meagre economic resources coupled with human insecurity, whether poverty can be eradicated only with the strong commitments made by the developing countries? Or, are similar commitments and concrete measures also required on the part of major global players and leading international financial institutions, particularly the World Bank and the IMF? One and possibly the most authentic answer to these questions is provided by Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary General¹⁴⁶. In his words: ‘We will have time to reach the Millennium Development Goals – worldwide and in most, or even all, individual countries – but only if we break with business as usual.’ In fact, ‘breaking business as usual’ particularly on the part of major international financial institutions may even be a greater challenge as compared to the reduction of poverty within the framework of MDGs. In this context, in the following discussions, we will attempt to explore various dimensions of human insecurity and review whether the prevailing global situation is helpful in obtaining MDGs or not.

What is Human Security?

Human security is generally considered to be a modern concept. By incorporating socio-political, religio-cultural, economic and issues related to sustainable development, human rights, access to education and healthcare, opportunities and choices to utilize his or her full potential; human security is a multi-dimensional concept. The objectives of human security are also part and parcel of the Millennium Declaration and MDGs. Human Security is inclusively a people-centred concept with its main focus on the protection of individuals and communities. In fact, the notion of human security can be considered a component of the overall concept of human development. There are varying views about human security and in recent years it has been considered that the borders of this notion are stretched beyond the defence of a country’s geographic boundaries. In Bhagavan’s¹⁴⁷ view ‘human security means ensuring that people’s basic needs are met, which at least, is about access to secure and adequate livelihoods and income.’ In 1994, the UNDP argued that: ‘For too long, the concept of security has been shaped by the

¹⁴⁵ Oxfam (02 February 2006), ‘Change the World in Eight Steps,’ <<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/mph/mdg.htm>>.

¹⁴⁶ UN Millennium Development Goals (28 December 2005), ‘UN Millennium Development Goals,’ <<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>>.

¹⁴⁷ M.R. Bhagavan (1997), ‘Knowledge and Research in a Radically Changed World’. In SIDA, *Development Cooperation in the 21st Century*, Stockholm: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, pp. 99-116.

potential for conflict between states. For too long, security has been equated with the threats to a country's border. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime – these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world¹⁴⁸. In the same report, the UNDP further says that: 'The world can never be at peace unless people have security in their daily lives. Future conflicts may often be within nations rather than between them – with their origins buried deep in growing socio-economic deprivation and disparities. The search for security in such a milieu, lies in development, not in arms.'

An in-depth consideration of these definitions reflects that Bhagavan's emphasis is on the basic needs approach and his definition fails to encircle a broader concept of human development. The salient points of the UNDP's approach are: i) human security is a universal concern (both for the developed and the developing worlds), ii) when the security of people in any part of the world is challenged, it also affects the security of people in other parts, iii) human security is people-centred as it is concerned with the daily lives of the masses, vi) it also means, security from hunger, disease, repression and protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life, and, v) human security is not a substitute of the broader concept of human development rather a precondition for it. In addition, there is a strong relationship between human security and human development. Progress in one area will promote opportunities in the other. It is worth mentioning that the UNDP's approach to human security is broader and more comprehensive as compared to Bhagavan's definition. This view is also supported by Buzan.¹⁴⁹ For him, state security is not necessarily enhanced by the decline of external military threats. Indeed, the reduced ability of the state to fulfil the needs of its citizens is also a potential threat to national and international security.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ UNDP (1994), *Human Development Report 1994*, *op. cit.*

¹⁴⁹ B. Buzan (1992), 'New Patterns: Global Security in the 21st Century', *International Affairs*, 67 (3), 431-51.

¹⁵⁰ However, it may be mentioned here that while defining human security, the importance of the conventional aspect of security, i.e., the armed or external threats to the existence of a community or a state cannot be underestimated. Whether these threats are local, regional or global – they may be beyond the control of a single nation state. The current wave of global violence, the US led war on terrorism (which is considered very controversial across the Muslim World), the instability in the Middle East, Central Asia and the South Asian regions are the facts which currently strengthen the arguments that the conventional aspect of security is also a vital component of the overall notion of human security which is the prerequisite for human development. For this reason, the threat to the national security of a country pushes for ever higher military spending which may seriously

Human (In-) Security in the Muslim World

As mentioned earlier, the UNDP's definition of human security highlights that income security, employment security, health security, environmental security and security from crime are its five major components. In this context, the following table presents a comparison of Indonesia and the Philippines as Muslim and Non-Muslim countries, respectively. It can be argued that there are several commonalities between these two countries. For instance, both are developing countries and belong in the UNDP's medium-HDI group. Both are South East Asian neighbours and members of ASEAN. And both have multi-faith societies, facing the problem of internal instability and geographically, consist of thousands of small and large islands. Here, for the purpose of analysis, income security is taken into account in the form of GDP per capita while employment security is considered as the level of unemployment. Similarly, health security is judged as the number of physicians per 100,000 people, environment security as the level of carbon dioxide emission and security from crime is viewed in the form of the level of crime and bribery in the capital cities. The table shows that as compared to Indonesia, the Philippines enjoy a 38 percent higher level of income but at the same time, also faces an 18 percent severer problem of unemployment. While income and employment have a strong correlation, it can be argued that there is reasonable potential for this considerable higher level of income to be utilised to promote employment opportunities and the Philippines could have an even better employment record as compared to Indonesia. Unfortunately, the rest of the indicators present a much worse picture for Indonesia. For instance, as compared to the Philippines, the proportionate number of physicians is only one-seventh in this country. Similarly, the proportion of population without access to improved sanitation is nearly double in Indonesia when compared to its counterpart. The situation of the environment and crime protection is also discouraging. Particularly, the level of vulnerability of Indonesians citizens to crime is seven times higher than Filipinos. Needless to say that in several Muslim countries, the state of income, unemployment, health, environment and protection from crime is much worse than Indonesia. This situation reflects the high level of human insecurity in the Ummah.¹⁵¹

harm efforts to achieve a higher level of human development. This is particularly true after 9/11 when the changed global environment has threatened the human security of several countries in the world in general and the Muslim countries in particular.

¹⁵¹ It is important to highlight that the Islamic approach to human security is an important component of the Islamic system. In Islam, human security is considered a preliminary step to achieving the objective of human development. Here the main emphasis is on the elimination of human poverty which is also called human deprivation. The recent shift from the World Bank-IMF backed 'structural

Table: 3.1. Human (In-) Security – A Comparative Outlook of Indonesia and the Philippines

| Country | Income and Health | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---------------------------------|--|
| | GDP/capita (US\$) | Unemployment rate (%) | Physicians (per 100,000 People) | Population without access to improved sanitation (%) |
| Indonesia | 3,700 | 10.0 | 16 | 48 |
| Philippines | 5,100 | 12.2 | 116 | 27 |
| Country | Environment and Crime | | | |
| | Per capita Carbon Dioxide emissions (metric tons) | Population victimised by crime in Jakarta and Manila (% of total) | | |
| | | Total crime | Bribery (Corruption) | |
| Indonesia | 1.4 | 20.9 | 29.9 | |
| Philippines | 0.9 | 10.6 | 4.3 | |

Source: CIA Factbook: 2005 and UNDP: 2005, 236-243, 289-292, 297-298.

Note:

- i) The data on GDP/capita and unemployment is based on CIA Factbook (2005).
- ii) Rest of the figures are quoted from UNDP (2005)

Human Insecurity or a Clash of Civilisations? Religio-Social and Economic Perspectives

In the previous chapter, we briefly discussed the situation of Islamophobia and the notion of the clash of civilisations. Here, within the context of human security and MDGs, it is appropriate to determine whether

adjustment programmes' to the current 'poverty reduction and growth facility' also highlights the importance of the elimination of poverty. The Islamic approach to human security differs from the 'basic need approach' as in the former the anti-poverty programme is based on human security while in the latter, the main emphasis is on the fulfilment of the basic needs of humankind. The difference between these two magnitudes – viz. individual's earning capacity and his level of consumption – has to be made up by a social security programme. Further to say that the concept of *Jihad* is an important pillar of the Islamic approach to human security. It is a struggle governed by rules and regulations where there is no room for violence. However, in contrast to this fact, in the present day, *Jihad* is generally considered a controversial and sensitive issue and is commonly understood in the context of 'holy war' or terrorism.

this clash is natural and inevitable, or, is it artificially created and promoted. It may be mentioned here that in one way or other, most of the global cultures are based on their respective religions and the basic philosophy of all faiths is to preach love for humanity and nature. The same is the spirit of secularism and there is no controversy in this argument that a vast majority of the inhabitants of this globe wish to live and let live in accordance with the principles of mutual respect, coexistence, harmony, peace, democratic norms and freedom of expression. The imbalance in these points can create instability or promote violence. In fact, the contemporary state of widespread Islamophobia all over the world demands extra care, so that global peace and stability may not be harmed by creating further hatred among different faiths and civilisations. Unfortunately, some sections of the global media are totally insensitive to religio-civilisational norms and respect for other faiths. Particularly, when it comes to the matter of respect for Islamic belief or Muslim civilisation, they leave no stone unturned to promote hostility. This hostility sows the seeds of a clash among civilisations which is an artificial process, not a natural phenomenon. Regrettably, whether it is political, socio-cultural or financial interaction among nations, the negative aspects of such a clash can be seen in every sphere of life.

The earlier discussion of Islamophobia highlights that there is a systematised process to defame Islam. However, this situation does not end here. There is a clear difference between defaming and attacking a faith or its followers. In the contemporary volatile global situation, Muslims are taken for granted and misinformation and mischief making about them by some comedians, cartoonists and influential sections of the media is supported by various political circles. This situation presents a serious threat to global human security as well as MDGs. Due to space constraints, we will quote only one example in the following lines. It is well known that Muslims all-over the world have high respect for, and are very sensitive with regard to the Prophet Mohammad and the Divine Book. On 30th September 2005, the Danish paper *Jyllands-Posten* published cartoons about the Prophet which was followed by their reprinting in a Norwegian paper on 10th of January 2006. On the first of February 2006, papers in France (*France Soir*), Germany (*Die Welt*), Italy (*La Stampa*) and Spain (*El Periodico*) also published some of these caricatures. These were 12 images which also appeared in various other papers published in Bulgaria, Switzerland, Belgium, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, New Zealand, Australia, the United States and Israel. These cartoons were considered most insulting and a direct attack on Islam and the Muslim masses all over the world.

In one of these images, the Prophet was shown wearing a bomb-shaped turban while another showed him as a knife-wielding nomad accompanied by veiled women. Another image is of him standing in paradise before a parade of suicide bombers and saying them: 'Stop, stop. We have run

out of virgins.’ On 31st January 2006, *Jyllands-Posten* apologised (30 January 2006) but maintained that it was legal under state law to print such material and they were published as a part of an ‘ongoing debate on the freedom of expression that we cherish so highly.’ But the paper neglected the fact that the freedom of expression implies responsibility. These drawings had specific objectives. They attempted to associate the Prophet with terrorism, criminality and the repression of women. Does freedom of expression equal a right to humiliate, offend, demonise, defame or slander? So wrong were the other papers and governments on the publication of these thoughtless and purposeless images, when they argued that because of the freedom of expression in the West they have not done anything wrong nor have they broken any law. Rather they criticised Muslim countries for putting barriers on free speech. It is important to see whether this act was freedom of expression or freedom of suppression of a specific faith? There are a few important points, which are worth noting here:

- The editor of *Jyllands-Posten* apologised for publishing these cartoons and said that he would not have printed those cartoons had he known the extent of Muslim anger all over the world. But one may challenge the true spirit of this apology. It is a common knowledge that copyright laws are very clear and strictly apply in all over the Western world, which is no doubt a commendable practice. Obviously, the copyrights of these images rest with the newspaper which first published these images. Therefore, how was it possible for a large number of newspapers of several countries to reproduce these images without the permission and consent of *Jyllands-Posten*? Hence, was this apology really aimed at reconsolidation or just a ploy to make Muslims look like fools all-over the world.
- The German paper *Die Welt* challenged Muslims by arguing that ‘there is a right to blaspheme in the West, and asked whether Islam was capable of coping with satire. *France Soir* said ‘it had the full set to show that “religious dogma” had no place in a secular society’ (BBC News: 01 February 2006). The editor of *France Soir* said: ‘There is nothing in these incriminated cartoons that intends to be racist or denigrate any community as such. Some are funny, others less so. That’s it. ... No, we will never apologise for being free to speak, to think and to believe’¹⁵².
- It is also appropriate to quote the view and feelings of a Muslim who says: ‘As if the publication by the Danish newspaper, *Jyllands-Posten*, of caricatures deemed blasphemous by the Muslims wasn’t enough, a Norwegian magazine added insult to injury by reprinting the offensive cartoons. The editor of this Norwegian periodical *Magazinet*

¹⁵² The Times Online (01 February 2006), ‘French Newspaper Reprints Muhammad Cartoons,’ <[http:// www. timesonline. co.uk/...](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/...)>.

rationalised his action by saying: “Just like *Jyllands-Posten*, I have become sick of the ongoing hidden erosion of the freedom of expression.” What about the world’s 1.5 billion Muslims who have become sick of these attacks on their religious sensibilities? The moral question that needs to be sorted out in order to ensure peaceful co-existence is to determine where to draw the line between someone’s freedom of expression and hurting another’s feelings¹⁵³.

- This view is also shared by Peter Singer, a Professor at Princeton University and son of Austrian Jews, whose parents escaped the Holocaust but his grandparents did not. Singer¹⁵⁴ writes in the *Jerusalem Post* that: ‘We cannot consistently hold that cartoonist have a right to mock religious figures but it should be a criminal offence to deny the Holocaust. I believe that we should stand behind freedom of speech.’
- The result of this situation was obvious. Although the violence cannot be justified, unfortunately, the publication of these caricatures led to violent protest all-over the Muslim World as well as in Europe. Lebanese demonstrators set fire to the Danish consulate in Beirut while Syrians set the Danish and Norwegian embassies ablaze in Damascus¹⁵⁵. Several people were killed in riots. This violence was condemned by a large number of Muslim scholars and governments; the situation remained tense and in Saudi Arabia, consumers boycotted Danish products. According to various newspaper reports, due to growing tension between Arab and West European countries, the Danish government advised its citizens to leave Lebanon and not to travel to Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries.
- The severity of the situation can be judged from the statement of the Danish Prime Minister, Fogh Rasmussen¹⁵⁶ who said: ‘We are facing a growing global crisis that has the potential to escalate beyond the control of governments and other authorities.’ But, in the view of the foreign ministers of various Arab countries, the solution was simple. After their meeting in Tunis, they issued a communiqué, i.e.: ‘We seek the Danish authorities to take the necessary measures to punish those responsible for this harm and to take action to avoid its repeat.’ However, due to their ‘freedom of expression’ and ‘democratic norms’ neither the Danish government nor others whose countries’ newspapers published these images agreed with this solution. Thus,

¹⁵³ *DAWN* (02 February 2006), ‘Taking Muslims for Granted,’ <<http://www.dawn.com...>>.

¹⁵⁴ Peter Singer (01 March 2006), ‘David Irving has a Right to Free Speech, Too,’ *Jerusalem Post* (Online Edition) <<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1139395515686&...>>.

¹⁵⁵ *MSN News* (05 February 2006), ‘Police Urged to Act Over Cartoon Protest,’ <<http://newsbox.msn.co.uk/article.aspx?as=adimarticle...>>.

¹⁵⁶ Yahoo News (07 February 2006), ‘Denmark Warns Cartoon Row could spin Out of Control,’ <http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20060207/wl_nm/religion...>.

Amr Moussa, the Secretary General of Arab League asked: 'Why do they talk about democracy and freedom of expression just when the issue concerns Islam?'¹⁵⁷.

- This instability also caused a trade war situation and led to a considerable decline in the sale of European products in various Muslim countries. The UK based *Financial Times* reported¹⁵⁸: 'Arla Foods, a dairy company that exports butter and cheese to the Middle East, said its products had disappeared from supermarket shelves in several Arab countries, leading to a daily loss of DKr10m (£920,000, €1.3m, \$1.6m) in sale. Novo, the insulin maker, said pharmacies and hospitals had demanded the removal of Novo's insulin from their premises.'
- The *Financial Times* also quoted Peter Mandelson, the Trade Commissioner of the European Union, who warned Saudi Arabia that the issue was very serious and 'a boycott of Danish goods was a boycott of the European Union'. He further warned that the matter could be brought up in the WTO. Pervez Musharraf, the President of Pakistan¹⁵⁹, does not agree with Mandelson as in his view this situation 'would encourage those who speak of a clash of civilisations.'
- El-Fara, the President of the Muslim Council in Denmark, said that he felt sorry for the losses to Danish business and argued that: 'We want to be treated as equal with Christians, Jews and Sikhs, whose religions are officially recognised by the state'¹⁶⁰. Similar views were also expressed by the Muslim Council of Britain¹⁶¹, an umbrella organisation. Its press statement reads: 'Our country today finally has a law that is supposed to prohibit incitement to religious hatred but it is a law that will not extend the same protection accorded to the Jewish and Sikh communities to other communities, including the Muslim [community].'
- According to Algerian Minister of State, Abdelaziz Belkhaden: 'European laws prohibit insult against ministers and officials but allow ridiculing a sacred figure revered by millions of Muslims. ... The United Nations must pass binding resolution obliging all countries to

¹⁵⁷ Islam Online (01 February 2006), 'French Paper Reprints Explosive Danish Cartoons'.

¹⁵⁸ *Financial Times* (31 January 2006), 'Denmark Warns on Saudi Arabia Trip,' <<http://financialtimes.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action...>>.

¹⁵⁹ Pervez Musharraf (President of Pakistan) (03 February 2006), 'President Strongly Condemns Publication of Blasphemous Cartoons,' <[http://www.presidentofpakistan.gov.pk/PRPressReleaseDetail.aspx?...>](http://www.presidentofpakistan.gov.pk/PRPressReleaseDetail.aspx?...).

¹⁶⁰ Islam Online (31 January 2006), 'Danish Muslims Urge Calm After Apology'.

¹⁶¹ Muslim Council of Britain (01 February 2006), 'Press Release: Religious Hatred Law Perpetuates Inequality after Commons Vote,' <http://www.mcb.org.uk/media/presstext.php?ann_id=186>.

respect religions and religious symbols, similar to the anti-Semitism laws¹⁶².

- Nobel Peace Prize winner and respected South African retired Anglican Archbishop, Desmond Tutu, says ‘Imagine if the subject had been the Holocaust and it had been treated in a way that the Jews deemed offensive and the reaction of the Danish government and the international community had been as it is now.’ He further pointed that: ‘Look at the Ku Klux Klan, who use a cross as their symbol and propagate hatred against others and encourage lynching. And yet we never hear anyone say “There’s an example of how Christianity encourages violence”¹⁶³.
- These views were also endorsed by Eric Geoffroy, a French academician who teaches Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Marc Bloch in Strasbourg. He argued: ‘When it [the West] tackles religious issues or values, then it is freedom of expression but when Muslims do the same, then it is reprehensible conduct. What do you call such an act? It is double standards in the broad sense of the word’ (*Islam Online*: 08 February 2006). Geoffroy’s argument is no doubt strong. Gwladys Fouché reported in the *Guardian*¹⁶⁴ that: ‘The Danish daily [*Jyllands-Posten*] turned down cartoons of Christ three years ago, on the grounds that they could be offensive to readers and were not funny. [The] editor [of *Jyllands-Posten*] Jen Kaiser said: “I don’t think *Jyllands-Posten*’s readers will enjoy the drawings. As a matter of fact, I think that they will provoke an outcry. Therefore, I will not use them”.’ Sadly, so short-sighted was Kaiser that he could only see the outcry of one community but not the other.

A simple question emerges here: what was the specific need to publish these images and to create an environment of hostility? One possible answer to this question is provided by the *Economist*¹⁶⁵. The magazine reveals: ‘If the aim was to provoke a reasoned debate about self-censorship, religious intolerance and the freedom of speech, the editor of *Jylland-Posten* failed miserably. Last September, Denmark’s biggest-selling daily broadsheet, noted that a local author could not find artists to illustrate his book about Mohammad. So the paper published a series of cartons depicting the prophet in various guises, along with an article arguing that self-censorship...rules large parts of the western world.’ There is a total consensus within the Muslim masses that all religions of the world should be protected from ridicule and

¹⁶² Islam Online (05 February 2006), ‘Muslim Want Int’l Law on Respecting Religions’

¹⁶³ Yahoo News (28 February 2006), ‘Tutu: Muslim Anger Not Just About Cartoon,’ <http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20060228/ap_on_re_mi_ea/...>.

¹⁶⁴ Gwladys Fouché (06 February 2006), ‘Danish Paper Rejected Jesus Cartoons,’ *Guardian*, <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/...>>.

¹⁶⁵ The Economist (03 February 2006), *Economist Intelligence Unit* (various country reports).

vilification and, the right of freedom of expression should be used with a sense of social responsibility. This view is also supported by Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the United Nations. In his statement he said: 'I share the distress of Muslim friends who feel that the cartoons offend their religion. I also respect the right of freedom of speech. But of course, freedom of speech is never absolute. It entails responsibility and judgment'¹⁶⁶. This discussion reflects that the publishing of such images or similar acts can be considered as:

- i) A deliberate attempt to create a clash between civilisations;
- ii) mis-understandings and/or clashes between civilisations means a setback to the promotion of the process of global human security;
- iii) an environment of global human insecurity adversely affects on all activities of human development;
- iv) global human insecurity poses a major threat to international trade;
- v) in an environment of human insecurity, it is impossible to achieve MDGs;
- vi) human insecurity and global poverty are positively correlated with each other; and,
- vii) most of the poor countries of the world are heavily indebted where mutually supportive poverty and debt burden keep the vicious cycle of human insecurity in rotation.

Therefore, in this context, when talking about global human security and the contemporary state of the under-developed Muslim World, the role of the major global players, the international financial system and financial institutions is extremely important. In the following pages we will review this situation.

Global Financial System – Another Version of Human Insecurity

It may be mentioned here, that it is not only with regard to religio-civilisational affairs, the current global financial system has also played its role in creating and promoting an environment of human insecurity in the world. The Jubilee Debt Campaign¹⁶⁷ reveals that the total burden of external debt on low-income countries is US\$523 billion due to which these countries pay US\$ 100 million/day as debt service. It further discloses that every dollar received by these countries in aid is paid back as 2.3 dollar in the form of debt service. It also argues that the current debt relief programme is too slow, too little and

¹⁶⁶ UN News Service (03 February 2006), 'Annan Urges Muslims to Accept Apology about Controversial Danish Cartoon,' <<http://www.un.org/apps/news/...>>.

¹⁶⁷ Jubilee Debt Campaign (12 February 2006), 'Facts and Statistics on Debt,' <<http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/?lid=247>>.

with strings attached. Interestingly, one of its earlier published report (Jubilee: 2000) showed how, in 1996, Africa paid out US\$ 1.31 in debt service for every one dollar it received in aid. The total debt owed by African countries in 1996 was US\$ 227 billion, which works out at US\$ 379 for every person living on that continent. This situation indicates that the debt burden on developing countries is increasing with the passage of time. Many people blame the World Bank and the IMF for the widespread human poverty and miseries that exists throughout the developing world. Catherine Caufield¹⁶⁸ has stated that: ‘When I began writing this book entitled: *Master of Illusion – The World Bank and the Poverty of Nations*, I asked the Bank to supply me with the manifestoes of the completed projects of which it was most proud. As I travelled, I wanted to be able to visit these as well as the many that had been brought to my attention by critics. I repeated my request on several occasions, always receiving the assurance that a list would be sent to me soon. The list, however, never materialised.’ The present author had a similar disappointing experience with the IMF, when in 2002, the respective official of the IMF refused to provide any information by arguing that everything was confidential.

According to Soren Ambrose,¹⁶⁹ the IMF and the World Bank are ‘preferred creditors’¹⁷⁰ who gain power over poor countries as the amounts owed to them increase. Since the 1980s, they have used international aid as an instrument to initiate and maintain the process of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). Particularly, the IMF approach to financial assistance has various dimensions, e.g., Extended Fund Facility (EFF),¹⁷¹ Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF), then in the 1980s the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF)¹⁷² and currently the more commonly used tools of

¹⁶⁸ Catherine Caufield (1998), *Master of Illusion – The World Bank and the Poverty of Nations*, London: Macmillan Publishers, p. xii.

¹⁶⁹ Soren Ambrose is a policy analyst and is associated with two Washington based international organisations; ‘Alliance for Global Justice’ and ‘50 Years Are Enough: US Network for Global Economic Justice’. The present author is most grateful to Soren Ambrose who through several e-mails, provided useful information for this discussion.

¹⁷⁰ Multilateral debt is that part of a country’s external debt burden owed to international financial institutions, particularly the IMF and the World Bank. For most of the world’s poorest countries, multilateral debt is larger than other debts because of these institutions’ status as ‘preferred creditors’, and providers of core development and balance of payment loans. This status means that payments to them must be given the highest priority, even over bilateral (government-to-government) debts. This is because, until the IMF gives its stamp of approval, which usually requires adherence to the economic policies it recommends, poor countries generally cannot get credit from other sources.

¹⁷¹ It is an earlier approach of the IMF (started in 1974) aimed to address the situation of an economy experiencing serious imbalance of payments.

¹⁷² After the EFF, the IMF further focused on structural reforms by initiating SAF and then ESAF.

the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF),¹⁷³ and Stand-By Arrangements (SBA).¹⁷⁴ The IMF and the World Bank are considered twin sisters where the actions of one institution supports the other. In the IMF's¹⁷⁵ own words: 'The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are inviting public participation in a comprehensive review of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) approach. The PRSP approach was adopted in 1999 to help poor countries and their development partners strengthen the impact of their common efforts on poverty reduction. ... The PRSP review, and a companion review of the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility being conducted in parallel by the Fund, will be presented to the Executive Boards of the Bank and Fund by endorsing changes in the PRSP framework in March 2002.'

