



American Thinker

September 26, 2010

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OIC and the Modern Caliphate

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The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is a religious and political organization. Close to the Muslim World League of the Muslim Brotherhood, it shares the Brotherhood's strategic and cultural vision: that of a universal religious community, the Ummah, based upon the Koran, the Sunna, and the canonical orthodoxy of *shari'a*. The OIC represents 56 countries and the Palestinian Authority (considered a state), the whole constituting the universal Ummah with a community of more than one billion three to six hundred million Muslims.

The OIC has a unique structure among nations and human societies. The Vatican and the various churches are de facto devoid of political power, even if they take part in politics, because in Christianity, as in Judaism, the religious and political functions have to be separated. Asian religions, too, do not represent systems that bring together religion, strategy, politics, and law within a single organizational structure.

Not only does the OIC enjoy unlimited power through the union and cohesion of all its bodies, but also to this it adds the infallibility conferred by religion. Bringing together 56 countries, including some of the richest in the world, it controls the lion's share of global energy resources. The European Union (EU), far from anticipating the problems caused by such a concentration of power and investing in the diversification and autonomy of energy sources since 1973, acted to weaken America internationally in order to substitute for it the U.N., the OIC's docile agent. In the hope of garnering a few crumbs of influence, the EU privileged a massive Muslim immigration into Europe, paid billions to the Mediterranean Union and Palestinian Authority, weakened the European states, undermined their unity, and wrapped itself in the flag of Palestinian justice, as though this would supply some protective system against the global jihad, which it endeavored to focus on Israel.

Religion as the main aspect of the OIC emerges from its language and its targets. It seems that the OIC is restoring in the 21st century the Caliphate, the supreme controlling body for all Muslims. In their Charter (2008), Member States confirm that their union and solidarity are inspired by Islamic values. They affirm their aim to reinforce within the international arena their shared interests and the promotion of Islamic values. They commit themselves to revitalizing the pioneering role of Islam in the world, increasing the prosperity of the member states, and -- in contrast to to the European states -- to ensure the defense of their national sovereignty and territorial integrity. They proclaim their support for Palestine with al-Quds Al Sharif, the Arabized name for Jerusalem, as its capital, and exhort each other to promote human rights, basic freedoms, the state of law (*shari'a*), and democracy according to their constitutional and legal system -- in other words, compliance with *shari'a*.

They also undertake to stimulate noble Muslim values, to preserve their symbols and their shared heritage, and to defend the universality of the Islamic religion -- simply put, the universal propagation of Islam (*da'wa*). They state