Did lending by the Bretton Woods institutions,¹⁷⁶ particularly by the IMF make a positive change or did it only enhance the hardships of the general public? It can be argued that so far, there is hardly any country which in reality has benefited from any of these programmes. According to a news report¹⁷⁷, Iraq planned to increase domestic fuel prices tenfold in 2006, just to fulfil the requirements of the IMF. This was in spite of the fact the Iraq had already increased the domestic oil prices by 200 percent in December 2005, which sparked widespread protests. According to an official from its Oil Ministry: 'We have to meet the demands of the IMF; they said prices should be equal to the prices in neighbouring countries.' But in neighbouring Saudi Arabia, the price of one litre gasoline was 25-30 cents compared 40-42 cents of Iraq's tenfold a litre. One may question the justification for such a dramatic increase in oil price for domestic users when the country was already crushed under the unsustainable external debt burden as well as by the continued human insecurity. According to the IMF's own estimates, the country's external debt accounted for US\$125 billion which was seven times of Iraq's

¹⁷³ PRGF is the new version of ESAF, which provides loans at concessional rates to low-income countries.

¹⁷⁴ SBA is a common type of credit arrangement designed to provide immediate assistance to a country facing severe financial problems.

¹⁷⁵ IMF (23 August 2004), 'IMF and the World Bank Invite Public Participation in Review of Poverty Reduction Strategy,' (News Brief No. 0107) <[http:// www.imf.org/ external/ np/sec/nb/ 2001/nb0107. htm](http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/nb/2001/nb0107.htm)>.

¹⁷⁶ In July 1944, an international conference was held at Bretton Woods (New Hampshire: USA) to discuss alternative proposals relating to post-war international payments problems. The agreement resulting from this conference led to the establishment of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (later the World Bank).

¹⁷⁷ Yahoo News (06 February 2006), <*op. cit.*>.

GDP¹⁷⁸. In these circumstances, it is not difficult to imagine the outcome of the IMF's approach.

Similarly, IMF-World Bank strategies, imposed on severely indebted countries, mainly benefit corporate interests, consequently reducing spending on domestic programmes. The impact of this situation can be felt in the form of diversion of national resources to debt servicing and the maintenance of IMF-World Bank's programmes, which are designed to transform local economies into a globalised model of production and export aimed at accruing the highest level of hard currency. The conditionalities of both these institutions are meant to finance the redesigning of governmental, industrial and commercial systems, to enable countries to continue to pay debt servicing. Resultantly, this situation causes an increase in poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation which ultimately leads to an increase in the overall size of a country's multilateral debt. One of the major problems in the decision making process of the IMF and the World Bank is their voting system which is based on the percentage of financial contributions made by its members. It means that poor countries have little or no voice while the United States government holds nearly all the decision-making power. Thus, in determining their policy, US Treasury officials seek to maintain leverage over other nations' economic policies.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a set of specific targets endorsed by the United Nations and the respective governments. In July 2005, to enable 18 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) to achieve their MDGs, the G-8 agreed to cancel their multilateral debts. It was a welcome deal¹⁷⁹. In his address to the UN World Summit on 14th September 2005, President George W Bush said: 'Even with increased aid to fight disease and reform economies, many nations are held back by another heavy challenge – the burden of debt. ... To break the lend-and-forgive cycle permanently, we agreed to cancel 100 percent of the debt for the world's most heavily indebted nations. I call upon the World Bank and IMF to finalise this historic agreement as soon as possible'. In the words of Prime Minister Tony Blair: 'Now coming up within a few weeks is going to be the IMF-World Bank meetings on debt relief, those have got to go the right way'¹⁸⁰. Unfortunately, the burden of debt continues.

¹⁷⁸ IMF (September 2004), 'Iraq: Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies for 2004-05,' <<http://www.imf.org/External/NP/LOI/2004/irq/01/index.htm>>.

¹⁷⁹ Oxfam (September 2005), *Beyond HIPC: Debt Cancellation and the Millennium Development Goals*, Oxford: Oxfam.

¹⁸⁰ Jubilee USA Network (September 2005), *Lose Ends: The G-8 Debt Deal and the Annual Meetings*, Washington DC: Jubilee USA Network.

Noreena Hertz¹⁸¹ reveals that: ‘The \$100 billion in debt relief, so triumphantly promised at Cologne, never materialised.’ In December 2005, six out of the 18 countries who had been promised that their debts would be cancelled, were disappointed by the IMF’s decision when it announced that they did not pass its economic policy test. Oxfam¹⁸² revealed that according to the IMF ‘as some countries completed the initiative some years ago, a further spot check is now required. Max Lawson, Policy Advisor at Oxfam, said that: “This means millions of dollars that these countries could spend on schools and hospitals will now be delayed until they dance to the IMF’s tune”.’ In a similar context, the Jubilee Debt Campaign¹⁸³ writes: ‘Nigeria is one of the poorest countries on earth where one in five children die before their fifth birthday. ... The debt deal covers Nigeria’s \$30 billion debt to rich countries. Of this, \$18 billion is being cancelled. But Nigeria is having to pay the other \$12.4 billion – 40% of the total to rich countries upfront. ... The \$3 billion (£1.7 billion) that Nigeria is paying to the UK in six months is twice as much as the UK gives to the whole of Africa in a year.’ Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the United Nations Millennium Project say: ‘Donors are very short-sighted in general. They say, pay us, pay us, pay us. ... Taking \$12 billion from Nigeria now is a dumb thing to do. ... West Africa will be completely de-stabilised by the failure of Nigerian reforms. We need long-term solutions to Nigeria’s problems’.¹⁸⁴ This situation reflects the economic dimensions of human insecurity, caused by the global financial spiral.

State of Debt Burden: Muslim and Non-Muslim Countries

In June 2004, USAID published a report entitled: *Economic Growth in the Muslim World – How can US Aid Help?* The study was conducted by Peter Timer and Donald McClelland. It concluded that the ‘Muslim countries tended to be poorer than Non-Muslim countries.’ It further revealed that: i) on an average basis, in selected sample regions, Non-Muslim countries enjoyed double per capita income as compared to Muslim countries, and, ii) ‘their long-term economic problems point to deep-seated failures to establish the core elements that support modern economic growth.’ USAID is right in its

¹⁸¹ Noreena Hertz (2005), *The Debt Threat and Why We Must Defuse It*, London: Harper Perennial. p. 128.

¹⁸² Oxfam (19 December 2005), ‘G-8 Debt Promises about to be Broken by International Monetary Fund,’ <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/press/releases/g8_debt191205.htm>.

¹⁸³ Jubilee Debt Campaign (28 February 2006), ‘Justice for Nigeria,’ <<http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/?lid=1168>>;

¹⁸⁴ Professor Jeffrey Sachs is Director of the United Nations Millennium Project and of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, New York. He has acted as an advisor to the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD, the World Health Organisation and the United Nations Development Programme’ (Jubilee Debt Campaign).

argument as the review of various Human Development Reports (UNDP), World Development Reports (World Bank) and World Development Indicators (World Bank) not only reflects the same situation but also highlight that the debt burden on Muslim countries is comparatively higher and continuously on the rise. This view is also endorsed by the Islamic Development Bank in its *Annual Report: 2004-2005*¹⁸⁵. The bank revealed that there was a gradual increase in the stock of external debt of Muslim countries, particularly in the case of the least developed Muslim countries.

To further analyse the state of indebtedness, it is appropriate to present a cross-country comparison of some of the selected countries in the Muslim and the Non-Muslim world. In the following table, on the basis of their per capita income, two groups with two countries in each are selected for comparison. While with the similar per capita income of each country in the respective group, the first group can be considered a lower income group while the second one enjoys a comparatively higher level of income. An overview of the figures reflects some important results. For instance:

- i) Jordan and the Philippines on the one hand, and Tunisia and Romania on the other, have similar GDP per capita but different debt burdens. In these two groups, both Muslim countries are facing far higher debt burden as compared to their Non-Muslim counterparts.
- ii) As compared to the Philippines and Romania, both Jordan and Tunisia, are much further behind in the UNDP's global HDI-ranking.
- iii) Higher indebtedness negatively affects the literacy rate of the country. Therefore, when compared to the Philippines and Romania, the literacy rate is lower in Jordan and Tunisia, respectively.
- iv) Similarly, higher indebtedness also adversely affects on the development of science and technology and industrial development, and resultantly reduces the potential of high technology-oriented exports. The Philippines and Romania have a comparatively better record of high technology export.
- v) This situation reflects that in spite of having a similar income, there is negative correlation between indebtedness and HDI-ranking, literacy rate, scientific and industrial development of a country.
- vi) This situation highlights the fact that the state of indebtedness and human under-development is more serious in the Muslim World than the Non-Muslim World.
- vii) At the eve of the 21st century, Choudhury¹⁸⁶ revealed that in the case of Muslim countries the aggregate burden of external debt was significantly higher than the Non-Muslim developing countries.

¹⁸⁵ Islamic Development Bank: (April 2005), *Annual Report: 2004-2005*, Jeddah. p.46.

¹⁸⁶ Masudul Alam Choudhury (1998), *Studies in Islamic Social Sciences*, London: Macmillan Press. pp. 198-99.

Unfortunately, this situation has declined further (see various issues of *Human Development Reports* and *World Development Reports*).

Table: 3.2. Cross Country Comparison of Indebtedness of the Muslim and the Non-Muslim Countries

| Country | Per capita GDP (US\$) | Global HDI Ranking | Literacy rate (%) | High Tech. Export (% of manufactured export) | Debt per capita (US\$) |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--|------------------------|
| Jordan | 4320 | 90 | 89.9 | 69 | 1544 |
| Philippines | 4321 | 84 | 92.6 | 90 | 755 |
| Tunisia | 7161 | 89 | 74.3 | 81 | 1550 |
| Romania | 7277 | 64 | 97.3 | 83 | 972 |

Source: Col. 2-5: UNDP: 2005, 219-222, 274-277.

Col. 6: Computed from: World Bank.¹⁸⁷

Note: Col. 5: High Technology Export is considered as percent of total manufactured export

Another important point with regard to the Muslim World should be mentioned here. In general, in these countries, there is a serious lack of concern to fix priorities in the development process. Under the current circumstances, to overcome the immediate problem of high unemployment which further promotes several social problems, Muslim countries should focus on labour intensive technology, particularly in the areas of agriculture, agro-based industry, basic engineering and mining. Apart from the promotion of human security, this situation would also help to strengthen their economic and social infrastructure and provide a solid base for advancement in the field of science and technology, which are capital intensive areas. Therefore, in addition to other positive affects, this process would promote the exports of Muslim countries and resultantly help them to reduce the high debt burden.

Debt Servicing

According to Muslim belief, Islam is a complete code of life as it provides guidance with regard to every aspect of life. A similar claim is also made with regard to the economic system. One of the basic and most important characteristics regarding the social economy and the economic system upon which the Quran repeatedly lays stress is that all means and resources are Divinely created¹⁸⁸. One of the most important characteristics of the Islamic economy is that it is free of interest, as according to Islamic

¹⁸⁷ The World Bank (2005), *World Development Indicators 2005*, New York: The World Bank. pp. 258-260, 292-293.

¹⁸⁸ K. Ahmad: 1976, pp. 3-18, 171-188. *op. cit.*

philosophy, interest is neither a trade nor a profit – but a socio-economic evil¹⁸⁹; ¹⁹⁰. Around fourteen centuries ago, the Quran clearly stated that: ‘They say, trade is like interest and Allah has allowed trade and prohibited interest’ (2: 275). ‘Whatever you pay as interest, so that it may increase in the property of [other] man, it does not increase with Allah’ (30: 39).

This leads to the question as to why religion has always prohibited interest? *The World Guide 2003/2004*¹⁹¹ reveals that: ‘Lending money and accumulating interest on the loan – can be traced back 4,000 years. But this has always been despised, condemned, restricted or banned by moral, ethical, legal or religious entities.’ In their book entitled, *Seven Steps to Justice*, Rodney Shakespeare and Peter Challen¹⁹² have challenged the moral and ethical grounds of interest. Mohammad Shafi and Mohammad Taqi Usmani¹⁹³ in their famous book, *The Issue of Interest*, and Tarek El Diwany¹⁹⁴ in *The Problem with Interest*, present detailed discussions and analysis of various issues related to interest. Chapra¹⁹⁵ has provided six rationales for the prohibition of interest in Islam, i.e., i) establishment and implication of justice – a central goal of Islam, ii) need fulfilment, iii) optimum economic growth, iv) full employment, v) equitable distribution, and, vi) economic stability in society.

The problems in the prevailing global financial system based on ‘interest’ highlight the validity of the above arguments. In her well-researched book entitled: *The Debt Threat and Why We Must Defuse It*, Noreena Hertz¹⁹⁶ quotes a senior Rwandan government official who says: ‘We had just got into power. It was 1994, just after the genocide. The streets of Kigali were littered with dead bodies. The previous regime had looted the coffers. There wasn’t even a stapler or a typewriter left in ministerial offices. And so we went to the World Bank, that first week, and we said we desperately need some help. And you know what the World Bank said to us? Not until you have paid the \$3 million interest on your outstanding debt.’ This situation highlights that the prevalence of ‘interest’ promotes ‘human greed’ rather than fulfilling basic ‘human need’. In essence, Islam advocates a system of *Mudarabah* (profit

¹⁸⁹ Waqar Masood Khan (1985), *Towards an Interest-Free Islamic System*, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation.

¹⁹⁰ M. Umar Chapra (1992), *Islam and the Economic Challenges*, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation.

¹⁹¹ New Internationalist Publications (2003), *The World Guide 2003/2004*, Oxford: New Internationalist Publications. p. 57.

¹⁹² Rodney Shakespeare and Peter Challen (2002), *Seven Steps to Justice*, London: New European Publications.

¹⁹³ Mohammad Shafi and Mohammad Taqi Usmani (1997), *The Issue of Interest*, Karachi: Darul Ishaat.

¹⁹⁴ Tarek El Diwany (2003), *The Problem with Interest*, London: Kreatoc.

¹⁹⁵ M. Umar Chapra (2000), *op.cit.*, p. 5-20.

¹⁹⁶ Noreena Hertz (2005), *The Debt Threat and Why We Must Defuse It*, London: Harper Perennial.

sharing) and *Musharakah* (joint business) where all parties involved in an economic activity, share the risks and benefits.

Table: 3.3. An Overview of Comparative Economic Systems

| Major Points | Capitalism | Communism and Socialism | Islamic Economy |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Property relationship | Man has ownership | State is the owner | Ownership belongs to Allah and man is a trustee on His behalf |
| Institutions | Banks, insurance companies and other institutions | Centralised command institutions | Profit and loss sharing, e.g., <i>Mudarabah</i> |
| Value system | Accredited Values | Values given by the command leadership | Divine value system as included in Quran |
| Motivational aspects | Mainly on account of monetary benefits and incentives | Regimentation | Belief in the Hereafter |
| Production system | No differentiation between <i>Haram</i> and <i>Halal</i> | No differentiation between <i>Haram</i> and <i>Halal</i> | Production of <i>Haram</i> products is prohibited |
| Earnings | No difference between <i>Haram</i> and <i>Halal</i> | No differentiation between <i>Haram</i> and <i>Halal</i> | <i>Haram</i> earnings are prohibited and <i>Halal</i> is mandatory |

Source: Saeed: 1999, 90.

Note: In Islam, *Haram* means all those items or actions, which are prohibited whilst *Halal* means all those that are allowed.

The current global experience indicates that the gulf between the rich and the poor countries is widening and that the policies of the World Bank and the IMF, are causing more harm than good. One of the most important mechanisms used to assess the debt burden is the calculation of 'debt servicing as a percent of government revenue'. It gives the ratio of the revenue paid to the IMF, the World Bank and other major lenders in relation to what remains in order to fulfil the basic necessities of life needed to just keep people alive in debtor countries. It is important to mention here that a chunk of the budgets of several Muslim countries are allocated for the payment of interest on previous loans. Under these financial circumstances, it is extremely difficult for them to become competitive in the globalisation process. This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that several Muslim countries are caught in a poverty spiral requiring further loans simply to pay the annual interest instalments of their previous loans. In table 3.4, four Muslim countries are selected from different parts of the world (i.e., Lebanon from the Middle East, Pakistan from South Asia, Tunisia from North Africa and Kyrgyzstan from Central Asia). One particular aspect common in all these countries is that with respect to their debt servicing, they face a deficit in their budgets. It is

astonishing to see that the Lebanon pays 81 percent of its GDP to debt servicing. How is a country expected to adequately function on the remaining meagre amount of revenues? Similarly, Pakistan is spending one third of its total revenues on debt servicing. The data, presented in the World Bank¹⁹⁷ and UNDP's¹⁹⁸ reports, reflects that in general, comparatively this situation is not as serious in Non-Muslim countries as it is in the Muslim World. Statistics indicate that the World Bank and the IMF are the major financial lenders in both the Muslim and the Non-Muslim worlds¹⁹⁹. This situation highlights just who is controlling and benefiting from the international financial market based purely on interest.

Table: 3.4. State of Government Revenue, Expenditure and Debt Servicing

| Country | Percent of GDP | | | |
|------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------------|
| | Revenue | Expenses | Cash deficit | Debt Servicing |
| Lebanon | 19.6 | 29.7 | -13.3 | 81.1 |
| Pakistan | 14.6 | 17.0 | -2.9 | 33.9 |
| Tunisia | 29.4 | 27.9 | -2.4 | 9.5 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 16.1 | 15.8 | -0.8 | 8.4 |

Source: The World Bank: 2005, 238-240.

International Aid

International aid is in fact an important component of the global financial system and is closely associated with the donors' own political interest rather than the genuine needs of a recipient country. Many examples can be quoted in this regard. British aid to Pakistan's education sector is one such example. Unlike the United States, in quantitative terms, Britain has not been a major donor to Pakistan in the field of education. However, being a major global player, with around two centuries of British rule over the South Asian Sub-continent, as well as Pakistan's membership of the Commonwealth – the importance of this country as a bilateral donor to Pakistan cannot be underestimated. It is particularly true that the political relationship with this country can affect the flow of aid from other bi- and multilateral donors. International aid to Pakistan has been influenced by the internal political situation of the country and the regional affairs of South and Central Asia. A recent example is that in October 1999, due to the military takeover, Britain

¹⁹⁷ The World Bank (2005), *World Development Indicators 2005*, New York. Oxford University Press.

¹⁹⁸ UNDP (2005), *Human Development Report 1995*, *op. cit.*

¹⁹⁹ The World Bank (2005), *op. cit.*

suspended aid as well as Pakistan's membership of the Commonwealth. However, later towards the end of 2001, when Pakistan joined the US-led military operation in Afghanistan in which Britain is the major partner, this country resumed aid, although Pakistan's membership of Commonwealth remained suspended²⁰⁰.

The rationale of British aid to developing countries can be found in the White Paper published at the birth of the Department for International Development (DFID). In 1997, the former Overseas Development Administration (ODA) reorganised in the form of DFID. At this occasion, Prime Minister Tony Blair said: 'Together you and I will begin to build a new society, a society in which each of us has the chance to grow, to achieve, to contribute, to create dignity for ourselves, and not for ourselves alone, but for others also; a society in which each of us has a stake, a share; and we will give back to our children what they deserve – a heritage of hope'²⁰¹. Similarly, Clare Short²⁰², the then Secretary of State for International Development, argued: 'It is our duty to care about other people, in particular those less well-off than ourselves. We all have a moral duty to reach out to the poor and needy. ... If we do not do so, there is a real danger that by the middle of the next century, the world will simply not be sustainable.' On another occasion, she said: 'I should like us all to make it an article of faith that every child, girl or boy born in 1997, will have an opportunity to go to school in the twenty-first century. We can do it if we can mobilise the political will'²⁰³. However, unfortunately, compared to 'political will', possibly 'political interests' are dearer to donors in the contemporary globalised world. In October 1999, British aid to Pakistan was suspended due to the military take over and Clare Short clearly said: 'Obviously, we cannot provide development assistance to the military authorities in Pakistan. No new funds for programmes linked to Government institutions will be made available and all our specialists who have been advising the Government of Pakistan have stopped work.'²⁰⁴

Further, to say that the attachment of ill-advised conditionalities with aid is a common practice adopted by the donors. It is especially true in the case of political changes in a recipient country. This policy may cause isolation of a recipient country resulting, in one way or another, to strengthening the

²⁰⁰ The Commonwealth (02 February 2002), 'Commonwealth,' <[http:// www.thecommonwealth.org/ ...](http://www.thecommonwealth.org/)>.

²⁰¹ T. Blair (1997) (cited in DFID), *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century (White Paper on International Development)*. London: DFID. p. 1.

²⁰² C. Short (1997a) (cited in DFID), *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century (White Paper on International Development)*. London: DFID.

²⁰³ *Ibid.* (29 August 1997b) (cited in 'Five Years to Lay Down the Foundations), *Times Education Supplement*.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.* (29 August 1997) (cited in 'Five Years to Lay Down the Foundations), *Times Education Supplement*. British aid was resumed during late 2001, as a reward for Pakistan for its cooperation in the military action in Afghanistan.

hands of autocrat rulers. Thus, without affecting the regimes, this situation adversely affects the common people, particularly the poor working classes of that country who pay the real price of sanctions and isolation. As discussed earlier, during October 1999, British aid to Pakistan was suspended due to the military takeover in the country. Later in January 2002, the same military government headed by the same General Musharraf, received appreciation from Clare Short. In her meeting with Musharraf, she appreciated his (Musharraf's) policies with regard to human development²⁰⁵. The question which begs an answer here is whether this change in the policy of the British government with regard to aid to Pakistan was really based on the interests of the poverty-stricken and illiterate masses, or, was it a reward to the military government of that country which decided to join the coalition operation in Afghanistan? Secondly, when there is no continuation and consistency in international aid, how can it be expected from a recipient country to keep partnership with the donor and fulfil its commitments with regard to the implementation of pro-poor policies? It can be argued that such circumstances question the credibility of donors and strengthen the hands of their critics. It also indicates that the purpose and the function of global finance is to serve the needs of the most powerful countries by allowing them to dictate the terms of involvement to all the others. Unfortunately, in the present global financial system, developing countries, particularly the Muslim countries have no voice.²⁰⁶ ■

²⁰⁵ DFID (2 February 2002), 'Department for International Development,' <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/...>>.

²⁰⁶ It should be noted that the issue of international aid is also associated with the issue of foreign investment. A developing country's ability to attract foreign investment mainly depends on international, national and firm-level factors that include international trade policy variables, major currency alignments, and shifts in global corporate strategies, all of which lie beyond the control of an individual government of a host country. In this context, foreign trade becomes closely associated with and linked to foreign investment. It is well known that countries possessing high levels of foreign investment will have increased production resulting in higher exports and greater participation in international trade. Unfortunately, like all other indicators, the Muslim World is also lagging well behind the rest of the world in this field. In addition to the scarcity of resources, the other major problem facing the Muslim World is the inadequate use of available resources. Needless to say that several ruling families in the Muslim World are billionaire and monopolising wealth and power. However, this money is either being spent on luxuries or is invested in Western banks and stock markets. Much has already been written in various journals and newspapers in this regard, and in the words of Koreshi (1995): 'Muslim rulers cannot see – not even the writing on the wall.'

CHAPTER IV

INTRA-UMMATIC TRADE: MYTH OR REALITY?

One may ask whether there is any specific need to promote international trade within the Muslim World, particularly when these countries are stretched from the eastern part of Asia to the western part of Africa. To explore the answer to this question, we need to know who is monopolising and taking advantage of global trade and how it effects the under-developed Muslim countries. It is a common observation that voices of opposition are being increasingly raised against globalisation. People, particularly from the developing countries, feel that globalisation has primarily resulted in economic, cultural and ultimately political domination by the industrialised countries. In principle, the democratisation of the market through the establishment of a just global system based on equality and human rights, as well as developing awareness about the environment and sustainable development are the general benefits expected from the globalisation process. However, in reality, it appears to be another form of colonisation or, what might be more accurately termed, ‘recolonisation’ – a tool of the West to exploit the East in order to expand and maximise the capitalist market through the workings of major international organisations such as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO. As the activities of the IMF and the World Bank have been discussed in the previous chapter, the WTO is briefly reviewed in the following paragraphs.

Being the successor to the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is considered to be one of the most important vehicles of globalisation. The objective of this organisation is to promote free global trade which, in fact, looks charming in theory but in practical terms not particularly beneficial to the masses in the developing world. The fury of the developing countries and other interest groups affected by WTO policies was clearly visible at Seattle in 1999, in Doha in 2001 and most recently, in Hong Kong during the ministerial conference held in December 2005²⁰⁷. In Seattle, during the 1999’s conference, as a result of the large-scale protests, President Clinton voiced sympathies for the concerns of the protesters and assured the establishment of an economic order with a humane face²⁰⁸. Although, similar assurances have also been given for the past

²⁰⁷ Jonathan Watts (12 December 2005), ‘Hong Kong on High Alert as Thousands of Protesters Fly in,’ *Guardian*.

²⁰⁸ Sultan Ahmad (02 March 2002) ‘Ill Effects of Globalisation’, *Dawn – Internet Edition*, <<http://www.dawn.com>>.

four decades, the only outcome is that rich countries are getting richer while poor countries are getting ever poorer. ‘The rhetoric of the WTO may be free trade, but its key agreements promote corporate monopoly’, writes Walden Bello²⁰⁹. He further argues that ‘whilst the world economy grows at around two percent per year, the transnational corporations expand by five times that amount.’

What is Wrong with the WTO Policies and Global Trade?

Christian Aid argues that trade liberalisation policies, as advocated by the WTO, harm the poor the most. While quoting an example from Africa, in one of its report entitled *The Economics of Failure: The Real Cost of ‘Free’ Trade for Poor Countries*, Christian Aid²¹⁰ estimated that during the past two decades, the damage done to 22 sub-Saharan African countries was around US\$ 272 billion. It further writes: ‘Had they not been forced to liberalise as the price of aid, loans and debt relief, sub-Saharan African countries would have had enough extra income to wipe out their debts and have sufficient left over to pay for every child to be vaccinated and go to school.’ Interestingly, the World Bank is not convinced by Christian Aid’s argument. Even a few years, prior to the above report published by Christian aid, the World Bank wrote: ‘The international trading system owes its robust development to successful institutions that straddle international and national levels – for many decades GATT and now its successor, the WTO. An effective WTO can serve the interests of developing countries in four ways: It can facilitate trade reform, provide mechanisms for settling disputes, strengthen the credibility of trade reforms, and promote transparent trade regimes that lower transaction costs’²¹¹. In fact, here the World Bank creates an illusion, as its statistics show that the developing countries share in global trade is on the rise and this growth is faster than at any previous time in recorded history. The Bank argued that it was due to the beneficial role of these organisations that more developing countries had joined the WTO – in 1987, as many as 65 developing countries were members of GATT while in 1999, there were 110 non-OECD developing countries registered as members of the WTO. The question that then arises is, if this is true, then (as mentioned in chapter one) why has the gap between the developed and the developing worlds continued to increase? In fact, this gap is constantly widening. Needless to say that the World Bank and the IMF are controlled by major powers whilst developing countries have

²⁰⁹ Walden Bello (09 December 2005), ‘WTO Ministerial Conference Hits Hong Kong’, *Weekly SchNEWS*, Issue 524.

²¹⁰ Christian Aid, *op. cit.*

²¹¹ The World Bank (1999), *op. cit.* p. 53,

no voice. In this context, Vandana Shiva²¹² argues: ‘As usual, the powerful countries, driven by their powerful corporations wanted both to prevent the mandatory reforms of the agreements that establish corporate monopolies in agriculture, seeds and medicines, as well as to introduce new issues like non-agricultural market access (NAMA) and further distort the already distorted GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Service).’ At the Hong Kong ministerial conference (November 2005) what they offered to developing countries was a ‘Development Package’ of ‘Aid for Trade’ through the World Bank and the IMF, another instrument of the Bretton Woods institutions to consolidate their grip on the global network of the debt trap.

In its report entitled *Trade and Development Report 1999*, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development²¹³ reveals that the closer integration of developing countries into the global trading and financial system is not bringing faster growth but leading to increased external deficits and instability. The report argues that in the present era, when the world economy is more integrated than at any other time in its recent history, developing countries depend even more on external resources in order to achieve sufficient rates of growth with which to address the deep-rooted problems of poverty and underdevelopment. The report estimated that in the low-level technology industries alone, developing countries were missing out on an additional US\$ 700 billion in annual export earnings. Another report of UNCTAD published in 2004, also indicates troubling trends. It revealed that during the 1990s, most of the developing countries of the world opened their markets to international trade and regarding their proportion of international trade with respect to their GDP, they were more integrated into the global economy as compared to rich (OECD) countries. However, in spite of this fact, during the 1990s, the developing countries’ average income declined and resultantly the incidence of poverty did not reduce. The major reason for decline in average income and resultantly the increase of poverty in developing countries can best be described in the words of Nobel Laureate, Joseph Stiglitz.²¹⁴ He says: ‘The Western countries have pushed poor countries to eliminate trade barriers, but kept up their own barriers, preventing developing countries from exporting their agricultural produce and so depriving them of desperately needed export income. The United States was, of course, one of the prime culprits, and this was an issue about which I felt intensely.’

²¹² Vandana Shiva (12 December 2005), ‘From Doha to HongKong, Via Cancun,’ *Z Net*, <http://www.Zmag.org/content/print_article.cfm?itemID=9308§ionID=13>.

²¹³ UNCTAD (26 January 2000), ‘Trade and Development Report 1999,’ <<http://www.unctad.org>>.

²¹⁴ Joseph Stiglitz (2002), *Globalisation and its Discontents*, London: Penguin Press, p. 6.

A recent report of UNCTAD's²¹⁵ entitled *Developing Countries in International Trade – 2005: Trade and Development Index*, also presents disturbing results. Due to the opening of their economies under the import liberalisation policies, a large number of developing countries faced more rapid growth in imports as compared to their exports. This situation caused severe negative effects on domestic production and employment, and there was no standardised strategy to come out of these crises. The report categorised 110 countries of the world in accordance with their TDI (Trade and Development Index). The situation of international trade of Muslim countries can be realised from the fact that there were only two Muslim countries, i.e., Malaysia and Kuwait which could join the top-10 TDI ranks. However, in contrast, in the bottom ten, six were Muslim countries, Benin, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Mali, and Niger.

As mentioned earlier, the WTO's sixth ministerial conference was held in December 2005 in Hong Kong. In this conference, 'aid-for-trade' was offered by western industrial countries to developing countries. This aid was generally considered as a 'tranquilizer' by the developing countries which are already trapped by IMF and World Bank debts. The United States offered to double its 'aid for trade' to developing countries (US\$ 2.7 billion/year by 2010). Similarly, Japan also offered a considerable aid package²¹⁶. But can this aid be helpful to developing countries. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy²¹⁷ reveals that every year, developing countries are losing over US\$ 40 billion in agricultural export income because of US and EU subsidies and protectionism. The Trade Justice Movement²¹⁸ says: 'Rich countries did not end the dumping of their agricultural products in developing countries. The EU and US have retained domestic agricultural subsidies that damage poor and vulnerable farmers in developing countries.' In the words of Oxfam²¹⁹: 'Rich countries put their commercial interests before those of developing countries. ... The rich world tells the poor world to get rid of subsidies, but continues to spend \$1 billion a day subsidising its own farming enterprises.' In its report entitled *Trade Invaders: the WTO and Developing Countries' Right to Protect*, Action Aid International²²⁰ quotes two key statements, i.e.: '...“We

²¹⁵ UNCTAD (2005), *op. cit.*, pp. 22-24, 79-89.

²¹⁶ Hussein Sameh (14 December 2005), 'Rich Put Poor on Tranquilizers at WTO,' *IslamOnline*, <<http://www.islam-online.net?English?News/2005-12/14/article06.shtml>>.

²¹⁷ The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (2005), *Sailing Close to the Wind*, Minneapolis.

²¹⁸ Trade Justice Movement (18 December 2005), 'No End to Poverty as Rich Countries Refuse to Deliver Trade Justice,' <<http://www.tjm.org.uk/wto/statement191205.shtml>>.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.* (02 January 2006), 'What Happened in Hong Kong?,' <*op. cit.*>.

²²⁰ Action Aid International (n.d.: 6), *Trade Invaders: The WTO and Developing Countries - Right to Protect*, London: Action Aid.

want to liberalise trade and grow markets in which to sell European goods and services. Multilateral [WTO] negotiations offer the biggest prize in achieving this” (Peter Mandelson, EU Trade Commissioner: 02 July 2005). ... “The US...will benefit the most from bold trade liberalisation reforms” (Robert Portman, US Trade Representative: 21 September 2005).’ It may be mentioned here that similar to other developing countries, Muslim countries have also opened their markets²²¹, however, most of the benefits of this process were taken away by the major global players.

The above facts are still unable to convince the World Bank as it says that free trade enhances opportunities and promotes economic growth.²²² However, the UNDP²²³ does not buy into this idea and concludes that ‘developed countries governments seldom waste an opportunity to emphasise the virtues of open markets, level playing fields and free trade, especially in their prescriptions for poor countries. Yet, the same governments maintain a formidable array of protectionist barriers against developing countries.’ For this reason, Christian Aid (24 November 2005) advocates that: ‘i) developing countries should have a right to determine for themselves, which tariffs to reduce and at what rate, to protect their rural producers, ii) developing countries to be able to exclude vulnerable sectors from any reduction in tariffs, and, iii) the reforms of rich countries’ subsidies that lead to the dumping of cheap produce on international markets.’ Christian Aid is a respected charity and its analysis on global trade is also relevant to the Muslim World. As nearly all the Muslim countries belong to the group of developing countries, as a result, they are particularly vulnerable to the dangers of ‘free trade’ mainly because of their crisis-ridden economies, unstable political situation, and low prestige at an international level. Thus, their future prospects in the free market appear to be rather bleak unless they manage to strengthen the process of socio-economic development and enhance intra-Ummatic cooperation.

Who is taking Advantage of Global Trade?

According to People and Planet:²²⁴ “Trade is a matter of life and death for many of the world’s poorest people. But the rich and powerful are pursuing trade policies that put profits before the needs of people and the planet. ... Unfair Trade rules deny poor countries \$700 billion a year.’ In a

²²¹ SESRTCIC (2005), ‘Integration into the World Economy: Experience of the OIC Countries,’ *Journal of Economic Cooperation Among Islamic Countries*, Vol. 26, No.1, pp. 1-62.

²²² The World Bank (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 194.

²²³ UNDP (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 113.

²²⁴ People and Planet (25 January 2006), ‘World Trade Rules are Hunting the Poor,’ <<http://www.peopleandplanet.org/tradejustice>>.

similar context *The World Guide*²²⁵ says that: ‘Globalisation is really a euphemism for “trans-nationalisation” the unfettered expansion of transnational corporations (TNCs) into the world economy, particularly into the economies of the poor countries. Today, TNCs have almost total control over the process of globalisation. More than two-thirds of international trade is under the control of a mere 500 corporations. Furthermore, a total of 40% of the trade they control occurs between different parts of the same TNC. Multilateral organisations such as the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank, play a key role in facilitating this process.’ The element of ‘key role’, with regard to the formulation of global trade policies, is also confirmed by the WTO²²⁶ itself, as it says on its website: ‘Informal consultation between IMF staff and the WTO Secretariat takes place regularly regarding trade policy developments and advice for individual countries.’ But what is the outcome of this ‘trade policy and advice’? Jeremy Kahn²²⁷ reveals that 1999 was a very fruitful year for the worlds top 500 TNCs as their total profit had increased by 26 percent over the past four years. During the next five years, i.e., 1999-2004, with the figure of 97 percent, this increase jumped even further. Table 4.1 reflects an interesting point. Although, from 1999 to 2004, the TNCs did enhance their total sale and assets (9% and 27%, respectively), the figure of proportionate increase in the net profit (97%) was far higher than the value of sales and assets. A careful consideration of this situation highlights that this high profit was achieved due to their: i) full monopoly over technology and skills, ii) merger of various major companies of the world which reduced market competition, and, iii) huge staff redundancies that made thousands of workers jobless, leaving their families in a difficult situation. Here, the question that needs to be asked is that, except for the payment of a meagre redundancy allowance in some cases, did the ordinary workers and consumers receive any benefit from billions of dollars of enhanced profit?

²²⁵ New International Publications Ltd. (1999), *op. cit.*, p. 63.

²²⁶ WTO (23 September 2005), ‘The IMF and the World Trade Organisations,’ <<http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/imfwto.htm>>.

²²⁷ Jeremy Kahn (24 July 2000), ‘The World’s Largest Corporations’, *The Fortnightly Fortune*, Vol. 142-143.

Table: 4.1. A Snapshot of the Top-500 Companies of the World

| Year | Sales (US\$ in billion) | Profit (US\$ in billion) | Assets (US\$ in billion) |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1999 | 12,696 | 554 | 44,003 |
| 2004 | 13,847 | 1,093 | 55,717 |
| Increase 1999-2004 | 1,151 (9.06 %) | 539 (97.29 %) | 11,714 (26.62 %) |

Source: Computed from Jeremy Kahn (2000) and Scott DeCarlo (2005).

It is important to recognise who the owners of these companies are and how many of these companies are owned by Muslim countries. In 1999, statistics indicate that out of the 500 top companies, 179 were American based, followed by Japan (107), the UK (38), Germany and France (37 each). Similarly, the United States, where only around five percent of the global population lives, received more than 55 percent of the profit from world trade (table: 4.2). The top four companies in the world (i.e., General Motors, Wal-Mart Stores, Exxon Mobil and Ford Motors) were also American. It is important to note that out of these 500 companies, only one, Petronas, was owned by a Muslim country (Malaysia). Similarly, there were 26 major oil companies out of which nine were American based, seven European and four were of Japanese origin. Among the developing countries, major importers of oil like India and China also owned oil giants with multi-million turnovers. Unfortunately, the Middle Eastern Muslim countries, which produce most of world's oil, had no major company to conduct their oil business²²⁸.

In the year 2004, with some minor changes, the above situation remained more or less the same. The figure of 179 top 500 US owned companies reached 206 and their share in the overall profit was 49 percent. One encouraging sign was that some developing countries with their fast economic growth increased their share of global trade. For instance, in each case, India, Brazil and Bermuda owned five companies among the top 500, while the same figure for China and Turkey was three and one, respectively. Thus, here in the case of the Muslim World, Malaysia was replaced by Turkey. With no representation of Muslim countries in the world's oil and gas sector, three major companies were Indian based; two were of Chinese origin while one was owned by Brazil. On an overall basis, the world's number one company was US owned Exxon Mobil which earned US\$ 25.33 billion as net profit. The number two, Royal Dutch/Shell Group (profit US\$ 18.54 billion) is also an oil giant and is jointly owned by the Netherlands and the United

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

Kingdom. Reifman and Wong²²⁹ reveal that during 2005, the turnover of 339 major US companies was one trillion dollars employing around four million people. Unfortunately, even among the top 1000 companies, there was no representation of Muslim countries' companies in the media and oil sectors,²³⁰. This situation indicates the poor position of Muslim countries in the global market. For this reason, apart from opening up their borders and making their trade policy flexible enough for the further expansion of existing corporations in the global market, Muslim countries are unable to play an active role in the process of globalisation.

Table: 4.2. Rank of Countries with Respect to Owing the Top 500 Companies of the World

| Country (1) | Total No. of companies owned | | Total profit US\$ in billion | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| | 1999 (2) | 2004 (3) | 1999 (4) | 2004 (5) |
| USA | 179 | 206 | 308 (55.54 %) | 538 (49.3 %) |
| Japan | 107 | 56 | 22 (3.94 %) | 78 (7.2 %) |
| UK | 38 | 39 | 52 (9.35 %) | 81 (7.4 %) |
| Germany | 37 | 21 | 31 (5.75 %) | 28 (2.3 %) |
| France | 37 | 29 | 29 (5.21 %) | 49 (4.5 %) |
| Others | 102 | 149 | 112,324 (20.18 %) | 319 (29.2 %) |

Source: Same as table 4.1.

Note: i) Column 4 and 5: % of total profit is the percentage of the profit of a respective country's companies with regard to the total profit of all 500 companies of the world.

ii) Others: includes Australia, Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Canada, China, Finland, India, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan and Turkey.

²²⁹ Shlomo Reifman and Samantha Wong (31 December 2005), 'America's Largest Private Companies,' *Forbes*, <<http://www.forbes.com/2005/11/09/largest-private-companies/05private/land.html>>.

²³⁰ Scott DeCarlo (31 March 2005), 'The Forbes Global 2000: Special Report,' *Forbes*, <<http://www.forbes.com/2005/03/30/05f2000land.html>>.

The above situation also presents reflections on ‘corporate globalisation.’ According to Friends of the Earth²³¹: ‘Corporate globalisation is the spread of big business across the world. As big business gets bigger, it gets more powerful meaning governments and people have less control over their lives. All over the world, big business is putting profit before people and the environment.’ This is a very complex situation and presents a major challenge to the trade sector of the Ummah. In addition to corporate globalisation, there is also another way to view the contemporary position of the Muslim World in the global trade market. Table 4.3 indicates the growth rate of the trade of developing Muslim and the Non-Muslim countries. The figures reflect the fact that Non-Muslim countries are in a better position as compared to their Muslim counterparts. The export growth of Non-Muslim countries was nearly double that of Muslim countries. Similarly, in the case of Non-Muslim countries the growth rate of exports has been higher in comparison to imports. This situation was reversed in the case of Muslim countries where the growth rate for imports was higher than that for exports, reflecting the fact that they had comparatively fewer opportunities for earning foreign exchange and hard currency than the Non-Muslim World. The same is also true for the balance of trade where the figure for Muslim countries was (-) 7.5 as against (-) 3.7 for Non-Muslim countries.

Table: 4.3. Growth Rate of Trade (goods & services) of the Low Income Muslim and the Non-Muslim Countries

| Countries | (percentages) | | |
|----------------------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| | Export | Import | Balance of trade |
| Muslim countries | 4.25 | 6.12 | -7.44 |
| Non-Muslim countries | 8.87 | 7.74 | -3.68 |

Source: Computed from UNDP (2001-2005) World Bank (2001-2005).

Another comparison of various groups of countries is presented in table 4.4. The statistics indicate that as compared to Latin America, high human development countries, low human development countries as well as world average, the Arabs states have the highest level of imports. Here, although the level of export is also higher when compared to rest of the groups, this is mainly oil – a major export item of these countries. However, in contrast, the figures of manufactured and high technology exports are far lower in the Arab States compared to all other groups. Does more trade mean

²³¹ Friends of the Earth (2005), ‘The World for Sale: An Introduction to Corporate Globalisation.’ In Craig Donnellan (ed.), *The Globalisation Issue*, Cambridge: Independence. pp. 25-27.

more human development? UNDP²³² provides the best answer. In its words: ‘Under the right conditions, it [trade] has potential for reducing poverty, narrowing in-equality, and overcoming economic injustices. For many of the world’s poorest countries, and for millions of poor people, these conditions have yet to be created.’ It may be mentioned here that with regard to the Muslim World, there are at least two main reasons for the sorry state of international trade. In the case of oil producing Muslim countries, the demand for consumer goods has exceeded the domestic production. So far as the non-oil producing Muslim countries are concerned, due to their low agricultural and industrial productivity as well as lack of foreign investment, their exports have been unable to match their imports. Thus, in both cases, the balance of trade has always been negative. This an alarming situation and requires immediate and serious considerations.

Table: 4.4. The Arab States and the Structure of Global Trade

| Countries (1) | Imports (2) | Exports (3) | Primary Export (4) | Manufac. Exports (5) | High-Tech. Exports (6) |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Arab States | 30 | 36 | 86 | 20 | 2 |
| Latin America | 21 | 24 | 44 | 55 | 14 |
| High HD Countries | 23 | 22 | 18 | 79 | 17 |
| Low HD Countries | 37 | 34 | .. | .. | .. |
| World | 24 | 24 | 22 | 77 | 18 |

Source: UNDP (2005: 277)

- Note: 1) Column – 2: Imports of goods and services as a percent of GDP.
 2) Column - 3: Export of Goods and services as a percent of GDP.
 3) Column - 4: Primary export as a percent of merchandise export.
 4) Column - 5: Manufactured export as a percent of merchandise export.
 5) Column - 6: High technology export as a percent of manufactured export.
 6) *High Human Development Countries*: Norway, Iceland, Australia, Luxembourg, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, Belgium, United States, Japan, Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, United Kingdom, France, Austria, Italy, New Zealand, Germany, Spain, Hong Kong, Israel, Greece, Singapore, Slovenia, Portugal, South Korea, Cyprus, Barbados, Czech Republic, Malta, Brunei, Argentina, Hungary, Poland, Chile, Estonia, Lithuania, Qatar, UAE, Slovakia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Croatia, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Latvia, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Bahamas, Seychelles, Cuba, Mexico, Tonga, Bulgaria, Panama and, Trinidad and Tobago.

²³² UNDP (2005), *op. cit.* p. 113.

7) *Low Human Development Countries*: Madagascar, Swaziland, Cameroon, Lesotho, Djibouti, Yemen, Mauritania, Haiti, Kenya, Gambia, Guinea, Senegal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Angola, Eritrea, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Congo, Mozambique, Burundi, Ethiopia, Central African Republic, Guinea Bissau, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leon and Niger.

A further notable point is that most of the exports of Muslim countries are agro-based. However, now the fast growing economies of China and India as well as the continued enlargement of the EU, pose a major challenge to textile exports from the Muslim World. Due to their large economies, India and China are considered world giants and both countries have a considerable share of the export of cotton and textile products in the global market. Due to fast industrialisation in the global market, their products are more competitive as compared to the products from Muslim countries. Similarly, by the same token, the situation of the EU, is an even further challenge for textile exports from the Muslim countries. In this context, Murat Ilkin²³³ writes in his research paper that:

Textiles play an important role in the economies of the OIC Mediterranean countries since they are the main industrial activity and the largest employer in Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia and Turkey and export items for Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey (EC: 2004, 1). Since they enjoy preferential treatment through the Association Agreement, textiles remained competitive in the European markets. However, since the preferential treatment that the CEECs [Central and East European Countries] enjoy by joining the Union outweighs that of the OIC Mediterranean partners, the new circumstances are expected to affect negatively on the OIC countries' volume of trade in textiles together with the growing competition in the Union. Moreover, the EU is the world's largest exporter of textile products and the world's second largest exporter of clothing after China (EC: 2004, 1). Thus, the OIC countries, in general, should develop new policies to overcome challenges such as losing competitiveness in the textile sector, facing business difficulties and unemployment. Furthermore, the same problems will be witnessed in the clothing sector since it also plays an important role in the economies of the OIC Mediterranean countries. ... It is evident that the OIC countries will be affected by the developments currently taking place in the European Union.

²³³ Murat Ilkin (July 2005) 'EU Enlargement and Its Implications for the OIC Countries,' *Journal of Economic Cooperation Among Islamic Countries*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 35-76.

The State of Intra-Ummatic Trade

In spite of the fact that international trade is an area where it is not always easy to translate good intentions into action, there is still a growing realisation within the Muslim World for the need to promote and strengthen commercial and economic ties. The statements of various Muslim heads of states reflect the need to establish an Islamic common market. The BBC²³⁴ quotes an outcome of a World Islamic Economic Forum, conducted with the support of the OIC. It reveals that: 'Trading between OIC countries is worth about \$800bn (£456) – no more than 7% of global trade as a whole.' According to another source, the total volume of trade within the Muslim countries is only 12 percent of the total trade of these countries with the rest of the world²³⁵. In spite of its slow growth, it is to some extent encouraging that with the passage of time, intra-Ummatic trade is on the rise as the same figure in 1998 was 10 percent²³⁶. The statistics compiled by the Islamic Development Bank show that the proportionate of intra-Ummatic export was 12.2 percent while the same figure for import was 14.4. The data presents a mixed picture of Muslim countries intra-Ummatic trade. For instance, in case of Djibouti, Somalia, Lebanon and Jordan the proportions of intra-Ummatic trade were 89, 74, 53 and 44 percent. In contrast, there were some other countries, e.g., Sierra Leon, Bangladesh Qatar, Malaysia and Indonesia where these figures were only 2, 4, 6, 7 and 9 percent, respectively (Islamic Development Bank: April 2005, 72-73).

The encouraging sign is that an established Islamic financial website indicates that during 2005, the top-100 companies from the Muslim World showed strong growth in their businesses. The total revenue of these companies was eight percent of the global top-100 companies. The source also revealed that the Islamic financial industry was growing and that financial cooperation between various Muslim countries was on the rise²³⁷. Various examples can be quoted in this regard. For instance, the accord between Indonesia and Algeria, although geographically both are situated on the opposite edges of the Muslim World. Both countries signed 23 contracts to promote mutual trade and cooperation²³⁸. Similarly, the Gulf States are also

²³⁴ BBC News (03 October 2005), 'Muslim Urge Islamic Free Trade,' <*op. cit.*>.

²³⁵ Muslim News, The (25 June 2005), 'Muslim Countries to Form Trade Block,' <[http://www.muslimnews.co.uk/...](http://www.muslimnews.co.uk/)>.

²³⁶ Masudul Alam Choudhury (1998), *Studies in Islamic Social Sciences*, London: Macmillan Press. p. 196.

²³⁷ Dinar Standard (December 2005) 'The 2005 DS100 Summary Report: Ranking Shows Strong Sale Growth' <<http://www.dinarstandard.com/rankings/ds100/analysis.htm>>.

²³⁸ VNA (27 February 2005), 'Indonesia and Algeria Sign Cooperation Deals,' <<http://www.vangency.com/vn?NewsA.asp?LANGUAGE...>>.

investing in Pakistan as they successfully won bids to buy companies at the time of their privatisation²³⁹. With regard to the promotion of intra-Ummatic finance and trade, the Islamic Development Bank is an important institution. By financing various trade operations, it attempts to enhance international trade within the Muslim World. To a limited extent, the Bank also provides temporary relief to Muslim countries as and when required against foreign exchange shortages. The major aim of these activities, in the promotion of economic cooperation among Muslim countries, is to help them to optimise the utilisation of their available resources and potentialities.

This discussion reflects that in spite of a few signs, there is still a long way to go to achieve the objective of development in the Muslim World. Kabir Hassan²⁴⁰ highlights various problems which create hurdles in the promotion of intra-Ummatic trade, e.g.: 'i) inconsistent economic policies of the Islamic countries' governments; ii) reliance on exports of only a few primary products, iii) low income elasticity of demand in the case of primary products, iv) deteriorating prices of primary products as compared to the prices of manufactured items, v) tariff and non-tariff barriers imposed by developed countries, vi) out flow of Islamic countries' capital due to higher imports as compared to their exports, vii) inelastic exports, viii) high debt burden, and, ix) too little intra-Ummatic trade.' This situation reflects that there is a need to coordinate and liberalise the Islamic market. In the post 9/11 context, the establishment and maintenance of local and regional peace and stability is an extremely important factor in this regard.

A Way Forward

The third extraordinary session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held in December 2005 in Makkah, presented a Ten-Year Programme of Action to meet the challenges facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st century. It emphasised on promoting and strengthening economic and trade cooperation among Muslim countries. The document says: i) [The programme] 'calls 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, ii) 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 level of 20% of the overall trade volume during the

²³⁹ *Pakistan Times* (14 February 2005), 'Saudi, Gulf Investment Inflows up in Pakistan'.

²⁴⁰ Kabir Hassan (May 13-15, 2002), *Regional Economic Blocs Among OIC Countries and the Prospects of Islamic Common Market*, *Proceedings of International Conference on Practical Measures to Establish A Common Market Between Muslim Countries*, Qatar: University of Qatar.

period covered by the plan..., and, iii) promote endeavours for institutionalized and enhanced cooperation between the OIC and regional and international institutions working in the economic and commercial fields²⁴¹

The outcome of the above discussion suggests that a possible solution for remedying the current position of Muslim countries in the global system would be to adopt a common strategy to promote mutual trade. While highlighting the need for an Islamic Common Market (ICM), Kasem Khan²⁴² emphasised the concept in its historical perspective and in his view: ‘An Islamic Common Market is a concept which has a firm basis in Islamic history. The establishment of the Islamic State in Medina founded the first Common Market. The dismantling of tribal, cultural and racial barriers by Islam led to a society based on religious brotherhood which transcended geographical boundaries. This new system was to unleash the entrepreneurial and trading agencies of the Muslims who with the passage of time, were determined to establish the greatest economic organisation the world has seen stretching from Morocco to Indonesia. ... There was a tremendous growth of trade and industry in the Islamic World due to three main reasons: i) a vast and diverse geographical area united by common ideology, ii) regional specialisation, and, iii) tariff preferences. The decline of this vast economic organisation began in the 16th century and was due to: i) the opening of new trade routes by European powers in the 16th century, ii) colonisation in the 17th century, and, iii) the impact of the Industrial Revolution in the 17th and 18th centuries.’

From time to time, this concept has been supported by various Muslim leaders. It has also been urged that, compared to the Western industrial countries, the Muslim World has the added advantage of the common ideology of Ummah. Unfortunately, due to a lack of proper implementation and planning, these promising proposals and blueprints for economic integration among the Islamic states never got off the ground. However, there are a number of other difficulties that arise in attempting to increase the level of trade among Muslim countries. For instance, in the late-1980s, Abdullah Al-Ahsan²⁴³ pointed out that many of the Muslim countries depend upon a single or at best, limited number of commodities for the greater part of their revenue. In addition, there are also some other internal and external problems such as the protectionist policies adopted by major industrial countries, tariff and non-tariff barriers, the impact of the debt crisis,

²⁴¹ OIC (December 2005), ‘*Ten-Year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century: Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference*, <<http://www.oic-oci.org/ex-summit/english/10-years-plan.htm>>.

²⁴² Salahuddin Kasem Khan (1996), ‘Towards an Islamic Common Market: A Progressive Approach.’ In Ayubur Rahman Bhuyan, *et. al.* (eds.), *Towards an Islamic Common Market: Proceedings of the International Seminar on Islamic Common Market held during December 18-20, 1993*, Dhaka: Islamic Economic Research Bureau. pp. 201.04.

²⁴³ Abdullah Al-Ahsan (1988), *op. cit.*, p. 92.

a lack of infrastructural facilities, close historical relationships with former colonial powers and above all the lack of political will on the part of the Muslim leadership²⁴⁴. At the dawn of the 21st century, a general overview of Muslim countries economies and their pattern of international trade reflect that this situation still exists. With regard to the European Union's common market, there are at least three major advantages which the Muslim World does not enjoy, i.e. i) most of the EU countries have attained the objective of industrial development, ii) their internal political stability and industrial base have also provided them economic stability, and, iii) geographically, they are situated in the form of a compact bloc. However, it may be argued that in the case of the Muslim World, doing nothing is not an option.

Although no research on the comparative analysis of this issue has been done so far, it has generally been observed that in the case of most West European countries, the governments were comparatively keener for integration than the public. During the past few years, the outcome of referendums conducted in some of these countries for the rectification of the EU constitution proves this argument. This situation is completely opposite in most of the Muslim countries, whereas compared to their respective governments, grass-roots sentiment is very positive towards the formation of a Muslim bloc. This factor can be considered to be a 'spiritual commonality of interest' and can provide a strong foundation for the formation and strengthening of any future Muslim union. However, if spiritual commonality is combined with the economic commonality of interest, it can further strengthen the ground for the establishment and growth of such a union. But when comparing with the EU, does this economic commonality of interest exist? Amazad Hossain²⁴⁵, who presented his paper in the *International Conference on Practical Measures to Establish a Common Market between Muslim Countries*, held in Qatar in May 2002, argued: 'Although the Muslim World is elaborated with relatively small and large group countries on a heterogeneous level of development stage, but when comparing selected economic indicators of selected Muslim countries with the EU, there is an opportunity to establish common economic activities within selected Muslim countries. And this can be established through a step by step process taking into consideration each country's interest, development stage and available resources.' In Hossain's

²⁴⁴ Farooq Shakweer (1996), 'Prospects for the Establishment of the Islamic Common Market and the Role of the Islamic Development Bank.' In Ayubur Rahman Bhuyan, *et. al.* (eds), *Towards an Islamic Common Market, Proceedings of the International Seminar on Islamic Common Market held During December 18-20, 1993*, Dhaka: Islamic Economic Research Bureau.

²⁴⁵ Amazad Hossain (13-15 May 2002), 'Opportunities to Integrate Muslim Countries for a Common Economy: An Experience from European Union,' *Proceedings of International Conference on Practical Measures to Establish A Common Market Between Muslim Countries*, University of Qatar, pp. 221-233.

view, the same approach was adopted by the EU. At the same occasion, similar views were also expressed by Karim Azarbayejany *et. al.*²⁴⁶ who further emphasised that the joint economic and commercial activities of Muslim countries should be in line with the contemporary process of globalisation.

With regard to the potential of intra-Ummatic trade, Seyed Komail Tayyebi and Mojgan Moallemy²⁴⁷ say that: ‘The actual volume of trade flow among all Islamic countries is about 53.2 percent less than its potential volume among them. ... Formation of a sub-bloc among the Middle East, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey would play an important role in promoting trade among them.’ Luckily, attempts have been made to exploit this potential, as concluded by Mokhtar M Metwally²⁴⁸. He reveals that the ‘intra-trade between Muslim countries grows faster than their total trade with non-Muslim countries. However, the intra-trade of Muslim countries within the neighbouring region grows much faster than total intra-trade of these countries with non-Muslim countries. ... [This] conclusion suggests that one practical means to establish a common market amongst Muslim countries is to start with regional forms of integration.’ This discussion, as well as the outcome of some other studies²⁴⁹; Nabil Dabour²⁵⁰; and Murat Ilkin²⁵¹: reflects that in spite of various difficulties, there is enormous potential for the development of intra-Ummatic trade and there are a number of avenues down which Muslim countries can cooperate for mutual benefit. For instance: i) the Muslim countries possess significant comparative advantages in labour intensive products, ii) in textile, clothing, fibres and yarn, Muslim countries have substantial surpluses and a wide spectrum of complementarities, iii) the potential for trade in food and

²⁴⁶ Karim Azarbayejany *et. al.* (13-15 May 2002), ‘Economic Convergence and the Spillover Effects of Trade and Regional Integration on Economic Growth (The Case of OIC Member Countries),’ *Proceedings of International Conference on Practical Measures to Establish A Common Market Between Muslim Countries*, University of Qatar, pp. 353-368.

²⁴⁷ Seyed Komail Tayyebi and Mojgan Moallemy (13-15 May 2002), ‘Possibility of trade Integration among Selected Islamic Countries,’ *Proceedings of International Conference on Practical Measures to Establish A Common Market between Muslim Countries*, University of Qatar, pp. 107-120.

²⁴⁸ Mokhtar M. Metwally (13-15 May 2002), ‘Establishment of an Islamic Common Market Through Regional Economic Integration,’ *Proceedings of International Conference on Practical Measures to Establish A Common Market between Muslim Countries*, University of Qatar, pp. 83-104.

²⁴⁹ Ruzita Mohd. Amin *et. al.* (July 2005), ‘Economic Integration among the Member of League of Arab States: An Empirical Evidence,’ *Journal of Economic Cooperation among Islamic Countries*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 77-102.

²⁵⁰ Dabour, Nabil (January 2005), ‘OIC and Central Asian Countries in Transition: Integration into the World Economy and Cooperation with the Rest of the OIC Countries,’ *Journal of Economic Cooperation among Islamic Countries*, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 63-106.

²⁵¹ Murat Ilkin (2005), *op.cit.*, pp. 35-76.

agricultural products is enormous and the same is also true for crude and manufactured items, and pharmaceutical products, and, iv) the potential is also particularly high with respect to the fact that some countries are rich in minerals, others have an abundance of human capital, while some countries have sufficient financial resources to finance any project of mutual interest.

Islamic Economic Union

Regional economic integration organisations like the EU, NAFTA and ASEAN, are the main focus of international attention and concern as global economic regionalism rapidly increases. As mentioned earlier, the use of protectionism by the major global players is undermining the developing countries' as well as Muslim countries' efforts to effectively utilise their comparative advantage. The tariff and non-tariff barriers imposed by the developed countries is another major problem for developing countries and the Muslim World in particular, especially in those areas where they have a comparative advantage, as in the case of agriculture, textiles and light manufacturing. The existing tariff system of developed countries creates serious problems for developing countries in exporting their products to the former²⁵². In order to overcome such problems and to promote mutual trade within the Muslim World, Muslim countries, like many other countries around the world, have established various regional organisations. For instance, Arab Common Market (ACM) established in 1964,²⁵³ Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS: 1975),²⁵⁴ Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO: 1985)²⁵⁵, Arab Maghreb Union (AMU: 1987),²⁵⁶ The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC: 1987),²⁵⁷ The Arab Cooperation Council (ACC: 1989),²⁵⁸ Developing Eight (D-8: 1997)²⁵⁹ and, Arab Free Trade Area (AFTA: 1997)²⁶⁰.

The Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) is briefly discussed in the following paragraphs. The ECO was established in 1985 by Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. In the early 1990s, seven new members, Afghanistan,

²⁵² UNDP (2005), *op.cit.* pp. 26-132.

²⁵³ Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Mauritania and Libya.

²⁵⁴ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

²⁵⁵ Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

²⁵⁶ Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Libya.

²⁵⁷ UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait.

²⁵⁸ Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Yemen.

²⁵⁹ Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria and Turkey.

²⁶⁰ Jordan, UAE, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Somalia, Iraqi, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Mauritania and Yemen.

Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan also joined this organisation. With a total population of 390 million (6% of the world's total) and covering an area of nearly eight million km², which is nearly 5.4 percent of the total land area of the world,²⁶¹ the ECO is one of the largest economic unions within the Muslim World. With regard to the population, it may be mentioned here that due to higher population growth rate in the region, the proportionate of the ECO population in the world's total population is increasing gradually. During 1996, the share of the ECO population in the total global population was 5.8 percent which increased to 6.0 percent during 2005.²⁶² This situation requires necessary measures for the development of this region in accordance with the growth of population. The major objectives of the ECO are: i) the promotion of sustainable economic development of member states, ii) removal of trade barriers, iii) the promotion of intra-regional trade; enhancement of the role of the ECO region in the growth of world trade, and, iv) the gradual integration of the economies of the member states with the world economy²⁶³.

On a collective basis, the ECO is rich in oil, gas, cotton and other resources and there is huge potential for mutual cooperation and trade promotion. Six out of the ten ECO member states are land-locked. As air transport is expensive and direct maritime outlets are not available, road and rail links, within and outside the region, assume the utmost importance. There are vast resources of minerals in these states. Like Iran, Turkmenistan²⁶⁴ and Uzbekistan are rich in natural gas. Tajikistan has huge potential for power generation, while Turkmenistan has large oil and gas reserves. In conjunction with oil and gas, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are also producers of cotton and textile products. However, these resources have not been properly exploited and as a result these states still remain greatly underdeveloped. The overall state of the ECO countries, can be judged from the following quote from its website²⁶⁵.

One of the main objectives of the ECO as a regional grouping is to promote trade within the region and the rest of the world based on the principle of free trade, and to meet the challenges of globalization. ... [Unfortunately the] external trade was

²⁶¹ The World Bank (2005), *op. cit.*

²⁶² CIA, *op. cit.*

²⁶³ ECO (15 January 2006), 'Economic Cooperation Organisation', <<http://www.ecosecretariat.org>>.

²⁶⁴ Turkmenistan is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of its natural resources. Turkmenistan possesses 35 percent of the world's reserves of gas, 12 billion tons of oil (just 30% of the territory of Turkmenistan has so far been explored). Its energy reserves (gas, oil and electricity) lay the basis for the development of its economy. After the USA, Russia and Canada, Turkmenistan is the world's fourth largest producer of natural gas.

²⁶⁵ ECO, *op. cit.*

adversely affected by the ripple effects following the events of 11 September 2001 and by the slower economic growth in major export markets. However, the regional economies of the ECO countries have been benefiting from trade liberalization and the move towards world prices. In 2002, exports grew significantly and the countries of the region were able to diversify their markets. ... According to 2000 statistics, the share of intra regional export of Pakistan was just 3.2 percent, Turkey 3.1 percent, Iran and Kazakhstan 3.8 percent and 6.9 percent respectively. While for Azerbaijan it amounted to 8.7 percent, for Turkmenistan 22.6 percent, for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan 30.8 percent and 23.6 percent respectively. ... The ECO member states had made efforts to promote intra-trade and taken significant steps forward for the improvement of regulatory frameworks and the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers in the region. The regional intra-trade situation is, however, far from satisfactory when compared to the preceding year and the prospect of an imminent change does not seem very likely unless private initiatives backed by the political will of the member states are given momentum.

This information and the global situation as well as the outcome of personal discussions of the present author with various officials of the ECO highlights that:

- It is an encouraging sign that ten Muslim countries situated in a troubled region of the world have taken the initiative to promote mutual cooperation, particularly in the field of international trade.
- Although, in spite of enormous potential in international trade, the progress so far, is not encouraging enough to meet the desired objectives.
- Apart from the weakness of the ECO countries, the global situation can also affect negatively in the promotion of mutual trade.
- A general inefficiency is a common observation of developing countries and the same is also true for the ECO. Unfortunately, the database and record keeping system of the ECO is quite poor. This can be judged from the fact that even in early 2006, the latest available statistics posted on its website was for the year 2002. While the rest of the cross-country data was for the year 1997-2001.
- During the 1990s, Pakistan was the first country to recognise the independence of all six republics and quickly moved to exchange diplomatic representatives. However, due to internal turmoil and the regional geo-political situation (particularly the civil war in

Afghanistan), Pakistan has not been able to achieve considerable benefits of trade with the new Central Asian Republics (CAR).

- For international trade, Iran is the shortest route to deep sea ports for CAR. It is also the most economical route to export oil and gas to the rest of the world. However, because of hard-line policies adopted by the current regime in Iran, this is not acceptable to major global players; especially the US.
- The volatile political situation in Afghanistan and the intermittent but continuing internal crisis in Pakistan, particularly in the two western provinces, NWFP and Baluchistan remain real and serious problems. If the conflict in Afghanistan ended, a direct link with CAR could be established with Karachi and a newly under-construction port of Gwadar (Pakistan). At present, this link is impossible, as 600 km's of the necessary territory needed inside Afghanistan is inaccessible because of the continued instability. This instability is also holding up the proposed pipelines which could be used to export oil and gas to a large number of countries.
- It is noteworthy that over 99 percent of Turkey's population is Muslim and the present OIC's Secretary General also comes from this country. However, in spite of these facts, Turkey is eager to join the European Union rather than focusing on strengthening the ECO or the OIC.
- It may be mentioned here that rather than specifically blaming the ECO, it is a common observation that several organisations established by the developing countries are also not successful in making headways. Thus, when their leaders meet, in many cases progress is limited to intentions and resolutions passed in conference. This happened during the latest summit held in September 2004 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

It can be argued that although the potential mutuality of economic interests between these countries is obvious, the perceived dissonance of political and security interests, as reflected in the Afghan conflict, remains a major obstacle along the path of regional cooperation. This situation demands that under the current circumstances, the founding members, and Iran in particular, should reformulate their foreign policy to make it more compatible with regional and global circumstances. What this means in practical terms is that they should concentrate more on common economic interests than the politics of rivalry. During the advent of Khatami's presidency in Iran, the Islamic Republic had improved its relationship with the entire region as well as with the rest of the world but the hard-line approach adopted by the current government is damaging the country's credibility in the eyes of the international community. It is important for the ECO-member states to be aware of the fact that in order to improve their integrative efforts in the region, they should take stock of what they have to offer and what they can do to strengthen this organisation which is ultimately in their interest. Further to

say that presently, under the auspicious of the WTO, world economies are being liberalised regularly and this is an unstoppable process in the contemporary globalised world. This situation further strengthens the argument that the promotion of economic cooperation, particularly mutual trade is neither simple nor a straightforward process. With regard to economic unions, apart from strong political will, it also depends upon the state of (under-) development, availability of infrastructural facilities, regional security and stability, and people to people contacts. Good intentions alone cannot make headway. The ECO and other Muslim economic unions, need to realise this fact and re-adjust their priorities and re-organise their strategies.

An important point that needs to be highlighted is that in the contemporary situation, the immediate integration of the economies of all, or the majority of Muslim countries, does not seem feasible. Thus, an alternative approach needs to be suggested where, instead of going for full economic integration all at once, Muslim countries should adopt a step-by-step approach towards their common goal. Hence, in the first stage of the programme, regional economic cooperation should be strengthened. At the second stage, the ECO and the GCC should attempt to establish a cooperative link between the two organisations. During the third stage, this cooperation would be expanded to include more organisations (i.e., D-8 and AFTA) that would work together on issues of mutual interest and towards larger integration within the framework of the Muslim World. However, the success of such an undertaking depends upon a collective plan, its proper implementation and above all, the political commitment and goodwill of the leaders of the Muslim World. The experience of the past indicates that achieving cooperation amongst Muslim leaders is not an easy task. However, the experience of the European Union, where former wartime enemies now cooperate in matters of business and politics, may serve as an example and possible framework for the leaders of the Muslim World on how to work together for their mutual benefit. Muslim leaders have to come to the realisation that their religion is like a language, a collective force that governs the lives of their people and which allows them to explore opportunities for their own interests. ■

CHAPTER V

DEFENCE AND STRATEGIC ISSUES

Today's Muslim World is surrounded by a complicated network of problems from all directions and at a global level much hue and cry has been raised about the perceived threat of 'Islamic terrorism'. This situation gives the impression that only Islam is a major threat to global peace and prosperity, and thus the Muslim masses have to be brought under control. The global media has exaggerated the situation to such an extent that universal facts have been ignored and suppressed in what has amounted to a new war under the name of 'War on Terror'. The prevailing global affairs reflect that unfortunately, the Muslim World will continue to suffer, at least in the near future, from a whole host of problems throughout most parts of the globe; from North and East Africa to the Middle East, Central and East Asia, and even in Europe and America. Islam is being branded as a reactionary force and is portrayed as the enemy of Western civilisation. Over a decade ago, Koreshi²⁶⁶ argued that: 'The two most prominent examples of recent times are the coined words "fundamentalism" and "terrorism", which have become the new words of abuse for Islam and Muslim liberation movements. One can look at the terms that have been used over the years for Islamic resurgence. It started with "militant Islam", then it became "radical Islam", then "fundamentalism" and then "Islamism" and "Islamic zealots". ... So successful have they been in this distortion exercise that almost every one has taken the new currency of terrorism for liberation struggle. ... Demolishing unacceptable leaders, regimes and lionising the favourites through the media is a proven Western method.' Unfortunately, as compared to the past, this situation is more serious now as the gulf between the West and the Muslim World is widening rapidly.

The current global situation highlights the fact that whether it is the problem of the Western Sahara, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Chechnya, the Palestinian occupied territories and refugees, or the so called 'liberation of Iraq' by the Allied Forces, the instability in the Kurdish region, the so called 'weapons of mass destruction' in Iraq, Syria and Iran, Pakistan's and Iran's nuclear programmes, the instability in the Central Asian states, the 'liberation of Afghanistan' from the grip of the hardliner Taliban, the Kashmir dispute, Arakan's Muslims in Myanmar, the Muslims in Southern Thailand and the Moro Muslims in the Philippines, etc, the Ummah seems to be suffering on

²⁶⁶ S.M. Koreshi (1995), *New World Order - Western Fundamentalism in Action*, Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies.

every front. The role of the Muslim countries in global geo-political affairs, international trade, international finance and global security is none whatsoever. Similarly, when any incidence occurs in any part of the world, e.g., 9/11, the Madrid bombings (March 2004), the London bombings (July 2005) or the offensive cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad, Muslims all over the world are branded as the real threat. No doubt, religion is a major factor in global politics, possibly not in the sense of spirituality but in terms of defining global alliances along ideological lines. It may be secular Turkey's desire to join the EU, Syrian and Iranian proposals for a nuclear-free Middle East²⁶⁷; (BBC²⁶⁸); Pakistan's wish for a nuclear-free South Asia as well as an intention to resolve the Kashmir dispute in accordance with UN resolutions, the bottom line is that the population of these countries and their rulers are all predominantly Muslims and are viewed by major global players through the prism of religion. A lot has been written on these issues which is published all over the world and it is neither advisable nor possible here to present a detailed historical and analytical overview of these issues; rather the following discussion is aimed at main relevant issues.

The Volatile Ummah

The present day Ummah is trapped into a complicated network of global politico-economic and strategic problems due to which, under the prevailing circumstances, it is impossible to present a straightforward formula to come out of these crises. There is no doubt that the most important problem as well as the root cause of various other troubles faced by the Ummah as a whole, is the Palestine issue. In 1948, David Ben Gurion declared Israel a Jewish state which was soon followed by a UN-mandate partitioning Palestine into two independent states one for the Arabs and the other for the Jews.²⁶⁹ This is, in spite of the fact, that this region had been known as Palestine for more than two thousands years. This fact was also admitted by Ben Gurion himself and he said: 'If I were an Arab leader, I would never sign an agreement with Israel. It is normal, we have taken their country' (Dajani: 1997, 8). The establishment of this state caused the displacement of tens of thousands of indigenous Palestinians. According to UN estimates, 1,200,000 Palestinians were living in the present area of Israel at the time of the partition, but by the end of 1949, as many as 726,000 were forced to leave their

²⁶⁷ Nuclear Policy Research Institute (30 December 2003), 'Syria Favours Nuclear-Free Middle East in Resolution,' <<http://www.nuclearpolicy.org/index.cfm?Page=Article&ID=1172>>.

²⁶⁸ BBC (27 February 2006), 'Iran Call for Nuclear-Free Region', <*op. cit.*>.

²⁶⁹ Ritchie Ovendale (1999), *The Origins of The Arab-Israeli Wars*, London: Longman.

homes.²⁷⁰ This was in contrast to the fact that a Jewish author, Carrie Supple²⁷¹ admits that in the medieval Muslim empire 'Judaism was seen as an official religion and Jews were often protected. Indeed, many of them prospered economically and in the atmosphere of learning in the Muslim World, Rabbis and scholars studied and taught the Torah, attracting students from all over the Diaspora'.

However, that is the past. Now the ground reality is as said by a former Israeli general, Moshe Dayan²⁷²: 'Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You don't even know the names of these Arab villages, and I don't blame you, because those geography books no longer exist. ... There is not one single place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population.' *The Economist* (22 July 2000) agrees with Moshe Dayan and writes: 'Israel has ringed East Jerusalem with Jewish suburbs to ensure that the city remains united forever under Israeli sovereignty. ... But Israel did not only annex East Jerusalem, it extended it to about three times its original size, designing careful new boundaries that maximised the land area while minimising the number of Palestinians who lived within the city's extended borders.' To achieve its objectives, Israeli forces used all means to oppress Palestinian resistance and protests. On the basis of a BBC programme, *Gulf News* revealed that: 'Israel used "a new gas" against Palestinian civilians in Gaza in February 2001, resulting in the hospitalisation of 180 people with severe "convulsions". The hospital staff were unable to treat the patients because Israeli authorities refused to disclose the nature of the chemical.' (*Gulf News*: 22 March 2003).

However, it is not just Palestinian sufferings; a decade after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, American led UN sanctions took a terrible toll on the innocent Iraqi civilian population. According to *The Economist* (08 April 2000, 22-26): 'An analysis of NGO health surveys conducted by Richard Garfield, a public health expert at Columbia University, found that at least 100,000 (and probably as many as 227,000) children under-five had died between 1991 and 1998 as a result of sanctions. That works out at between 26 and 60 deaths every day among infants alone. A recent UNICEF report also estimated that, over the same period, some 500,000 children under-five had died.' A renowned Australian journalist, John Pilger²⁷³ revealed that 'in May 1996, the

²⁷⁰ Conciliation Commission for Palestine, *Report of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission*, New York: United Nations Document A/AC.25/6, p. 9.

²⁷¹ Carrie Supple (1993), *From Prejudice to Genocide – Learning About the Holocaust*, Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books. p.12.

²⁷² General Moshe Dayan (04 April 1969). Quoted in *Ha'Aretz*, 4th April 1969. Re-quoted in the *Return Review*, Vol. 8, Issue 10, November 2004, London.

²⁷³ John Pilger (2000), 'Collateral Damage.' In Anthony Arnove, *Iraq Under Siege – The Deadly Impact of Sanctions and War*, London: Pluto Press, 2000, quoted from Leslie

US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright was asked on the CBS programme *60 Minutes* if the deaths of more than half a million children was a price worth paying for the continued imposition of sanctions. “[W]e think the price is worth it”, she replied⁷. The purpose and effectiveness of these sanctions must be questioned given the fact that Saddam Hussein, the so called ‘source of evil’ in the eyes of Washington, remained in power for several years to come. The United States and its allies occupied Iraq on the grounds that Saddam Hussein possessed ‘weapon of mass destruction’, a claim that was based on false intelligence and has since proved to be false. It is well known that the post-Saddam Iraq is neither stable nor secure for its citizens. According to a reliable source²⁷⁴, until early March 2006, there were between 28591 and 32225 civilian casualties. Another source reveals that up until March 2006, the US had spent 251 billion dollars on this war²⁷⁵. One may ask how much this country has spent on the elimination of global human deprivation during this time?

A similar situation can also be seen in Afghanistan where the rule of the US-backed Afghan government is limited to only a few cities. A large number of warlords make up part of the parliament and government. According to various newspaper reports, the Taliban are still a major challenge for Allied Forces. It is unclear how the occupation of two Muslim countries can serve to promote global peace and security. The complexity of this issue and the nature of the problem can be illustrated by a quotation from an interview of Noam Chomsky, a famous US intellectual and war critic. In his words: ‘On October 12th [2001], a couple of days after the bombing [of Afghanistan] started, [George W] Bush publicly announced to the Afghan people that we will continue to bomb you, unless your leadership turns over to us the people whom we suspect of carrying out this crime, although we refuse to give you any evidence. ... Three weeks later by the end of October, the war aims had changed. ... [They] informed the Afghan population that we will continue to bomb you until you change your leadership²⁷⁶. However, later on another occasion, President Bush claimed that ‘God told him to invade Iraq and Afghanistan’²⁷⁷.

Stahl (12 May 12, 1996), ‘Punishing Saddam’, produced by Catherine Olian, CBS, *60 Minutes*.

²⁷⁴ Iraq Body Count (03 March 2006), ‘Iraq Body Count,’ <<http://www.iraqbodycount.net>>.

²⁷⁵ National Priorities Project (13 March 2006), ‘The Calculator: Turning Data into Action,’ <<http://costofwar.com/numbers.html>>.

²⁷⁶ Dissident Voice (28 July 2002), ‘Noam Chomsky on the Middle East and US War on Terrorism’ (interview with Noam Chomsky on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation program *Hot Top* with Evan Solomon), 16th April 2002. Edited by Sunil Sharma for Dissident Voice newsletter, <http://www.dissidentvoice.org/Articles/Chomsky_DV-HotType.htm>.

²⁷⁷ *Yahoo News*: (06 October 2005), ‘Bush Claimed God Told Him to Invade Iraq, Afghanistan,’ <http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20051006/ts_alt_afp/...>.

It is worth mentioning here that the above policies of the US government are not shared by its citizens. According to a poll conducted by the *New York Times* and *CBS News*, 63 percent of Americans believed that the Iraq war was not worth fighting²⁷⁸. In this type of environment, a basic question emerges – whether the Muslim World hates the United States?²⁷⁹ By providing a quotation from a report released by the US Department of Science (Defence Science Board), a famous and well respected American paper *Christian Science Monitor* (29 November, 2004) gives an answer to this question. It reads: ‘Muslims do not hate our freedom, but rather they hate our policies.’ In a similar context, Michel Chossudovsky,²⁸⁰ an eminent intellectual and author quotes Ahmed Rashid, an expert on the Taliban,²⁸¹ who says: ‘Ample documented, the war on terrorism is a fabrication. Al Qaeda is a US sponsored “intelligence asset”. Saudi born Osama bin Laden is a creation of US foreign policy.’ Obviously, this situation leads towards a global war-like situation. Possibly, because of such circumstances, Ra’anan Gissin (a senior advisor to the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon) said that World War III was on the way whether anybody liked it or not²⁸². This whole scenario highlights a major fact that whether it is World War III or a ‘War on Terror’ – the Muslim World is the biggest victim. This type of environment provides a breeding ground for religious extremism which in fact has no geographic borders. The rise of various religious hardliner groups in the Middle East, Central, the South and South East Asian regions are mainly the result of US and Western policies towards the Muslim World. This is an alarming situation where various factors are interconnected and mutually supportive to keep the cycle of global insecurity in rotation.

It is important to establish the nature and the ‘economic cost’ of the War on Terror being born by the Muslim World. Here, only one example is enough to judge the reality. With regard to the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, i.e., the toppling of the Taliban regime, a report of

²⁷⁸ Angus Reid Consultants (02 March 2006), ‘Iraq War Not Worth Fighting for 63% in US,’ (Monitoring World Opinion Every Day), <<http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/index.cfm/fuseaction/viewItem/itemID/11053>>.

²⁷⁹ See: Ziauddin Sardar and Merryl Wyn Davies (2002) *Why Do People Hate America?* Cambridge: Icon Books.

²⁸⁰ Michel Chossudovsky (21 December 2005), ‘The Anglo-American War of Terror: An Overview,’ (paper presented at the Perdana Global Peace Forum 2005, Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) <<http://www.globalresearch.ca/printarticle.php?articleId=1576>>.

²⁸¹ Ahmed Rashid (2001), *Taliban: The Story of the Afghan Warlords*, London: Pan Books, 2001.

²⁸² National Journal (2003), ‘WWIII is Coming “Whether They Like it or Not” - Top Sharon Aide’ (by Stephanie Innes), *Arizona Daily Star* (27 April 2002), <<http://www.globalfire.tv/nj/03en/jews/warmongers.htm>>.

the United States Central Command²⁸³ reveals that: ‘A total of 57,800 sorties have been generated from Pakistan’s air space/soil. ... Pakistan provided two thirds of its air space as an air corridor to the US/Coalition Forces. ... The Pakistan Navy provided landing facilities to the US/Coalition ships at Pasni.’... A total of 60,000 regular troops and 55,000 paramilitary personnel were employed on the sealing off of [Pakistan’s] western border [with Afghanistan and Iran].’ The report reveals the shocking economic losses to Pakistan caused by this ‘cooperation’. It discloses that: ‘Operation Enduring Freedom adversely affected the already fragile economy of Pakistan. Major losses were caused to civil aviation, tourism, investment and shipping due to the rise in the rate of insurance. Besides this, Pakistani exports also suffered adversely and foreign investment experienced a visible decline.’ The *Report for Congress*²⁸⁴ says: ‘A rough estimate indicates that regional anti-terrorism efforts have caused the Pakistani economy losses in excess of \$10 billion since October 2001.’ One wonders to what extent the United States will compensate this huge sacrifice given by its ally. A further US report prepared for the US Congress²⁸⁵ provides an answer to this question and states: ‘In June 2003, President Bush vowed to work with Congress on establishing a five-year, \$3 billion aid package for Pakistan. An annual instalment of \$600 million each year, split evenly between military and economic aid, began in FY2005.’ But that this is only the economic cost – the price paid by Pakistan in the form of a rise in internal instability, socio-political unrest, external security threats, as well as their after-effects is impossible to quantify.

The Propaganda War

In the modern world, advancements in the field of information technology have become an important instrument for Western industrial countries in their desire to control global affairs. However, more significant is the marriage between information technology and the global media system, which plays a critical role in forming and reforming international public opinion. In fact, this information technology and global media system is almost exclusively owned by a set of Multi-National Corporations (MNCs), which in turn all hold vested interests in the global capitalist system supervised

²⁸³ United States Central Command (Website assessed on: 03 March 2006) (undated and untitled), <<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/pakistan-usscentcom.htm>>.

²⁸⁴ K. Alan Kronstadt (28 March 2003), *Report for Congress: Pakistan-U.S. Anti-Terrorism Cooperation* (Order Code: RL31624), Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Division – Congressional Research Services: The Library of Congress.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.* (10 February 2006), *Pakistan-U.S. Relations – CRS Issue Brief for Congress* (Order Code IB94041), Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Division – Congressional Research Services: The Library of Congress.

by the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO. Indeed, none of the major corporations in the business of information and news diffusion come from Asia, Africa, South or Central America, or any of the developing countries. Therefore, under the contemporary global situation, it is unclear how Muslim countries can even begin to start reducing this widening communications technology gap. This leads to a situation where they become unable to compete in the global market and where their economies, industries, institutions as well as culture and norms become even more accessible and vulnerable to further exploitation by MNCs.

The above problem is not only limited to socio-economic dimensions, misunderstandings concerning Islam and the Muslim World, and the barrage of global media propaganda, have created an environment of mutual distrust between the Muslim and the Non-Muslim worlds (particularly the Western World). It has divided the world into 'them' and 'us'. Unfortunately, on most occasions, the electronic and print media play a leading role in presenting a negative image of Islam. The Muslim World is particularly irritated by the global media's use of certain terms of categorisation such as, fundamentalism, violent, terrorism, isolation, 'axis of evil' and rogue state, etc. In many cases, the governments of most Muslim countries spend much of their time and energy trying to prove that they are not supporting fundamentalism and terrorism, rather cooperating fully in the War on Terror. The imposition of international 'isolation' status and 'sanctions' on certain countries has proved to be not only harmful to the Muslim World as a whole but also to humankind in general. The human deprivation and sufferings imposed upon a country through the policies of containment, isolation and sanctions result in frustration and disparity. Iran, Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan are only a few examples in this regard.

Further to say that anti-Islamic sentiments have increasingly become more publicly pronounced following the events of 9/11; a negative picture of Muslims and Islam is being painted all over the world. This is one of the main reasons for the Muslim masses continuing to suffer more than any other religious group. Under the current global circumstances, Muslim views and news are either neglected or misinterpreted by the global media. This is exacerbated by the fact that, due to their own weak media and information technology, Muslim countries are totally dependent upon the West, not only to communicate with 'them' but also to communicate among themselves. One of the most important factors is that the global media power unleashed against the Muslim World is causing unprecedented danger to its unity and self-respect. As is evident from the above discussion, this media, which is completely owned by the major global players and acting in their interests, has adopted the strategy of over-exaggeration in its dealings with the Muslim World. One of its main objectives is to malign Islam and Islamists by pursuing a strategy of categorising the Muslim World, through the repetition of a series

of stock phrases that have become embedded in people's consciousness as defining terms, when dealing with issues related to Islam and Muslims. Several examples of distortion of terminology can be presented here, such as:

- *Targeted Killing*: Assassination of Palestinian civilians (including women and children) by Israeli missiles or artillery.
- *Settlers*: Occupiers of the Palestinian territories (in defiance to UN resolutions).
- *Suburbs*: Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.
- *A Divided City*: East Jerusalem with a majority of Arab population.
- *Collateral Damage*: In common terms, civilian casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan by aerial attacks of Allied Forces.
- *Disputed Territory*: In defiance of UN resolutions, possession of Palestinian land by Israel and Kashmir by India.
- *Respond*: Military response to civilian resistance and protests.
- *The International Community*: The Western countries.
- *Operation Enduring Freedom*: US takes international law into its own hands.
- *A Brave American Pilot*: Drops bombs which caused deaths (including elderly, women and children).
- *Weapon of Mass Destruction*: That kills thousands of people (directly).
- *Sanctions*: Kills million of civilians (indirectly).
- *An Atrocity*: Around 3000 innocent civilians killed in 9/11.
- *A Mistake*: Destruction of Iraqi infrastructure and civil services due to continued bombardment by Allied Forces.
- [But] *Not a Mistake*: International sanctions caused millions of civilian deaths (including infants) in Iraq ('*worth it*': US Secretary of State).
- *Population Transfer*: Forced expulsion of Palestinians from their motherland (it is an 'issue' not a 'crime against humanity').
- *A Just Treatment*: Treatment met out to prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib ('*a just practice*' to keep the world '*safe*' and '*terrorist-free*').
- *Islamic Terrorism*: As if Islamists are the only terrorists in this world.
- *Radical Islam*: As if Islam has only its radical face and that must be destroyed.

Unfortunately, all this is a part and parcel of a global propaganda war on which major global players and particularly the United States is spending millions of dollars. For instance, according to a *Guardian*²⁸⁶ report: 'The Bush administration made an emergency request to Congress yesterday for a seven-fold increase in funding to mount the biggest ever propaganda campaign against the Tehran government.' In these circumstances, it need not be

²⁸⁶ *Guardian* (16 February 2006), 'Bush Plans Huge Propaganda Campaign in Iran'.

emphasised that in the contemporary ‘civilised’ world, the treatment being meted out to Palestinians, Sudanese, Afghanis, Iranians, Syrians and Iraqis are only a few examples of the unjust policies of major global players. How has the Muslim World found itself in such a situation and what can it do to rectify it?

Global Instability and Spending on Arms

The implications of defence and development expenditures are the main subjects of debate, deliberation and review concerning almost every country in the world. Obviously, if a large proportion of a nation’s budget is diverted from development to the defence sector, it is likely to weaken the national economy in the long run. Ironically, many nations these days are choosing (or under the prevailing global circumstances, forced to choose) to spend a chunk of their financial and physical resources on military training and armaments. Unfortunately, due to the continuous increase in arms spending, particularly after the initiation of the ‘war on terror’, the situation has become more serious. The main reason for the rise in the overall global military spending, is the massive enhancement of the United States military budget which is nearly half of the world’s total²⁸⁷. As is evident from the following table, certain countries allocate a large proportion of their national resources to defence – a fact particularly true of tiny countries such as Luxembourg and Singapore who neither face the problem of internal instability nor have any territorial dispute with its neighbours which may pose an external threat to their security. The same is also true of West European countries e.g., Norway, Belgium and Denmark who spend 4.7, 3.4 and 3.1 billion dollars per annum on their military, respectively. It is difficult to say whether these countries are in the grip of ‘a fear of the unknown’ or so called ‘Islamic terrorism’.

²⁸⁷ Anup Shah (08 February 2006), ‘High Military Expenditure in Some Places,’ <<http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp?p=1>>.

Table: 5.1. Military Expenditure of the Top-10 Countries of the World.

| Total expenditure | | Global Ranking | Per capita expenditure | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|------|
| Country | US\$ in billion | | Country | US\$ |
| USA | 522 | 1 | USA | 1779 |
| China | 62.5 | 2 | Kuwait | 1720 |
| Russia | 61.9 | 3 | Luxembourg | 1637 |
| UK | 51.5 | 4 | Israel | 1426 |
| Japan | 44.7 | 5 | Singapore | 1302 |
| France | 41.6 | 6 | Norway | 1022 |
| Germany | 30.2 | 7 | Saudi Arabia | 918 |
| India | 22.0 | 8 | UK | 860 |
| Saudi Arabia | 21.3 | 9 | France | 693 |
| South Korea | 20.7 | 10 | Australia | 657 |

Source: Col. 1 and 2: Centre for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation (February 2006)

Col. 4 and 5: Computed from Centre for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation (February 2006) and The World Bank (2005a, 292-293)

Note: In case of Luxembourg, the figure is based on Centre for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation (February 2006) and CIA (2005).

The figures reflect that some Muslim countries also spend huge amounts on defence. Unfortunately, it appears that under present global political circumstances, the Muslim World has little hope of curtailing its current defence expenditures. There is another important point which needs to be taken into account here. In general, the ratio of military expenditure per member of the armed forces is considered as a crude measure of the level of military technology in a country. The CIA (2005) and the International Institute for Strategic Studies²⁸⁸ statistics indicate that on an overall basis, this ratio was far higher in the Non-Muslim World as compared to the Ummah. However, in contrast, the proportion of armed forces members with respect to its population, is comparatively higher in the Muslim World. The proportionately higher number of soldiers and comparatively lower levels of defence expenditure in the Muslim World tend to reflect the low quality of their armed forces in general, and the fact that they operate in an environment where they are totally dependent on the import of defence equipment from the West. Table 5.2 indicates the level of the military superiority of Israel and India against their respective rivals. Interestingly, while the population of Israel is only one twelfth of the combined population of Syria and Iran²⁸⁹, the military budget of this tiny country is six times higher than the combined

²⁸⁸ International Institute for Strategic Studies (2005), *Military Balance 2005-2006*, London: Routledge.

²⁸⁹ The World Bank (2005), *op. cit.* pp. 292-293.

military budget of its rivals.²⁹⁰ When talking about the defence expenditure per soldier, Israel spends nearly 14 times more than the aggregate expenditure of Syria and Iran. A similar situation can also be seen in the case of India and Pakistan where the Indian defence budget is around six times higher and its per soldier cost is nearly three times higher than that of its counterpart.

Table: 5.2. A Comparison of Military Power of Israel vs. Syria and Iran and, India vs. Pakistan

| Military Expenditure | Israel | Syria | Iran | India | Pakistan |
|--|---------|-------|-------|--------|----------|
| Total defence budget (US\$ in Million) | 34,900 | 1,640 | 4,100 | 19,400 | 3,330 |
| Defence expenditure per soldier (US\$) | 207,738 | 5,342 | 9,761 | 14,641 | 5,379 |

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies (2005, 188-211, 236-246).

With reference to the context, it can be argued that whether it is a matter of achieving the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals or Making Poverty History, a large number of community workers, activists and intellectuals accuse the G-8 governments of hypocrisy. According to a *Sunday Independent*²⁹¹ report: 'The London-based Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) reveals that seven of the G-8 nations are among the world's top-10 arms dealers – responsible for the export of more than \$24 billion worth of weapons, half of which last year went to developing countries.' The paper quotes a statement of a spokesman of CAAT, who argues that: 'The cost of arms sale and the conflict they help to sustain, have a massive and disastrous effect on the possibility of sustainable development. Talk about ending poverty at the G-8 summit will only be meaningful if G-8 countries end their political and financial support for the arms trade.' The paper also quoted a former South African education minister, Kader Asmal. In Asmal's view, it is a sort of network 'between militaries, industries and governments in the North to keep on funding ways of spending money on arms at the expense of bettering the plight of human beings around the world.' Asmal is correct in his argument as according to *The Independent*²⁹², British companies made a fortune from the Iraq war. This situation reflects the nature of military expenditure and the arms trade in the world as well as its outcome.

²⁹⁰ In addition to its military budget, Israel also receives a huge amount from the United States in the form of military assistance.

²⁹¹ *Sunday Independent* (12 June 2005), 'Global Spending on Arms for Outstrips Aid,' <<http://www.sundayindependent.co.za/general/...>>.

²⁹² *The Independent* 13 March 2006, 'The War Dividend: The British Companies Making a Fortune Out of Conflict-riven Iraq' (by Robert Verkaik) <<http://news.independent.co.uk/...>>.

Due to a lack of industrial base and under-development in the field of science and technology as well as widespread human deprivation, the combined GDP of the whole Ummah is only around US\$ 1900 billion which is less than France and Britain, where the respective figures are 2002 and 2141.²⁹³ As is evident from table 5.1, the United States is the biggest military spender, both, in the context of total as well as per capita expenditure. In the case of the Muslim World, as a total state expenditure, Saudi Arabia has the largest military budget. However, in the per capita terms, Kuwait spends the highest amount on its military. But interestingly, when considered in the context of military expenditure as a percent of GDP, the figure for the United States is 3.8, which is in contrast to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, where the respective figures are 8.7 and 9.0. In terms of per capita expenditure, tiny Luxembourg and Norway are major military spenders. However, their figures of military expenditure as a percent of GDP are only 0.9 and 2.0. This situation is totally in contrast to various Muslim countries, e.g., Syria and Pakistan which spend 7.1 and 4.4 percent of their GDP on the military²⁹⁴. No doubt, it can rightly be argued that most Muslim countries are situated in the troubled regions of the world and face problems of internal instability, due to which they are forced into high military spending. But, is there any way to save a part of these expenditures without compromising their national security? If Muslim countries pooled a proportion of their military resources on the same lines as NATO, this could be a more effective and efficient method.

Uni-Polar World and US-Israel Defence Cooperation

It is well-known that following the demise of the Soviet Union, the United States now stands alone as the world's only super power. This situation has provided the country with many advantages, particularly in the economic, political and strategic arenas. However, the main negative aspect is that it has resulted in paralysing the United Nations on many occasions. Due to this skewed situation, most of the developing countries and the Muslim countries in particular, have no real say in global affairs or in the decisions that affect their legitimate rights. Palestine and Kashmir can be taken as examples where it has been shown that international problems and disputes relating to the Muslim World have been deliberately ignored due to the fact that their resolution was deemed not to be in the interests of the major global players or their allies. Unfortunately, this is not limited to the denial of legitimate rights of Muslim countries or communities, the *World Guide 2003/2004* argues that: 'Within the current context, in which the US as the only true superpower, categorises other states as "rogue" or "criminal", denying them the sovereignty

²⁹³ The World Bank (2005), *op. cit.*; CIA (2005), *op. cit.*

²⁹⁴ UNDP (2005), *op. cit.*, pp. 282-287.

that defines the international pact embodied in the creation of the United Nations after World War II, it should come as no surprise that wars can be treated as abstraction as – occurred with the “War on Terror”, declared by US President George W Bush in 2001, following the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre’.²⁹⁵ It is not difficult to imagine the outcome of this type of environment.

With regard to the Muslim World, *International Herald Tribune* (10 February 2005), quoted President Bush’s State of Union address in January 2006, in which he said that: ‘The aim of his administration is to defeat radical Islam.’ In the following month, ‘US Defence Chiefs unveiled their plan for battling global Islamist extremism. They envisage a conflict fought in dozens of countries and for decades to come’²⁹⁶. Embedded in the regime change of unfriendly countries, the battle labelled as ‘War on Terror’ is primarily based on propaganda. In early 2006, the US administration decided to allocate five million dollars to finance Syrian opposition. The State Department said that the purpose of this funding was ‘to accelerate the work of reforms in Syria’ (*Herald Sun*: 18 February 2006). But the question needs to be asked is why the US administration needs to meddle in every country’s internal affairs which does not agree with its policies? After spending billions of dollars and deaths of numerous US soldiers as well as thousands of innocent civilians, what type of reforms have been carried out in Iraq and Afghanistan and how did it help to promote global peace? The *Los Angeles Times*²⁹⁷ stated: ‘The crushing victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections has starkly revealed the bankruptcy of the Bush administration’s strange strategy of trying to democratize Arabs while ignoring their feelings and opinions.’ The paper criticises the one-sided propaganda war as well as the total failure of US funded Middle East focused Al-Hura TV and Radio Sawa. However, in spite of the ineffectiveness of this strategy, Bush administration sought to increase its propaganda budget.

With reference to the context it can be argued that it is not only within the Muslim World that the US government’s foreign policies do not enjoy respect. *Newsweek*²⁹⁸ reports: ‘Bars in Seoul have banned GIs from entering. ... [South Koreans] see U.S. troops as an occupying force and believe peace with North Korea could break out tomorrow if only Washington would stop meddling.’ Similarly, while criticising other nations for their poor human rights record, United States itself does not enjoy a good reputation in this field. The Archbishop of York, John Sentamu condemned US administration for not closing the notorious Guantanamo prison, for which he said: ‘A society

²⁹⁵ New Internationalist Publications, The (2003), *The World Guide 2003/2004*, Oxford, p. 62.

²⁹⁶ *Guardian* (15 February 2006), ‘America’s Long War’.

²⁹⁷ *Los Angeles Times* (13 February 2006), ‘The Limits of Propaganda,’ <<http://www.fairuse.com/news2/latimes11v.htm>>.

²⁹⁸ *Newsweek* (13 January 2003), *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

that is heading towards George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.²⁹⁹ It may also be mentioned that US hegemonic role is not liked by the United Nations either. In early 2006, the United Nations asked the United States to put the terror suspects on trial or shutdown the Guantanamo prison. It also emphasised that the United States should refrain from torturing detainees. However, the United State refused to accept the United Nations views³⁰⁰. Possibly for this reason, a British High Court Judge ruled that the United States' view on torture was not the same as of Britain and that this country's view did not 'appear to coincide with that of most civilised countries'.³⁰¹

The United States is the biggest producer and exporter of arms. According to the Arms Control Association,³⁰² this country 'accounted for just over half of worldwide weapons shipments. It exported arms worth \$18.5 billion, a sum four times greater than the next highest totals of \$4.6 billion of Russia and \$4.4 billion by France.' Earlier, Mohamed Elbaradei,³⁰³ the head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog requested 'the United States to set an example to the rest of the world and cut its nuclear arsenal and halt research programmes.' He argued that if the application of double standards is not stopped, there will be more nuclear arms in the world. Unfortunately, instead of giving a positive response, the US space agency, NASA pushed ahead a plan to place nuclear arms in space. This was in spite of the fact that this decision may cause more accidents in space³⁰⁴. In addition, the US also pushed nuclear free New Zealand to allow its nuclear-powered warships to use the ports of its country. The reason given was that it was essential to carry out a global War on Terror³⁰⁵.

During March 2006, on his official visit to South Asia, President George Bush made various agreements with India to promote bilateral relations. He also offered F-16 and F-18 advanced combat aircraft to India ³⁰⁶. Both fighter jets are capable of delivering nuclear arms. However, one of the

²⁹⁹ *The Independent* (18 February 2006), 'The Americans are Breaking International Law'.

³⁰⁰ *San Francisco Chronicle*: 16 February 2006, 'U.S. Rejects U.N. Report on Gitmo,' <<http://www.sfgate.com/...>>.

³⁰¹ Ireland-On-Line (17 February 2006), 'US Idea of Torture - Not Same as in UK, Judge Says,' <<http://breakignews.iol.ie/news/story.asp?i=172946702&p=y7z9474x8>>.

³⁰² *Arms Control Association* (October 2005), 'US Tops Expanded Arms Market,' <http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005_10/OCT-armsmarket.asp>.

³⁰³ *Financial Review* (27 August 2003), 'US Should Set Dismantling Example,' <<http://afr.com/cgi-bin/newtextversions.pl?storyid...>>.

³⁰⁴ Democracy Now (27 August 2003), 'NASA Pushes Ahead with Nukes in Space While New Report Predicts more Space Shuttle Accidents could Occur,' <<http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=03/08/27/1416254>>.

³⁰⁵ *The Japan Times* (25 August 2003), 'New Zealand Struggle to Stay nuclear-Free,' <<http://www.japantimes.com/cgi-bin/gated.pl?eo20030825al.htm>>.

³⁰⁶ Yahoo News (02 March 2006), 'US Offers India Advanced Fighter Aircraft,' <<http://www.news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20060303/...>>.

most important aspects of his tour was that both countries signed an agreement by which the United States would offer civilian nuclear technology to India. According to ABC News³⁰⁷, President Bush said: 'We concluded an historic agreement today on nuclear power. It's not an easy job for the prime minister to achieve this agreement. I understand. It's not easy for the American president to achieve this agreement.' This 'historic agreement' was signed by ignoring the fact that according to a US think tank, India had been involved in illicit nuclear activities³⁰⁸. Further to say, that at the same time when President Bush visited Pakistan, he totally ruled out any nuclear cooperation with this country³⁰⁹. He did not even sign an agreement to promote bi-lateral trade or agree a financial assistance package. Instead, he said: 'Pakistan and India are different countries with different needs and different histories.' He also asked Pakistan to do more to defeat Al-Qaeda.³¹⁰ This situation highlights how the United States applies different standards for different nations. It is not only the case of Pakistan and India; the same is also true when it deals with Israel and the Arabs.

Out of 177 countries of the world, with its GDP's figure of US\$ 20,033 per capita, Israel is on 23rd position in global HDI-ranking³¹¹. However, a report prepared for the US Congress says: 'Israel is not economically self-sufficient and relies on foreign assistance and borrowing to maintain its economy. Since 1985, the United States has provided \$3 billion in grants annually to Israel'.³¹² With regard to the nature of this aid, another Congressional report reads: 'US-Israeli relations have evolved from an initial American policy of sympathy and support for the creation of a Jewish homeland in 1948 to an unusual partnership that links a small but militarily powerful Israel, dependent on the United States for its economic and military strength'³¹³. It may also be mentioned here that various other sources have a different view with regard to US aid to Israel and, Israel's influence on the sole

³⁰⁷ ABC News (02 March 2006), 'U.S., India Reach Agreement on Nuke Deal (by Deb Riechmann)', <[http:// abcnews.go.com/ Politics/ wireStory? id=1677864](http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory?id=1677864)>.

³⁰⁸ Institute for Science and International Security (10 March 2006), 'India's Gas Centrifuge Programme: Stopping Illicit Procurement and the Leakage of Technical Centrifuge Know-How' (by: David Albright and Susan Basu), <[http:// www. isis-online.org/ publications/ southasia/ indiaprocedurement.pdf](http://www.isis-online.org/publications/southasia/indiaprocedurement.pdf)>.

³⁰⁹ *New York Times*, *The*, 5 March 2006 'Bush Rules Out a Nuclear Deal with Pakistanis,' <[http://www.nytimes.com/ 2006/03/05/ international/asia/...](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/05/international/asia/...)>.

³¹⁰ BBC (5 March 2006), *op.cit.*

³¹¹ UNDP (2005), *op.cit.*, 219-222.

³¹² Clyde R. Mark (17 March 2005), *Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance* (CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Order Code IB85066), Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade Division, Congressional Research Services, The Library of Congress. p. 3.

³¹³ *Ibid.* (16 March 2005), *Israeli-United States Relations* (CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Order Code IB82008), Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade Division, Congressional Research Services, The Library of Congress.

superpower of the world. For instance, *Christian Science Monitor*³¹⁴ writes: 'Since 1973, Israel has cost the United States about 1.6 trillion. If divided by today's population, that is more than \$5,700 per person. This is an estimate by Thomas Stauffer, a consultant economist in Washington. ... And now Israel wants more. In a meeting at the White House late last month, Israeli officials made a pitch for \$4 billion in additional military aid.' Further to say that a joint study conducted by John Mearsheimer (Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago) and Stephen Walt (Dean of the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University), also indicates that the United States sets aside its own security interests for the protection of Israel.³¹⁵

In a similar context Christopher Bollyn,³¹⁶ writes: 'While it is commonly reported that Israel officially receives some \$3 billion every year in the form of economic aid from the U.S. government, this figure is just the tip of the iceberg. There are many billions of dollars more in hidden cost and economic losses, lurking beneath the surface. ... [The] support for the state of Israel has cost American taxpayers nearly \$3 trillion.' Even with regard to the obvious figure of three billion dollars US aid to Israel, the World Policy Institute³¹⁷ says: 'Israel has been the largest recipient of U.S. foreign assistance for almost 30 years, and since 1985 has received about \$3 billion in military and economic aid each year. In fact, as much as 17% of all U.S. foreign aid is earmarked for Israel. And, US foreign military financing makes up 20% of Israel's defence budget.' Clyde Mark³¹⁸ reveals in his Congressional report that: 'Of the more than \$90 billion in aid the United States has provided Israel through FY2003, about \$75 billion has been grants and \$15 billion has been loans. ... The U.S. government has waived repayment of aid to Israel that was categorised as loans.' Stephen Zunes³¹⁹ argued that: 'The United States aid relationship with Israel is unlike any other in the world, or indeed, like any in history. ... Indeed, Israel receives more U.S. aid per capita annually than the total annual GNP per capita of several Arab states, including Egypt, Mauritania, Sudan, Yemen and Morocco. ... [This is in spite of the fact that]

³¹⁴ Christian Science Monitor (09 December 2002), 'Economist Tallies Swelling Cost of Israel to US,' (by David R. Francis) <<http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/1209/p16s01-wmgn.htm>>.

³¹⁵ John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt (March 2006), *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, United States: University of Chicago and Harvard University, Working Paper No. RWP06-011. Also published in the *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, No. 6 23.

³¹⁶ Christopher Bollyn (08 June 2003), 'The Real cost of US Support for Israel: \$3 Trillion,' *The Truth Seeker* <<http://www.thetruthseeker.co.uk/...>>.

³¹⁷ World Policy Institute (June 2005), *US Weapon at War 2005: Promoting Freedom or Fueling Conflict? US Military Aid and Arms Transfer Since September 11* (by: Frida Berrigan and William D. Hartung), New York: World Policy Institute.

³¹⁸ Clyde Mark (17 February 2005), *op. cit.*, p. 6.

³¹⁹ Stephen Zunes (n.d.) (27 March 2006) 'The Strategic Functions of U.S. Aid to Israel,' <<http://www.eroj.org/Palestina/zunes.htm>>.

Israel consists of just .001% of the world's population, and already has one of the world's higher per capita incomes.'

In one way or the other, United States endorses and supports Israeli policy of occupation of Arab land. It is not only the Palestinian territories; even with regard to the Golan Heights, a Congressional report ³²⁰ says: '[The United States] sympathized with Israeli concern that Syrian control of the Heights prior to 1967 provided Syria with a tactical and strategic advantage used to threaten Israel's security.' One may ask about the legitimate right of Syria and the security of its capital Damascus, which is at a stone's throw from the Heights? It is important to note that as long as United States foreign policy favours Israel, the Arab and Muslim masses will see this country as hostile to the Muslim World. This situation questions the credibility of the United States as a fair and neutral peace broker in the Middle East as well as in the rest of global affairs. It also highlights the role and (ir-)responsibility of the sole super power in promoting or preventing international conflicts and instability. These facts demand that rather than hiding its head in the sand, the Muslim leadership must read the writing on the wall and seriously think of ways and means to stand on its own feet.

Indo-Israel Defence Cooperation

In addition to the above stated US-Israel relations, the 'flourishing Indo-Israeli relationship has [also] the potential to make a significant impact on global politics by altering the balance of power, not only in South Asia and the Middle East, but also in the larger Asian region, which has been in a state of flux in recent times' ³²¹. Therefore, in this context, it need not be emphasised that the evolution of a new nexus, linking Israel and India, both sitting at the heart of the Muslim World, is a major concern to the Ummah. Whether it is bilateral or trilateral – in case the United States is the part of this triangle, the implication of this nexus is enormous. Since its independence, India has been considered an ally of the Arabs and raised its voice for the Palestinian cause at various levels. However, during the early 1990s, with the establishment of this new bond, the situation has now changed to a great extent. In fact, there are several commonalities which have brought these two countries closer to each other, i.e.:

- i) While in defiance of a large number of United Nations resolutions, India occupies a major part of Kashmir and Israel is the occupant of Palestinian territories.

³²⁰ Clyde Mark (16 March 2005), *op.cit.*

³²¹ Harish V. Pant (December 2004), 'India-Israeli Partnership: Convergence and Constraints,' *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 60-73.

- ii) Both, Palestine and Kashmir, are Muslim majority areas in which various resistance groups are struggling against their occupiers.
- iii) In this perspective, both countries consider 'Muslim militancy' a common foe and a major threat to their security. This sense of commonality has enormously increased after the events of 9/11.
- iv) Both the right-wing Likud Party in Israel and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India have clear common ideologies based on their respective religions. By using force and violating human rights, both countries have regional and global ambitions based on expansionism.
- v) Both, India and Israel, are declared and undeclared nuclear powers, respectively, and it is widely believed that they possess hundreds of atomic bombs. They view Pakistan's nuclear warheads as an 'Islamic Bomb' and a potential threat to their security.³²²
- vi) In the 1990s, in India, the secular Congress Party's government was replaced by the BJP, a hardliner Hindu nationalist Party. The BJP's anti-Pakistan policy was an important factor which promoted Indo-Israel friendship.
- vii) After the demise of the Soviet Union, India considered Israel a reliable source of high-tech military weapons.
- viii) Israel has the most powerful lobby in the United States and it is in the interest of India to be closer to Israel to further its influence in the US administration.
- ix) Although, Arabs and the Muslim countries have a negligible role in global affairs, Israel has always been active to neutralise it. India is an emerging power, thus it was a good opportunity for Israel to join hands with this country.
- x) Israel has always been keen to enhance its arms export and it saw India as its best market.
- xi) There was great potential to expand cooperation in various other fields, e.g., bi-lateral trade, agricultural development, industrial and scientific research and, education etc.

The socio-cultural links between Israel and India started in the 1940s when they emerged as independent states and with the passage of time they have become close strategic and politico-economic allies. Israel's Deputy Prime Minister, Shimon Peres was born in Bombay, the financial capital of India. Since its creation, Israel has been seeking to bolster its influence and national security through various means. In 1950, Israel opened its consulate in Bombay which facilitated the migration of Indian Jews to Israel. This helped to further strengthen their ties and during the 1967 Arab-Israel war, when

³²² In 1998, India conducted nuclear tests and in spite of a US request to Israel for issuance of a condemnation statement, Israel did not condemn India (See *Global Beat*: 06 June 1998, 'Israel-Indian Nuclear Cooperation Gets Attention of the Region').

France halted arms supplies to Israel, India secretly supplied spare-parts of planes and tanks to this country ³²³. These relations kept growing and in September 2003, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, visited New Delhi which started a new chapter of bi-lateral relations in these countries. During their meeting, Ariel Sharon and Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Indian Prime Minister) particularly discussed cooperation in defence technology to defeat the common foe – ‘Muslim militants.’ For Israel, it was an important step to enhance its influence through a growing strategic alliance with India. On this occasion, Sharon’s spokesman said: ‘Our contacts with India are definitely a triangular relationship, in line with the U.S. stance on world terror’ ³²⁴. This statement reflects the real nature and intention of the ‘bi-lateral relations’ of these two countries. Pro-Israel and pro-India lobbies are now working hand-in-hand in the United States ³²⁵.

With reference to the context, it may also be mentioned here that according to a news report: ‘The Indian leaders had evinced keen interest in acquiring nuclear weapons, even before the independence of their country. At a press conference on June 26, 1946, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declared that “India will develop its own nuclear research. In case India is under threat, it will employ whatever means it had to defend itself”. After independence, addressing the Indian parliament in 1948, Nehru again declared that “if India was compelled to use atomic energy for other than peaceful purposes, no pious sentiment will stop it from using it that way”’ ³²⁶. The validity of this situation can also be judged from another report. In its edition of 15th July 2002, *Newsweek* quoted the statement of the Indian President who is a nuclear scientist by profession and the architect of the Indian nuclear programme as well as the father of its missile-technology. He argued: ‘On our planet, only weaponized states are friends, otherwise the relationship immediately regresses into the oppressor and the oppressed. Strength respects strength.’ Possibly for this reason, ‘India has started building an aerospace command station to have nuclear weapons platforms in space to provide an edge to its retaliatory capability in case of a nuclear attack’ ³²⁷. In early 2004, the United States and India started their ‘Next Step in Strategic Partnership’ to conduct a joint missile defence programme. Israel already has three satellite families in operation, i.e., Eros, Ofek (or Ofeq) and Amos. Israel’s space programme has a dual-use capacity (i.e., civilian and military). India has particularly been

³²³ *Dawn* (18 September 2003), ‘India’s Strategic Ties with Israel’.

³²⁴ PINR (24 September 2003), ‘Indo-Israeli Alliance Affects Regional Players,’ <http://pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=95>.

³²⁵ *Haaretz* (09 September 2003), ‘Pro-Israel, Pro-India Lobbies Now Working Together in U.S.’ <<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/337667.html>>.

³²⁶ *Dawn* (23 May 2003), ‘Denuclearization of South Asia.’

³²⁷ *Daily Times* (07 September 2003), <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/print.asp?page=story_7-10-2003_pg1_7>.

interested in acquiring the Ofek-5 military satellite from Israel, on a lease basis.

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In August 2004, India and Israel held talks to jointly produce a long range missile³²⁹. This cooperation in arms manufacturing can be viewed in the context that Israel is the second largest exporter of military hardware to India³³⁰. In late 2003, India, Israel and Russia signed a huge defence deal worth one billion dollars. According to this agreement, India would buy Russian surveillance planes fitted with Israeli-made radar systems³³¹. According to Qutubuddin Aziz³³², a defence analyst: 'India's collaboration with Israel in defence and acquisition of Israeli military technology will attain new heights in the coming years, especially after it agrees to joint production of the new version of the Barak II naval missiles. The ship-born Barak missile is designed to intercept and destroy two approaching anti-ship missiles, at sea. It can also detect and tangle with sea-skimming missiles at low altitudes, locking on to two enemy missiles at the same time.' In addition, the Indo-Israel joint working group on defence met in November 2005 and held a dialogue on security issues. Apart from the strategic alliance, around 40 Indian companies conduct business in Israel. The bilateral trade between these two countries was worth US\$ 200 million in the early 1990s, but reached US\$ 3.0 billion in 2005. Closeness between Israel and India has also encouraged the United States to transfer nuclear technology to India.³³³ Due to these circumstances, Israel strongly supports India to become a permanent member of the expanded United Nations Security Council.³³⁴

And, not only is it in the trade of the military hardware, Israeli intelligence officials have also been transferring technical know-how and advice to their Indian counterparts to counter militancy, i.e., the techniques and technologies Israel uses against Palestinians. Israel's interference in Muslim areas, particularly its provision of military training and support to Kurdish rebels in Iraq, Syria and Iran is no secret. According to *The New*

³²⁸ Centre for Non-proliferation Studies (27 February 2006), 'Current and Future Space Security,' *India* <<http://cns.miis.edu/research/space/india/index.htm>>.

³²⁹ *The News* (01 September 2004), 'India plans joint Production of Long-range Missile with Israel,' <<http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/sep2004-daily/01-09-2004/main/main12.htm>>.

³³⁰ *The News* (08 August 2003), 'Sharon Wants India, Israel, US triad,' <<http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/aug2003-daily/...>>.

³³¹ *Ibid.* (11 October 2003), 'India, Israel, Russia Sign \$1bn Defence Deal,' <*op. cit.*>.

³³² Qutubuddin Aziz (04 January 2005), 'Indo-Israeli Arms Collaboration,' *Dawn*, <<http://www.dawn/...>>.

³³³ Siddhartha Sriyastava (07 February 2006), 'India-Israel: Dismal Ccience and a Cuddle,' <http://atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/HB03Df03.html>.

³³⁴ India First Foundation, 14 February 2006, <http://www.indiafirstfoundation.org/news_m/p&p_m.htm#p&p2>.

*Yorker*³³⁵, a senior CIA official disclosed that Israelis were operating in Kurdistan. The paper says that when the concerned official was asked: 'Whether the Israelis had sought approval from Washington, the official laughed and said, "Do you know anybody who can tell the Israelis what to do?"' But it can be argued here that the Indo-Israel alliance is not only unpopular in the Muslim World, the Communist Party of India is also critical of it. Ranjit Abhigyan, a representative of the party said: 'On the anniversary of 9/11, the BJP had rolled out its carpet for the Israeli Prime Minister. ... We, the democratic people of India, can neither accept the BJP's communally distorted vision of our country, nor the alliance with Sharon, who is the leader of one of the most racist, colonial regimes in existence today'³³⁶. This argument is also supported by another source. In the year 2002, in the Indian state of Gujarat, hundreds of Muslims were slaughtered and their properties burnt down by Hindu extremists. There is a general feeling in Gujarat that Israel was possibly involved in this carnage. According to *Milli Gazette* (1-15 August 2002): 'Some people may consider it a flight of fancy but those who have observed the conditions prevailing in Gujarat and have a deep understanding of Indo-Israeli relations, do not consider it a remote possibility.' The paper further reveals: 'A few months ago, hundreds of young-men of Gujarat were sent to Israel, ostensibly for agricultural work where they were imparted special training. These youths imbibed with Hindutva played an important role in the burning of Gujarat. A citizen of Ahmadabad badly affected by these riots said that some packets of these dangerous chemicals used by the rioters had been found with the "Made in Israel" mark on them.'³³⁷

The Nuclear Issue and the Muslim World

The nuclear issue is a matter of great concern for the whole world because the atomic bomb is the biggest 'weapon of mass-destruction'. According to a recent estimate, the United States possesses nearly 5,968 nuclear warheads, followed by Russia (4,978), France (350), Britain (200) and China (100). However, these are deliverable warheads only, as there is a huge

³³⁵ *The New Yorker* (21 June 2004), 'As June 30th Approaches, Israel Looks to the Kurds (by Seymour Hersh)' <<http://www.newyorker.com/...>>.

³³⁶ *Guardian* (10 September 2003), 'Indians Protest at Sharon's Visit'.

³³⁷ With regard to these riots, the *Telegraph* (18 June 2002) writes: 'The exact number of dead is unknown, but the violence was probably worse than any of the bloody sectarian convulsions India has experienced since Partition. "This was state sponsored violence, no doubt about it", said a senior police officer in Ahmadabad. ... Three British Muslims died in the violence, prompting the British High Commission to launch an investigation that concluded that the attacks were premeditated and carried out with the support of the state government.'

additional stockpile which can be readily available at short notice.³³⁸ According to another source, Israel has 200 nuclear arsenals, India between 110-150, Pakistan 75 and North Korea around 13.³³⁹ In fact, ‘the United States of America was the first country in the world to successfully develop nuclear weapons, and is the only country to have used them in war against another nation. During the cold war, it conducted over a thousand nuclear tests and developed many long-range weapon delivery systems’³⁴⁰. Even more recently, on 23rd February 2006, this country again ‘carried out a subcritical nuclear experiment at an underground test site in Nevada’³⁴¹. According to Schaeffer,³⁴² ‘the US has issued nuclear threats on some 20 occasions since it destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki... [this country] has been guilty of only threatening non-nuclear opponents.’ This situation highlights the fact that the statement of the Indian President was true and that only weaponised states are friends.

In one of its publication of 1998, The Brookings Institution disclosed that the United States had spent at least 5.5 trillion dollars on its nuclear arsenals and related facilities.³⁴³ Such a huge amount is more than enough to wipe out the root causes of global human deprivation. This situation reflects the level of rationale and credibility of the US policies – a country which is the sole superpower of the world.³⁴⁴ Another revealed that: ‘A President of the United States would be able to launch pre-emptive nuclear strikes against enemies planning to use weapons of mass destruction.’ One may wonder who these ‘enemies’ are and where do these ‘weapons of mass-destruction’ lie? John Isaacs³⁴⁵ argued that: ‘They’re trying desperately to find new uses for nuclear weapons, when their uses should be limited to deterrence. This is very, very dangerous talk.’ Similarly, on the other hand, the US government spends ten

³³⁸ Arms Control Association (April 2005), ‘Nuclear Weapons: Who Has What at a Glance,’ <[http://www.armscontrol.org/...](http://www.armscontrol.org/)>; (October 2005), ‘US Tops Expanded Arms Market,’ <*op. cit.*>.

³³⁹ Glenn Elert (ed.), 08 March 2006, ‘Number of Nuclear Weapons Capable Nations,’ (Yuen H. Fong – 2005), <<http://hypertextbook.com/fact/...>>.

³⁴⁰ *Wikipedia Foundation*, 01 March 2006, ‘Nuclear Weapons and the United States,’ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_weapons_and_the_United_States>.

³⁴¹ *ABC News* (24 February 2006), ‘US Conducted Subcritical Nuclear Test,’ <<http://www.abc.net/news/newsitem/200602/s1577409.htm>>.

³⁴² Robert Schaeffer (1999), *Warpath – the Politics of Partition*, New York: Hill & Wang, pp. 218-219.

³⁴³ David Silverberg (08 July 1998), ‘America’s Nuclear Arsenal: \$5.5 Trillion Well-Spent,’ The Brookings Institution, <<http://www.brook.edu/...>>.

³⁴⁴ *The Times Online*, 12 September 2005, ‘WMD Threat Could Spark American Nuclear Strike’ (by Giles Whittell), <<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,1-10889-1776250-10889.00.html>>.

³⁴⁵ John Isaacs (08 March 2006), In Paul Richter ‘U.S. Works Up Plan for Using Nuclear Arms,’ *Los Angeles Times* (09 March 2002). In Common Dreams News Centre <<http://www.commondreams.org/cgi-bin/...>>.

billion dollars per year on its missile defence programme, an amount which is four times higher than the per year budget of research and development in energy³⁴⁶. The outcome of this type of environment is not difficult to judge. It has encouraged non-nuclear countries to acquire nuclear technology, resulting in increased regional and global insecurity and tension.

This discussion highlights the level of nuclear development and the extent of strategic cooperation between the United States, Israel and India. Needless to say that this is a very important triangle in the process of making and shaping global affairs. And, it does not want any Muslim country to have access to nuclear technology. In spite of its strong friendship with Iran, in IAEA's meeting held in February 2006, India voted against Iran's nuclear energy programme and wanted to forward the case to the UN Security Council³⁴⁷. By the same token, during his visit to India in early March 2006, President Bush welcomed India into the global nuclear club³⁴⁸. Here, a question to ask is whether Iran is really making nuclear weapons? To judge the situation, a few news-reports and quotations are worth noting.

Iran's Nuclear Weapons?

- 'Production, stockpiling and using nuclear weapons are against Islamic and human values'.³⁴⁹
- 'Iran suspends uranium enrichment and opens way to fresh nuclear deal with EU'.³⁵⁰
- 'Message from Iran says Tehran seeks talks with Israel'³⁵¹.
- 'We are certainly ready to give any kind of guarantee that Iran will not divert towards nuclear weapons'.³⁵²
- 'Iran Invites U.S. to bid on [its] Nuclear Plant'.³⁵³
- 'UN nuclear watchdog rebuts claims that Iran is trying to make the atomic bomb'.³⁵⁴

³⁴⁶ Nieman Watchdog (24 January 2006), 'Philip Coyle: Missile Defence Costs \$10 Billion a Year – What Do We Get For That?' <http://www.clw.org/2006/01/missile_defence.html>.

³⁴⁷ *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* (05 March 2006), 'India Urges Diplomacy for Iran Nuke Crisis,' <<http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/...>>.

³⁴⁸ *Times Argus*, 03 March 2006, 'Bush Welcomes India into Nuclear Club,' <<http://www.timesargus.com/apps/pbcs.dll/...>>.

³⁴⁹ Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (08 November 2004), 'Iran: Nuclear Pact may be Finalised Soon,' <<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6417121...>>.

³⁵⁰ *The Independent* (23 November 2004), *op. cit.*

³⁵¹ *Haaretz* (30 October 2003). Quoted in *Something Jewish* (BICOM Daily Briefing 30 October 2003) <http://www.somethingjewish.co.uk/articles/544_bicom_daily_briefing.htm>.

³⁵² Kamal Kharrazai (22 February 2005), 'Iran Says It has no Nuclear Ambitions,' *Onlypunjab*, <<http://onlypunjab.com/...>>

³⁵³ ABC News (11 December 2005), 'Iran Invites U.S. to bid on Nuclear Plant,' <<http://abcnews.go.com/International/...>>

- 'Iran is offering to suspend full-scale uranium enrichment for upto two years'.³⁵⁵

US and/ or Israeli Attack on Iran's Nuclear Installations?

- In September 2004, Israel disclosed that it was purchasing 500 bunker-buster bombs from the United States, which could be used to hit Iran's nuclear installations (*Daily Telegraph*: 22 September 2004).
- 'The Israelis might well decide to act first [attack on Iran's nuclear installations] and let the rest of the world worry about cleaning up the diplomatic mess afterwards'.³⁵⁶
- According to the Commander-in-Chief of the Israeli Air Force: 'Israel must be prepared for an air strike on Iran'.³⁵⁷
- 'Strategists at the Pentagon are drawing up plans for devastating bombing raids backed by submarine-launched ballistic missile attacks against Iran's nuclear sites as a "last resort" to block Tehran's efforts to develop an atomic bomb'.³⁵⁸
- 'Israel will have to act on Iran if the UN can't'.³⁵⁹

Double Standards?

- Mohamed El-Baradi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency argued that: 'The Security Council had practiced double standards by using a "good guys versus bad guys" approach" and accused the council of having "little to no response" as North Korea built nuclear arms. ... We haven't seen any concrete intelligence that points to a fact that Iran has a nuclear programme. [Global] arms race could be slowed if the United States and its allies implemented the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which would halt all nuclear weapons testing'.³⁶⁰
- In his article entitled 'Israel's nukes serve to justify Iran's', in the *International Herald Tribune*³⁶¹, Jonathan Power says: 'These

³⁵⁴ *The Independent* (14 August 2005), 'UN Nuclear Watchdog rebuts claims that Iran is Trying to make A-bomb'.

³⁵⁵ M. Macleans (07 March 2006), 'Iran reportedly offers to suspend large-scale uranium enrichment up to 2 years,' <<http://www.macleans.ca/...>>.

³⁵⁶ Dick Cheney (21 January 2005), 'Cheney says Israel might "Act First" on Iran First,' <<http://www.freerepublic.com/...>>.

³⁵⁷ *Haaretz* (21 February 2005), 'Israel must be prepared for an air strike on Iran'.

³⁵⁸ *Daily Telegraph* (12 February 2006), 'US Prepares Military Blitz Against Iran's Nuclear Sites,' <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/...>>.

³⁵⁹ *Yahoo News* (08 March 2006), 'Israel will have to act on Iran if UN can't.' (by Louis Charbonneau), <<http://www.yahoo.com/...>>.

³⁶⁰ *San Francisco Chronicle* (05 November 2004), 'Top UN Arms Inspector Slams Bush'.

³⁶¹ *International Herald Tribune* (22 September 2004), 'Israel's Nukes Serve to Justify Iran's'.

Western powers have argued convincingly for decades that nuclear deterrence keeps the peace – and themselves maintain nuclear arms long after the cold war has ended. So, why shouldn't Iran, which is in one of the world's most dangerous neighbourhoods, have a deterrent too?⁷

- Jonathan Power is right in his argument. All restrictions are placed on the Muslim World while major global players are exempted from any binding. According to a report by *Times Online*³⁶²: 'Britain has been secretly designing a new nuclear warhead in conjunction with the Americans, provoking a legal row over the proliferation of nuclear weapons ... "We've got to build something that we can never test and be absolutely confident that, when we use it, it will work," one senior British Source said last week.'
- According to the former UN Weapons Inspector Hans Blix, Iran is at least five years away from making nuclear weapons. He emphasised the point that as the US has given time to North Korea and is negotiating with this country, the same approach should be used in the case of Iran.³⁶³

This type of environment strengthens the feelings of mass frustration and anger throughout the Muslim World. By enhancing their popularity, it also strengthens the hands of autocrat rulers within their own countries. Therefore, whether it is an unjust global system and the double standards applied by major powers of the world, or irrational and hardliner statements issued by the current Iranian president, e.g., to wipe-out Israel from the global map³⁶⁴ – neither is helpful towards wiping out global human deprivation, which is a major challenge and a pre-requisite to initiate a sustainable process of global human development. Unfortunately, being a special target of the global media, the Muslim World is the main loser in this scenario. Furthermore, such an environment also levels the ground for major global players, particularly the United States to keep the Muslim World out of the global decision making process. Muslim leadership as well as the masses across the world need to seriously consider and examine this situation and act in a rational way to address the modern challenges faced by them.

It must be re-emphasised that if Muslim countries still fail to develop an appropriate and comprehensive strategy for their long-term socio-economic and strategic development, they will be further exploited by the major global players. It is noteworthy that after the demise of the Soviet Union, the ruling elite in the West, and particularly in the US, saw Islam as the next new global

³⁶² *Times Online* (12 March 2006), 'Revealed: UK Develops Secret Nuclear Warhead' (by Michael Smith), <<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/...>>.

³⁶³ *ABC News* (03 April 2006), <<http://www.abcnews.go.com/...>>.

³⁶⁴ CNN (29 October 2005), *op.cit.*

enemy. It then began to instigate a programme that aimed to remove Muslims from having any role in global affairs. They blocked the ways and means for Muslim countries to acquire modern technology, particularly civilian nuclear technology. The denial of modern defence technology is another example due to which they intentionally want to reduce the armed forces of the Muslim countries to local level militias. They further want to curb the power of this militia to the extent that it is just capable of keeping law and order and protecting the politico-economic and strategic interests of major global players and their multi-national corporations working in that areas. They also do not hesitate to change regimes in the Muslim countries which do fit in their manufactured iron frames. The basic objective of this whole strategy is to keep the Muslim World weak and deny them nuclear power as well as other technologies. The United States vision of the nuclear club in relation to the Muslim World, can be illustrated by the following equation.

$$\text{Permitted Nuclear Powers} = \{(\text{five major powers}) + (\text{Israel}) + (\text{India})\} - (\text{all Muslim countries})$$

The Weak Ummah and Redrafting the Global Map

Today, the map of the Ummah has little ethnic, religious or socio-linguistic validity in the world, as it arose merely as a result of colonial division. It seems that the major global players are still fearful of the fragments that emerged from the destruction of the vast Ottoman and Persian Empires. This can be cited as one of the reasons as to why they are still attempting to further disintegrate these pieces. Unfortunately, the activities of the major powers and the United States in particular are not just limited to propagating anti-Muslim propaganda but are in fact dedicated to the reshaping and restructuring of the entire Muslim World. Thanks to the internal weaknesses of the Muslim countries which provide a favourable environment for this process. In early 2000, a report prepared by an American commission and approved by the White House made the following important points ³⁶⁵: i) the next 25 years will be disastrous for Pakistan and the security of this country will be in great danger, particularly as a result of the situation in Afghanistan, ii) the Taliban may fight against India, iii) Pakistan will fight with India over Kashmir, iv) Pakistan will be disintegrated by the end of the first quarter of the twenty-first century, and; v) this situation could lead to war between Iran and India in order to attain a maximum share of the disintegrated Pakistani territory.

This report emerged at a time when American President Bill Clinton was due to visit Pakistan as part of a South Asian tour in April 2000. The question that arises is what information and factors exist that lead America to

³⁶⁵ *Akbar-e-Watan* (March 2000), Vol. 31-3, London.

conclude that this particular Islamic country will disintegrate within a specific period of time? Are they secretly working on bringing this situation to such a pass? So far time has shown that India, Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan have not entered into any conflict between themselves. Iran and India both remain friendly. Further to say that in early 2005, another report jointly prepared by the US National Intelligence Council and the CIA also presented a similar scenario. It stated: 'By the year 2015, Pakistan would be a failed state, ripe with civil war, bloodshed, inter-provincial rivalries and a struggle for control of its nuclear weapons and complete Talibanisation' (*Dacca Herald*: 14 February 2005). One may ask that as Pakistan is a front line state in the US-led War on Terror, why this country keeps up with its hostile propaganda against an ally. Similarly, on what grounds, the so called deadline of 2025 with regard to the disintegration of Pakistan, was brought forward to 2015? No doubt, for some time, there has been instability in a few areas of Blochistan province (Pakistan) where a handful of tribal heads have taken the law into their own hands. But on the other hand, there are also some reliable reports that on the basis of US and Indian financial and material support, these tribal heads have been turned into warlords and have challenged the authority of the state.³⁶⁶ Should any government or nation tolerate this type of situation?

Is the reshaping of regional maps, a part and parcel of the current globalisation process? In his book entitled: *The Globalisation of Poverty*, Chossudovsky (1998) explains several factors and roles played by major global participants and international financial institutions to the destruction of Somalia, the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and the suffering of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He also exposes the hidden realities and highlights the reasons behind the civil wars. His findings show that when the major global powers want to make or break a country, they first of all set about creating a particular environment with which to work in. There are many examples of this created environment, from the Camp-David accord between Egypt and Israel to the war between Iran and Iraq, from the Gulf War to the imposed sanctions on Iraq and then its occupation on the ground of possession of weapons of mass-destruction, and from Bosnia-Herzegovina to the emergence of East Timor, and, the most recent campaign of propaganda against Iran and Syria.

This is an alarming situation and the Muslim leadership needs to consider it very seriously. Here, the first and foremost important point is that rather than always complaining and blaming others for all their ills, the Muslim leadership needs to put its own house in order. It is their own responsibility to curb widespread corruption and wastage of financial and human resources within the Ummah. Unfortunately, the record of the ruling Muslim families is

³⁶⁶ *News Central Asia* (27 February 2006), 'Pakistan: Unveiling the Mystery of Balochistan Insurgency,' (Part: I & II) <<http://www.newscentralasia.com/...>>.

quite discouraging in this regard. For instance, the *Independent*³⁶⁷ reports about a luxurious foreign tour of a Muslim ruler. It reveals that he flew in his private 747 jet accompanied by three other aircrafts and 350 servants. One of the planes was used to transport his Mercedes. The convoy from the airport to his palace in that foreign country consisted of 50 black Mercedes cars and several coaches. With regard to his summer holidays there, in his own super-luxurious palace, the Paper says that: 'He and his vast retinue spent €90m. Hoteliers, restaurateurs, jewellers and florists are waiting expectantly after estimates that the royal party will this time spend up to €6m (£4m) a day.' This was in spite of the fact that there were tens of thousands of unemployed in that Muslim country and the economy had steadily gone down for several years.

Due to their own corrupt practices, Muslim rulers do not trust their own countrymen either. They employ foreign bodyguards for their personal security, but make fools of their own public by blaming the West for all their ills. According to a report published in the *Middle East News line*³⁶⁸, Israel has been quietly training foreign bodyguards for the royal family of a Muslim country. It is not difficult to imagine from this situation that Israel would have trained these bodyguards the tactics which it uses to oppress Palestinians. Thus, how can these leaders justify criticising the Israeli military for its inhuman treatment to Palestinians? It can only be hoped that one day these leaders will realise their mistakes as it is a matter of survival for their own future generations. Otherwise, these affairs may lead to bloodshed and revolution in a number of Muslim countries.

While some powerful countries, such as the United States and Israel, are preachers of free trade and privatisation, they follow aggressive policies with regard to their national security. They particularly follow different principles when dealing with Muslim countries. According to various newspaper reports³⁶⁹; *Washington Post*:³⁷⁰, a UAE-based maritime company successfully placed a bid to acquire a contract of US\$ 6.8 billion to run six major US ports. However, as the company was owned by a Muslim country, no matter whether friend or foe, there was hue and cry in the US Congress that by letting in 'Islamic terrorists' and Al Qaeda operatives, it will jeopardize US security. The situation became so serious that the UAE-company was forced to bow to pressure from Congress and decided to sell off its business to American owners. It seems that while the US government and American

³⁶⁷ The *Independent* (16 August 2002), *op.cit.*

³⁶⁸ *Middle East Newline* (01 January 2005), 'Israel Trains Guards of Saudi Royals,' <http://www.menewline.com/stories/2005/january/01_25_2.html>.

³⁶⁹ *Washington Times* (The 08 March 2006), 'Lawmakers Hit UAE Ties to Saddam, Al Qaeda' (by Amy Fagan), <<http://www.washingtontimes.com/functions...>>.

³⁷⁰ *Washington Post* (10 March 2006), 'Bubai Firm to Sell U.S. Port Operations,' (by Jonathan Weisman and Bradley Graham) <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/...>>.

based multi-national corporations want to monopolise all sensitive operations and businesses in the Muslim countries, they do not extend the same opportunities when it comes to business in their own country. In the same context, a further example is notable here. In February 2006, by annexing the Jordan Valley, the acting Israeli Primer Minister, Ehud Olmert, revealed a plan to draw up new borders in order to create a future Palestinian state on Israel's terms. He further disclosed that: 'If we won't be able to reach agreement upon borders, we will operate in a different way, which it is not appropriate to detail now ... We don't need to wait for someone else to impose our fate'³⁷¹. According to *The New York Times*³⁷² and *Aljazeera*³⁷³, he said that he would unilaterally impose permanent borders for Israel by 2010, unless Hamas accepts the so-called roadmap for peace. Does any Muslim country enjoy similar powers to impose its unilateral will with regards to its security? This is a very important and sensitive issue which the Muslim leadership needs to think about seriously. ■

³⁷¹ *Guardian* (8 February 2006), 'Israel Unveils Plan to encircle Palestinian State'.

³⁷² *New York Times* (10 March 2006), 'Olmert Outlines Plans for Israel's Borders' (by Greg Myre), <<http://www.nytimes.com/...>>.

³⁷³ *Aljazeera* (09 March 2006), 'Israel Reveals Plans for Unilateral Border-setting,' <<http://www.aljazeera.com/...>>.

CHAPTER VI

ADDRESSING MODERN CHALLENGES AND RE-ORGANISING THE OIC

The Under-Developed Muslim World

*I*n the previous chapters, we analysed the overall state of the Muslim World in the context of contemporary global affairs. With particular reference to the re-organisation of the OIC, this final chapter explores ways and means to improve the situation. In addition, it also suggests some specific measures to enable Muslim countries to address modern challenges and to prepare them to play their rightful role in the global decision making process. Before proceeding further, it is appropriate to revisit the main points discussed in the earlier chapters to present a clear and concise picture of the situation. The outcome of the analysis of this study reflects the poor state of development in the Muslim World in comparison to the Non-Muslim world. It is generally believed that the cause of this inequality is the prevalence of widespread poverty and illiteracy in the Muslim World. However, these are not the only reasons for this sorry state of affairs. The high and increasing burden of foreign debts and debt servicing, lack of competence in global trade, regional and intra-Ummatic conflicts, soaring defence expenditures, interference by foreign powers in the internal affairs of the Muslim World and mismanagement of available resources, are other important factors in this regard. Allied to these problems is the Western based technology and media, which are used as efficient tools to create instability and retard the whole process of Ummatic socio-economic development. The main points of earlier discussions can be summarised in the following lines.

- With around one and half billion population, demographically as well as geographically, the Muslim world constitutes nearly one quarter of the world. Due to the high birth rate amongst the followers of Islam as well as the high conversion rate, Islam is considered the fastest growing religion on the planet.
- On an aggregate basis, Muslim countries are well behind in the field of human development when compared to respective Non-Muslim countries. The same is also true of the literacy rate. This situation reflects wide-spread human deprivation in the Muslim World.
- The state of human security in the Muslim World is poor compared to the Non-Muslim World. Muslim countries face the serious problem of low per capita income, low health facilities and various other similar hurdles to their development and security.

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- Due to mismanagement and inefficient resource utilisation, human capital formation in the Muslim countries is very low. This factor is also linked to the high level of mismanagement of resources which leads to politico-economic instability in these countries.
 - There is a huge propaganda engineered by the global media with the specific aim to link Islam and the Muslims with violence. By creating misunderstandings and promoting mistrust between the followers of various faiths, this situation leads to a 'clash of civilisations', which in reality, is an artificial phenomenon and not a natural process.
 - Wide-spread global Islamophobia has created a war-like situation in the world, which is eroding the process of peace and prosperity in the world.
 - The state of indebtedness is quite serious in the Muslim World. Every year, several Muslim countries allocate a chunk of their annual budget for debt servicing. Therefore, little is left for development programmes. This situation is mainly caused by the strict and ill-advised conditionalities imposed by the IMF, World Bank and other major lenders.
 - In most cases, international aid is also associated with the politico-economic interests of the donors. At the time of giving aid, they accord priority to their own national interests, rather than considering the betterment of the end-users of aid.
 - International trade is monopolised by the United States and major global players. The Muslim world's share in global trade is only around 13 percent. Most of the exports of Muslim countries are raw-material oriented, which leaves little room to earn reasonable foreign exchange.
 - At present, the total volume of intra-Ummatic trade is around 12 percent. Past trends show that international trade between Muslim countries is gradually increasing. However, the pace of this growth is far from satisfactory.
 - During 2005, the top-100 companies from the Muslim World showed a considerable increase in business. Similarly, the Islamic financial industry is also growing and financial cooperation between various Muslim countries is on the rise. However, in spite of these encouraging signs, there is still a long way to go to achieve the objective of development and economic integration of the Muslim World.
 - Regrettably, the security situation is quite volatile in several Muslim countries. The triangular alliance between the United States, Israel and India and their policies based on global expansionism, are not in the interest of the Muslim World.
 - The major global players are also the main exporters of arms particularly the United States, which is the biggest exporter of arms to the world as well as the Muslim countries. By keeping global conflicts

on the boil, arms exporters earn huge profits from this trade. The Muslim World is a particular victim of this situation, where the vicious cycle of instability keeps in rotation.

- Further to say that the major global players, especially the United States wants to keep its monopoly on all types of modern technology, particularly in defence and nuclear technology. The application of double standards by the main powers of the world is specifically obvious in this field. They consider it a security threat if a Muslim country is on the way to becoming financially or strategically strong and self-sufficient.

A consideration of the above points reflects that from the perspective of the process of globalisation, there are at least five major elements which are responsible for keeping the Muslim World under-developed and oppressed, i.e., i) the international financial system, ii) the pattern of global trade, iii) technological under-development, iv) an extremely weak Muslim media, and, v) weak defence systems and a total dependence on the West for defence equipment and technology. The last point is particularly true in the post-9/11 era. Here, in this context, the words of Indian President are worth re-quoting: 'On our planet only weaponized states are friends, otherwise the relationship immediately regresses into the oppressor and the oppressed. Strength respects strength.' These points reflect the gravity of the situation and demand that the Muslim World should think seriously about enabling itself to be able to stand on its own feet. There is clear evidence that if urgent and concrete measures are not adopted, the further sharp decline of the Ummah is inevitable.

Globalisation or Recolonisation?

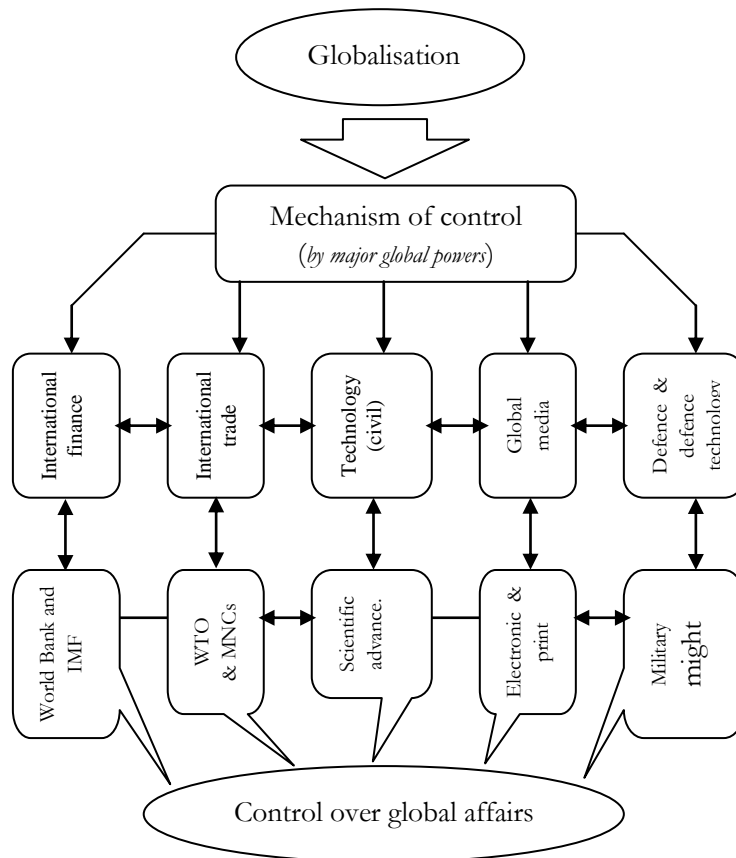
Chapter one focused on conceptual issues and briefly discussed a few dimensions pertaining to the globalisation issue. It reflects that globalisation is a process causing the 'interdependence' of countries and their economies. The discussion in the subsequent chapters, based on current facts and figures, reflects that globalisation is not only a matter of interdependence, but also includes elements of 'dependence' where one group of countries is totally reliant on another group. In essence, this divides countries into two groups, 'developed' and the 'developing'. In the globalisation process, the position of 'interdependence' may be attributed to the developed world, whereas for the developing world 'dependence' is more or less the norm. It is obvious from the analysis made in the earlier discussions that even within the developing world, when compared to the Non-Muslim countries, the Muslim countries are lagging well behind in the overall field of socio-economic development. Therefore, it can safely be said that dependency is a truer fact of life in the Muslim countries than the 'developing Non-Muslim countries'. However, this is not a simple and straightforward process as it incorporates a series of inter-

connected activities that have an effect on international finance, foreign trade, technology, international politics, media, culture and even ideologies. In such a context, we must begin to search for a new definition of globalisation.

The analysis made in the previous chapters, reflects that the world-wide phenomenon, globalisation, is a composition of a series of processes of domination through global political economy, including international finance and trade, informational technologies, media, international defence and strategic issues. In other words, it is a systematised process of the making and breaking of countries, imposing ideologies and programmes of one, or a group of countries, over others. Within the network of developed countries, globalisation is the integration of economies, which promotes interdependence and economies of scale. However, in the context of developing countries, it promotes dependence of the latter on the former. With regard to the Muslim World, it is characterised by 'dependence' as well as the imposition of alien ideologies. In current global affairs, this whole exercise of globalisation has accelerated the process of dominance by the developed countries, which, in reality, is a process of recolonisation.

It may also be mentioned here that contemporary globalisation did not emerge as a 'natural' development but rather as a created entity driven by the major global powers through agencies such as the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO and the global media. The objective of all these organisations and their activities is to control the world, particularly the Muslim World, economically, politically, culturally, ideologically and militarily. Interestingly, the above mentioned five major elements, i.e.: i) international financial system, ii) pattern of global trade, iii) technology, iv) global media, and, v) superiority in defence and military technology; which are greatly responsible for keeping the Muslim World under-developed, are also used as the main tools by the major global players to keep and strengthen their grip on global affairs. In fact, as elaborated in the following diagram, it is a complicated network of interconnected factors which keep the cycle of globalisation in rotation.

Globalisation and its Mechanism of Control



How is the present process of globalisation different from the process of colonisation? The answer is simple. During colonisation, colonisers kept themselves in power, mainly on the basis of their military might. In the era of globalisation, the same colonisers are once again evident but this time in addition to military superiority, their hold on power is based mainly on their full control of global finance, trade, politics, media and advancements in science and technology. Therefore, despite the fact that the present process of globalisation looks like the outgrowth of neo-colonialism, in reality, it is a process of 'recolonisation'. However, whether it is a matter of colonisation, neo-colonialism, globalisation or recolonisation, one fact remains true, the colonisers and the colonised are still the same. The only thing which has changed is that the 'gap' between 'the rich and the poor', and the 'haves' and the 'have nots' has increased many times over. In this scenario, it is noteworthy that the situation of the Muslim World is different to that of the developing world in general. In spite of having a sufficient supply of resources (including natural, financial and human), the dependence of the Muslim World

on the West has reached the level of oppression. The socio-economic and political situation of the Muslim World, discussed in the previous, chapters clearly attests to this fact.³⁷⁴

Islamic Approach to Globalisation and the OIC

According to Muslim belief, Islam is a complete code for all aspects of life. However, during the colonial period, most Muslim countries blindly followed the capitalist economic models where the main emphasis was placed on growth rather than the concept of fair distribution. These models were directed by Western institutions whose real objective was to develop their colonies including Muslim countries as a source of cheap raw materials for export. Presently, 'exports to the Western countries have been pursued with such vigour that Muslim countries have become marginalised with regard to trade between themselves. The pursuit of economic growth has made the Muslim countries subservient to, and trapped by, its technological and financial dependency on the West to an extent hitherto unseen'³⁷⁵.

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

The key to the success of this whole programme lies with economic motives. It is therefore, necessary that these countries seek to encourage the promotion of mutual trade through institutions such as the OIC and the Islamic Development Bank. This increase in cooperation will lead to a further promotion of mutual confidence within the entire Muslim World. The step by step nature of this development programme will enable them to solve their problems without external interference. Indeed, a true measure of the success of these proposals, would be the emergence of a situation where the Muslim

³⁷⁴ For further study, see: Ali Mohammadi and Muhammad Ahsan (2002), *Globalisation or Recolonisation? The Muslim World in the 21st Century*, London: TaHa Publishers.

³⁷⁵ M. A. Choudhury (1998), *op.cit.* p. 196.

World is able to intervene in an effective and meaningful way in solving various crises in other parts of the world. Such a development would be beneficial in maintaining the balance of power in global affairs, as well as in helping to reduce the burden on the United Nations, which could then afford to focus more of its attention on developmental issues, rather than political disputes.

However, in order to achieve such a position, within the framework of the OIC, the Muslim World need to strengthen various institutions, such as the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange (ICCI&CE), Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development (IFSTAD) and in particular, the Islamic media and news agencies, that already exist. In addition, within the same network, they also need to establish new institutions for the protection of their own interests such as the Muslim Monetary Fund (MMF), Human Development Fund (HDF), Muslim News Agency (MNA), Muslim Security Council (MSC), and Muslim Defence Force (MDF). As discussed the following pages, to take these steps, a strong political will and concrete measures are required to re-organise the OIC. Not only the strengthening of earlier institutions is extremely important, the establishment of these new institutions, is also vital for the security and development of the Ummah.

Ironically, several Muslim countries are facing a serious problem of balance of payments and are forced to request money from the IMF. However, the IMF not only gives loans with tough conditionalities, its approval is also required to obtain development loans from the World Bank and other bilateral lenders which give money on their own terms. Further to say that the wide-spread human deprivation is a common problem of most of the Muslim countries. Similar to the IMF, the World Bank also exploits this situation and dictates its own policies to its borrowers. Therefore, under the prevailing circumstances, the need for the establishment of the MMF and the HDF is obvious. It needs no emphasis here that within the UN system, the Security Council is the most important and the strongest institution. Unfortunately, this institution is totally monopolised by its five permanent members, particularly the United States, and Muslim countries have no voice here. In this context, the present situation of Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the Muslim World need no elaboration. Thus, the creation of the MSC, similar to the UN Security Council and the MDF on the pattern of NATO, would help greatly to promote stability and strengthen security within the Muslim World.

In fact, the news media is a crucial issue in Muslim countries, as instead of sharing news and information amongst themselves, they buy news from major news cartels such as Reuter, Agence France-Presse and Associated Press. In Muslim countries, there is a lack of mutual cooperation in the

sharing, distribution and diffusion of news, a problem that does not exist in Western-based news agencies. Here, close cooperation between the Muslim media and the Western based news agencies is required. Unfortunately, this cooperation does not exist and instead of promoting mutual contacts between the media and news agencies of the Muslim and the Non-Muslim worlds, the Muslim media is always blamed as biased and unreliable by the Western news agencies. This situation promotes distrust between the Muslim and the Non-Muslim worlds. Regrettably, this situation exists because of the absence of a strong Muslim news agency and media network. It can be hoped that the establishment of these proposed institutions will build confidence and initiate a new era of socio-economic development in the Muslim World. Furthermore, in addition to countering the process of recolonisation, it will also promote global stability and maintain a balance of power.

The OIC and Modern Challenges

The first Islamic Summit was held in September 1969 in Rabat and 24 Muslim countries participated. In this conference, it was declared that: 'Muslim governments would consult each other with a view to promoting among themselves close cooperation and mutual assistance in the economic, scientific, cultural and spiritual fields, inspired by the immortal teachings of Islam'³⁷⁶. But good intentions alone cannot bring about the desired results, unless backed by a strong political will and concrete actions. Unfortunately, whether it is a matter of promotion of socio-economic cooperation among Muslim countries, or the issues of Palestine, Kashmir, Iran-Iraq war, Bosnia Herzegovina, the contemporary situation of Iraq and Afghanistan, or several other problems faced by the Muslim World, the OIC has had no influence. Moreover, 'the OIC has had major problems in dealing with matters involving Muslims in non-member countries. Although Muslims in non-member countries have no status in the OIC Charter and are not officially represented in the OIC's structure, the organisation has frequently shown its concern for them'³⁷⁷. However, in spite of these setbacks, the OIC has not only survived but its membership has also swelled to more than double. At present, this organisation enjoys the membership of all Muslim majority countries, while some Non-Muslim countries and international organisations have an observer status in it. At Ummatic level, the major significance of the OIC is that it provides a platform where Muslim leaders sit together and discuss various issues of common concern.

Since the advent of the 21st century and particularly with reference to 9/11, structurally and behaviourally, the global system has changed a great

³⁷⁶ Abdullah Al Ahsan (1988), *op. cit.* p. 18.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.* p. 118.

deal. This situation led to a change in the role and behaviour of the major global powers and other international institutions, such as the UN Security Council and NATO. This changed environment is a major challenge for the OIC and other Islamic international institutions. Saad Khan³⁷⁸ argues that, ‘there is no denying the fact that the OIC and its subsidiary institutions have achieved much less than what the pioneers had envisioned. Most of the lofty goals and ideals are still on paper alone. The Muslim Common Market, the Islamic Free Trade Area, the Islamic Collective Security System and many such things which the OIC had long been harping about, are yet an unrealised dream.’ Further to say that in the post-9/11 era, throughout the Muslim World, the resistance against the policies of the United States, has risen tremendously. This resistance is almost entirely in the hands of non-state actors which poses a challenge to nation states as well to the OIC. Magnificent declarations on the platform of the OIC are unable to resolve the problems of the Ummah unless the leadership of Muslim countries is willing to accept changes in accordance with the need to address modern challenges. No doubt the abundance, complexity and interconnectivity of challenges, complicates the situation to such an extent that on some occasions, it makes it difficult to pinpoint where to start and in which direction to go first. Some of the major challenges faced by the Ummah are highlighted in the report of the Secretary General of the OIC ³⁷⁹, Final Communiqué ³⁸⁰ and Makkah Declaration ³⁸¹ were presented at the Third Extra Ordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held in December in Makkah (Saudi Arabia) during December 2005. Their salient points were as under:

Globalisation:

- The Muslim World stands at historic crossroads and faces tremendous ‘challenges with immense repercussions for its future.’
- With regard to the challenges posed by the process of globalisation, the necessity for unity within the Ummah has increased tremendously.

³⁷⁸ Saad S. Khan (2001), *Reasserting International Islam: A Focus on the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and Other Islamic Institutions*, Karachi: Oxford University Press. p. 309.

³⁷⁹ OIC (7-8 December 2005a), *Secretary General's Report: New Vision for the Muslim World: Solidarity in Action* (Presented at the Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference - Makkah al-Mukarramah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), <<http://www.oic-oci.org/ex-summit/english/sg-report.htm>>.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.* (7-8 December 2005b), *Final Communiqué of the Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century, Solidarity in Action*, Makkah al Mukarramah, 5-6 Dhul Qa'adah 1426h (7-8 December 2005), <<http://www.oic-oci.org/ex-summit/english/fc-exsumm-en.htm>>.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.* (7-8 December 2005c) *Makkah al-Mukarramah Declaration - Third Session of the extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference*, 5-7 Dhul Quidah 1426h (7-8 December 2005), <<http://www.oic-oci.org/ex-summit/english/makka-dec-en.htm>>.

- No doubt globalization presents advantages and challenges; the Muslim World can reap benefits from it through intra-Ummatic economic cooperation.
- Due to rapid changes in the world and the widening of the spectrum of global issues, the OIC is an appropriate institution to respond to these challenges.
- Due to the wider portfolio of global tasks, the role of the OIC in the international arena is immense and critical.

Security:

- The need for conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building is increasing with the passage of time.
- Serious consideration is required to resolve the major and current problems faced by the Ummah, e.g., the Palestinian issue, terrorism, the media and Islamophobia, dialogue among civilizations, the political and human rights of Muslim minorities in non-OIC Member states.
- Concrete efforts are required for the peaceful resolution of conflicts within the Muslim World. The OIC can play an important role in this regard.

Global Media and Islamophobia:

- The state of Islamophobia in the West is alarming and, in fact, is a form of racism and discrimination. An appropriate strategy needs to be adopted to promote inter-faith harmony and inter-civilisational dialogue.
- Being a powerful tool in the globalised world, the media can project a positive image of Islam and can promote the interests of the Ummah. However, it is monopolised by the major global players and it is being used to create a negative image of Islam and Muslims.

Human Development:

- With regard to the state of education in the Muslim World, the Secretary General suggested the complete eradication of wide-spread illiteracy in the coming 10 years. Similarly, he also highlighted the need to improve the conditions of Muslim universities and research centres.
- The conference emphasised the need to take practical steps to achieve scientific and technological development, especially self-sufficiency in the peaceful use of technology, with a view to supporting a sustained process of development in the OIC member states.

- Being a unique Muslim international organisation, the OIC has the potential to play a major role in creating a brighter and prosperous future for the Ummah. However, reforms would be required to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Economic Integration of the Ummah:

- From time to time, there has been emphasis on promoting the integration of the economies of the Muslim countries. This process should be accelerated to avoid further marginalization of the Ummah.
- At present, the figure of intra-Ummatic trade is not more than 14 percent. This proportionate must be enhanced by the creation of a Free Trade Area leading to the Islamic Common Market in the long-run.

With regard to countering contemporary problems and the future vision of the Ummah, the Secretary General of the OIC said that: ‘Most of the global challenges demonstrate the fact that the world is passing through rapid and sweeping changes. ... [Thus, what] we need is a vision that would respond to these challenges and enable us to shape a brighter future for Muslims, across the world. [To address the modern challenges] the reform of the OIC necessitates a redefinition of its mandate, status, structure and functions in line with the common principles and aspirations of Muslim states and societies’³⁸². In this context, the conference presented a programme for the coming ten years (entitled: *Ten-Year Programme of Action – To Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century*). The programme talks about a large number of issues, including:

- Promotion of intra-Ummatic unity and political will;
- Solidarity and joint Islamic actions;
- Moderation and tolerance in Islam;
- Inter-faith dialogue;
- Multiplicity of Islamic Jurisprudence;
- Palestine and occupied Arab territories;
- Combating terrorism;
- Combating Islamophobia;
- Human rights and good governance;
- Conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict rehabilitation;
- Promotion of intra-Ummatic economic cooperation;
- Supporting the Islamic Development Bank;

³⁸² OIC (7-8 December 2005), *op.cit.*

- Social solidarity in the face of natural disasters;
- Supporting development and poverty alleviation in Africa;
- Higher education, science and technology;
- Rights of Women, youth, children and the family in the Muslim World;
- Cultural and information exchange among member states; and,
- Reform of the OIC.

All the above issues mentioned in the Ten-Year Programme of Action, were merely good intentions and absolutely no concrete measures were adopted for tackling the problems. Here, one example is enough to judge the effectiveness of this programme as well as the summit as a whole. Global violence and terrorism is considered a major problem in the contemporary world. This issue is also linked with several other factors, e.g., Islamophobia, international politics and security, etc. This issue is adversely affecting the whole Ummah across over the world. In spite of the seriousness of this issue, the OIC has been unable even to form a definition of ‘terrorism’ based on Islamic principles. A review of the Ten-Year Programme of Action and various other relevant documents reveal that the Muslim leadership is totally silent on this issue. *The Final Communiqué Adopted by the First Ministerial Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference*³⁸³ also reflects that Muslim leaders are unable to respond to this point. Similarly, there are several political statements issued by a number of Muslim leaders with regard to the re-organising of the OIC. Under the heading of ‘Reform of the OIC’, The Ten-Year Programme of Action also touches on this issue. However, it is unclear what the features of this process would be and how the task would be carried out.

Re-organising the OIC

It should be noted that the current globalisation trend and the state of Ummatic under-development are interrelated issues that demand urgent attention. Furthermore, unless the ruling elite in the Muslim countries realise the severity of the problems, and undertake a genuine political commitment to solving them, their current situation will become dramatically worse. The Muslim countries require structured and comprehensive planning for the future of the Ummah. Therefore, in this context the re-organisation of the OIC is vital. The OIC Charter adopted on 04 March 1972, is not fully

³⁸³ *Ibid.* (15 March 2006), *Final Communiqué Adopted by the first Ministerial Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Organization of the Islamic Conference* (OIC troikas), Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 15 Safar 1427 (15 March 2006), <<http://www.oic-oci.org/index.asp>>.

compatible to addressing the current challenges. For instance, Article II-A says: ‘to take necessary measures to support international peace and security founded on justice.’ However, here without elaborating on the nature and composition of ‘*international peace and security founded on justice*’ leaves ambiguity. It is not clear whether such justice is based on secular foundations or the Islamic ones, as both have a different value system.

Similarly, in the same article, another point argues ‘*to back the struggle of all Muslim people with a view to preserving their dignity, independence and national rights.*’ Once again, it is not clear how the OIC intends to support the struggle of Muslim movements for their rights and sovereignty in Non-OIC countries. Surely, under the UN Charter, such an act would be considered interference in the internal affairs of a third country. In addition, the OIC Charter also shows contradictions on other issues, such as, on the one hand its full emphasis is on the concept of Ummah as a whole while on the other, priority is given to the sovereignty of the nation states – a notion based purely on the Western secular approach. This situation highlights the need to reform the Charter to enable it to provide guidelines for tackling the problems of the 21st century. The current global environment also demands that the OIC Charter should provide a framework to make a loose confederation of Muslim countries. The supreme body of this proposed confederation should comprise the heads of the member countries and it should only deal with inter-state and global issues. Furthermore, the name ‘Organisation of the Islamic Conference’ should be changed to the ‘Muslim Union’. In fact, Muslim countries must learn a lesson from the European Union and should adopt all relevant and good practices which can benefit the proposed Muslim Union (MU).

With regard to the administrative setup, ‘the OIC has a three-tier structure. At the top, there are four principal organs, namely, the conference of Kings and heads of States, Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, the General Secretariat and, since 1981, the International Islamic Court of Justice. Then, on the second level there are specialised committees like the three standing committees (one each on economic cooperation, science and technology, and cultural and information affairs, respectively), Permanent Finance Committee and Al-Quds Committee etc. On the third tier, there are a number of specialised and subsidiary organs like the Islamic Development Bank, Islamic News Agency, ISESCO, etc. In addition, there are several independent institutions, affiliated to the Organisation’³⁸⁴. An overview of the OIC’s setup reflects that there is no need to extensively reshuffle its organisational structure except to focus on the following important points:

³⁸⁴ With regard to organisational structure and functions of the OIC, see: Saad S. Khan, (2001), *Reasserting International Islam: A Focus on the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and Other Islamic Institutions*, Karachi: Oxford University Press.

- Reforming the Charter and renaming the OIC to the Muslim Union (MU).
- Several members do not pay a financial contribution to the OIC but have high expectations from it. This attitude must change as in such an environment, the OIC cannot work efficiently.
- Advancement in the fields of science and technology.
- Establishment of a sound central financial system for the Muslim World, for which it requires the establishment of:
 - A Muslim Monetary Fund (MMF)
 - A Human Development Fund (HDF), and,
 - A new currency with the name of the 'Islamic Dinar'.
- Establishment of an Islamic Common Market (ICM) for the promotion of mutual trade.
- Establishment of a strong Muslim News Agency (MNA) at par with CNN and the BBC.
- Establishment of two new security institutions:
 - Muslim Security Council (MSC), and,
 - Muslim Defence Force (MDF).

One of the key issues determining the success of this strategy, lies in the performance of the OIC. There exists no other organisation in the world where such a large number of countries have joined together solely on the basis of religion. Despite the weaknesses of this organisation, it still provides the best basis for all future development activities in the Muslim World. Therefore, these steps should be pursued through the OIC or the proposed MU as the Muslim World has no other or better alternative. In the context of the contemporary global environment, any future cooperation among Muslim countries needs to be predicated on economic factors, otherwise it is doomed to failure. A number of short, medium and long-term strategies need to be adopted for this purpose. These strategies should then be placed within a specified operational timeframe, i.e.: phase one; 2011-2020, phase two; 2021-2040, and phase three; 2041-2050. The period from now until 2010 should be utilised for mutual consultation in order to establish consensus and political commitment. Within the framework of the MU, the process could be conducted in the following way.

Phase One: 2011-2020 – Short-term Strategy:

Promotion of Intra-Ummatic Cooperation:

- Establishment of a sound central financial system for the Muslim World.
- Creation of a Common Islamic Market for the promotion of mutual trade.
- Focus on advancement in the field of science and technology.

- Strengthening the Muslim media and establishment of the MNA.
- Establishment of the MSC and the MDF.

Phase Two: 2021-2030 – Medium-term Strategy:

Merging Economies and the Establishment of a Joint Foreign Policy:

- Steps to adopt a joint foreign policy.
- Creation of a single currency (Islamic Dinar) for the MU member countries.
- Coordinating and strengthening the activities of the Islamic industrial, commercial, savings and agricultural development banks.
- On the lines of NATO, the MDF should be able to take a lead role in dealing with issues of intra-Ummatic security.
- Poverty and debt burden should be reduced to a minimum.
- By strengthening the MU, the status, role and authority of the head of this institution should become more than a formal Secretary General.
- By establishing a foundation for the overall industrialisation and integration of Muslim economies, the conclusion of Phase Two should lead to the formation of a confederation of all member countries.

Phase Three: 2031-2050 – Long-term Strategy:

Establishment of a Loose Confederation of Muslim Countries:

- A loose confederation of member states controlling four main sectors, i.e., unified currency (Dinar), Ummatic defence, foreign affairs and communication.
- By the end of this stage (i.e., 2050), the MU should be converted into a ‘federal governing body’ of the Muslim World.
- The designation of the present Secretary General should be changed to a formal Caliph which will give further confidence to the MU. A person selected for this position should be an established administrator as well as an eminent scholar.

It is important that with regard to this whole proposed programme, the above mentioned activities are completed within the time frame set-out in the three phases. By the year 2050, the strategy of unification should be adopted in such a way that at the apex level, there should be a loose confederation of member states. While by keeping sufficient internal autonomy, all Muslim countries would remain independent in their internal affairs. This confederation should be based on democratic principles. However, much exercise and research is needed to make this framework

compatible with the requirements and challenges of the modern age without reverting to a medieval or Taliban-style government. This would provide enormous politico-economic benefits to those living in the Muslim World. With regard to the need and importance of this framework, it may be added that it is high time the Muslim World realised the intensity and complexity of global problems particularly in the context of their own faith which says that God will not change the condition of a nation, unless it changes itself (Quran: 13-11, 8-53). Doing nothing is not an option here; full energies are required to strengthen the OIC/MU as this is the only institution, which can provide a concrete base for future development and security. The weakness of this institution means that all hopes are dashed.

With regard to the provision of joint security, Mohammad El-Sayed Selim³⁸⁵ rightly pointed out that: ‘Analysts of international organisations agree that the ability of an organisation to deliver security to its member states is one of its essential functions. The failure of an organisation to establish a series of collective arrangements to deter external aggression, inevitably weakens the connection of loyalty between the organisation and member states, as they will look elsewhere for security.’ This is true in the sense that while the Allied forces are active in Afghanistan and Iraq, the OIC has absolutely no role there, which is shameful indeed. The post-9/11 era highlights the need to adopt a collective security approach for the Muslim World. As discussed in chapter three, in a rapidly changing world, the concept of security has become much broader and refined in shape, encompassing not just military power but also local, regional, political and economic issues. Despite the prevalence of widespread poverty, illiteracy, hunger and debt burden, Muslim countries are forced to allocate a significant chunk of their financial resources to the defence sector, due to the internal and external threats to their security. Through a system of mutual cooperation, a large amount of these resources can be saved and utilised in other productive sectors of the economy. In fact, the prevailing global instability as well as the situation of the Muslim World highlights an obvious and urgent need for their collective security for which they need to create two new institutions, i.e., the Muslim Security Council (MSC) and the Muslim Defence Force (MDF). The MSC should have two objectives. Firstly, on the political front, it should be the supreme authority for dealing with various conflicts in the Muslim World. Secondly, it should be the governing authority of the MDF to respond to any aggression towards a member state. Composed of the militaries of various Muslim countries, the MDF should be organised on the lines of NATO. It should be an active and rapid action force

³⁸⁵ Mohammad El-Sayed Selim (1997), ‘The Organisation of the Islamic Conference: Towards a New Agenda.’ In Ghulam Sarwar, *OIC – Contemporary Issues of the Muslim World*, Rawalpindi: Foundation for Research on International Environment National Development and Security. p. 2863.

to deals with any security threat. Here, another point of primary importance is the imbalance of power within the UN Security Council, which sees five permanent members enjoy an undue and unjust monopoly in global affairs. Recently, various other countries have been very active in attempting to secure a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Muslim countries must also try to secure at least one permanent seat on this council and this seat should be jointly operated through the proposed MU.

The approach to collective security would also promote intra-Ummatic cooperation in other areas, e.g., the promotion of economic cooperation. There is enormous potential for international trade between Muslim countries and significant research has already been conducted in various aspects of this field. Muslim countries have to realise that they must develop their own markets and not merely be used as a dumping ground for second-rate goods and services from the industrialised countries. First, they should focus on regional and sub-regional economic unions such as the Arab Common Market, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Economic Cooperation Organisation. When this cooperation is sufficiently strengthened, the next step should be inter-cooperation between the regional economic groups leading to the development of a full-fledged 'Islamic common market'. This task is not difficult to achieve as the compact geographical position of the Muslim countries gives them a comparative advantage over trade with Western industrial countries. Furthermore, the cost of transportation would be far lower in most of the intra-Ummatic trade as compared to trade with Australia, American or the European Union. In addition, due to the fact that they are all developing countries, their cost of production is also much lower than that of the Western world, which means that they accrue additional advantages arising from economies of scale. However, to achieve this objective, there is an urgent need to strengthen the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade, the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange, and the Islamic Ship-owners Association. These institutions are already established for this purpose and are working under the administrative control of the OIC. The role of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce is of particular importance as this institution is composed of the federations of chambers of commerce and industry or national chambers, and other similar institutions existing in Muslim countries.

As indicated earlier, the Muslim World is under huge financial strain from the crippling burden of foreign debts, particularly those of the IMF and the World Bank. At present, the situation is that both these global money-lending institutions are receiving a huge amount of interest on the loans which they have advanced to many countries. The amount received as interest is utilised to advance further loans to the same countries, so that they can pay back their interest or in certain cases, just to keep them afloat. There are some countries that have repaid more interest than the total amount of the initial

loan. Under current global circumstances, there is no way-out from this vicious circle. The ruling authorities of the Muslim countries need to develop a positive strategy in order to redress this alarming situation. To do this, requires strengthening the Islamic Development Bank so as to enable it to eliminate the dictatorial role of the IMF and the World Bank. A large number of wealthy families of several Muslim countries, have huge financial reserves and investments in Western banks and stock exchanges. It is essential that a significant part of this money be taken and invested through the Islamic Development Bank. Furthermore, a Muslim Monetary Fund (MMF) should be established with its primary objective being to help Muslim countries out of the vicious circle of foreign debt. This action would drastically reduce the financial burden on the annual budgets of these countries, thus enabling more resources to be diverted to tackling issues such as poverty. It would also enable them to initiate various industrial projects, which would generate income and employment opportunities. In addition to the MMF, the Muslim World also needs to establish a Human Development Fund (HDF). At the initial stage, this money should be utilised to establish a basic infrastructural network and to start various human development projects in deprived communities throughout the various Muslim countries. In this instance, the Islamic Development Bank would not only be a key institution in improving the financial condition of Muslim countries, but also a means of enhancing intra-Islamic trade, as well as helping in the research and development of science, technology, the Muslim media and other projects, with a view to eliminating mass poverty.

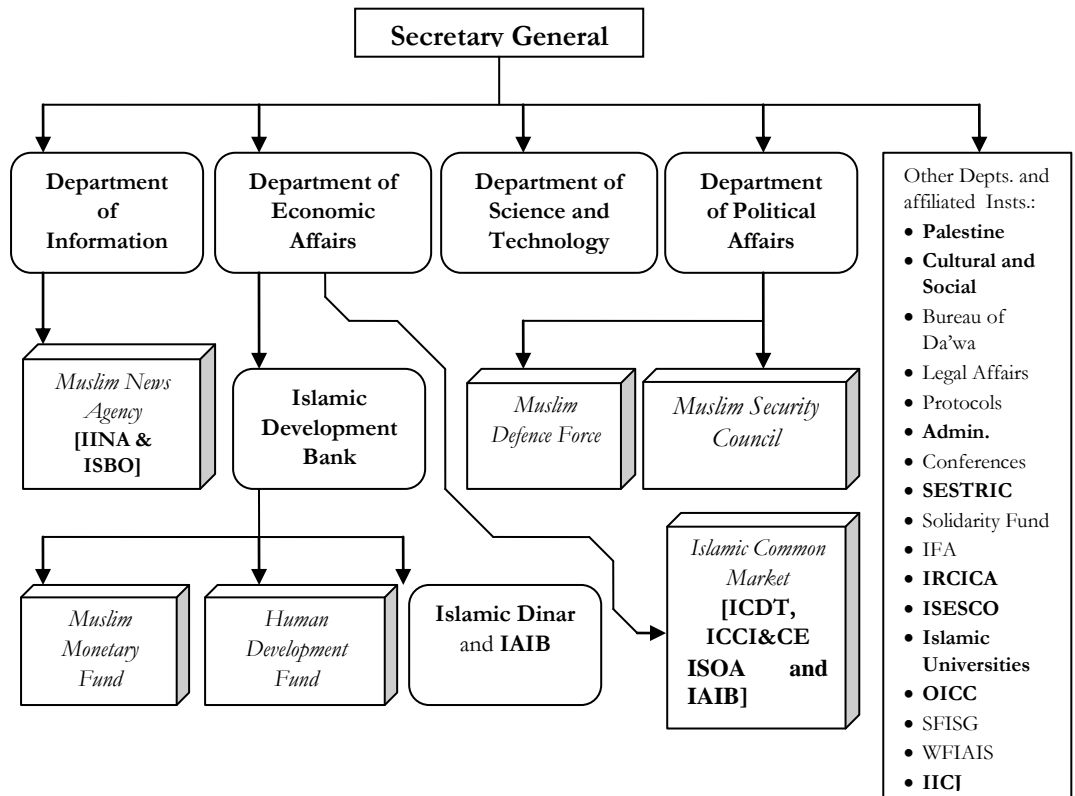
It does not need to be emphasised further that the Muslim World is lagging behind the rest of the world in the field of science and technology. The same is also true of the media. In both these fields, the Muslim World is totally dependent upon the major global players. This is one of the main reasons why the Muslim countries have no voice and weightage in global affairs. As discussed previously, there are various institutions already working in this area under the auspices of the OIC. These include the, International Islamic News Agency, the Islamic States Broadcasting Organisation, and the Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development. The problem is that the limited spectrum of the activities of these institutions has made them completely ineffective. Muslim countries must begin to establish a strong Muslim News Agency, not less than the level of the BBC, Voice of America or CNN. This undertaking requires an availability of satellites in space (Syed: 1997, 183-211). Some Muslim countries have gained the necessary technological skills in this area but are unable to launch a programme due to financial constraints. However, this hurdle can be overcome by initiating joint-

ventures with the rich Muslim countries who do not possess such skills.³⁸⁶ This programme would constitute a huge advance for the Muslim media, and is essential if it is to assume a leading role in global affairs. These efforts will not only help to project the Islamic cause in the world but will also help the Western world to better understand the Muslim World. Towards this end, it may be expedient for regions to develop their own media policies as a first step towards a more comprehensive and integrated policy for the Muslim World as a whole. This would require establishing a team of experts for the purposes of creating the desired impact and maintaining overall harmony and balance in the projection of themes and ideas.

An obvious question that emerges here is to know as to who will finance this huge package for the creation of new institutions and for strengthening the existing ones. The Muslim leadership and masses need to realise that the major global players are not going to give them charity to carryout these reforms. Whatever method they use, Muslim countries have to create the resources from within. One possible way is that through agreement, as a first step, all Muslim countries should start contributing 0.01 percent of their GDP to a common pool administered by the Islamic Development Bank. If started in the year 2011 on a yearly basis and if that contribution is regularly raised to the level of one percent by the end of 2020, it is estimated that over US\$ 100 billion can be accumulated in the common pool (World Bank: 2005a; CIA: 2005). Thus, on an average basis, the amount of ten billion dollars per year, would be more than sufficient to initiate a new chapter in the life of the Ummah. The advantages of this process would be multifarious and not solely limited to the Ummatic socio-economic development and security issues. It will give Muslim countries the confidence and the means with which to solve their own problems rather than constantly having to depend upon the major global players. This situation will also help in maintaining a balance of power in global affairs. It can be hoped that with the initiation of this process, problems such as the destruction of Somalia, the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, the present situation of Iraq and Afghanistan, the vulnerability of the Palestinians, the Kashmir dispute and, violence in Sudan, would be much less likely to happen in the future.

³⁸⁶ See: Muhammad Ahsan (1999), 'Education: The Twenty-first Century and the Human Development in the Muslim World,' *Muslim Education Quarterly*, Vol. 16-3, 4-23.

A Suggestive Re-organisational Approach for the OIC (Muslim Union)



Note:

- i) Text in **normal font** indicates that institutions already exist and do not need a major change in their functions.
- ii) Text in **bold font** means that institutions already exist but need to strengthen their activities, qualitatively and quantitatively.
- iii) Text in **Italic font** shows that new institutions need to be created.
- iv) The Islamic Development Bank uses Islamic Dinar which is a unit of account equivalent to one SDR (i.e., Special Drawing Right of the IMF). However, this it is not used as an official currency of any Muslim country.
- v) IAIB: International Association of Islamic Banks.
- vi) ICCI&CE: Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange
- vii) ICDT: The Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade.
- viii) IFA: Islamic Fiqh Academy.
- ix) IICJ: International Islamic Court of Justice.
- x) IINA: International Islamic News Agency.
- xi) IRCICA: The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture.
- xii) ISBO: The Islamic States Broadcasting Organisation.

- xiii) ISESCO: The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
- xiv) ISOA: Islamic Ship-owners Association.
- xv) OICC: Organisation of Islamic Capital and Cities
- xvi) SESTRIC: The Statistical, Economic, Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries.
- xvii) SFISG: Sports Federation of Islamic Solidarity Games
- xviii) WFIAIS: World Federation of International Arabo-Islamic Schools

Ummatic Global Vision

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

The contemporary global situation demands a rational interpretation of Islam, in tandem with the mobilisation of political power in the Muslim World. This fact needs to be highlighted so that Islam does not prohibit Muslims from working with the Western world on matters of common interest. Thus, efforts should be made to promote mutual trust between the Muslim and the Non-Muslim Worlds. This is a very challenging task but they must accomplish it, as it is essential to their future survival. These activities will not only serve the interests of the Muslim World but will also prove beneficial to the promotion of global stability, peace and prosperity³⁸⁷. In order to accomplish these undertakings, two simultaneous approaches, i.e., in the

³⁸⁷ Ghulam Sarwar (1997), *OIC – Contemporary Issues of the Muslim World*, Rawalpindi: Foundation for Research on International Environment National Development and Security.

internal and external sectors need to be adopted. The most important step with regard to the internal sector is the need for collaboration between the general public, liberal and moderate Muslim intellectuals and politicians, with a view to establishing pressure groups and gaining public support within the country, in order to eliminate social evils. At an Ummatic level, such national movements should work together in close coordination so as to affect the maximum influence on the governments of Muslim countries. They need to put moral and political pressure on their own respective governments to promote coordination among the Muslim countries. The objective of this approach should not be to bring about a revolution within the Muslim World, which may be disastrous, rather it should start as a peaceful and social evolutionary process starting from the grassroots level up. Such efforts in various Muslim countries would be helpful in creating internal solidarity and stability, as well as external coordination and harmony at the Ummatic level. This process, if properly implemented, could result in the idea of 'Islamic globalisation' becoming a functioning system, where the Muslim World can gradually begin to solve its own problems. ■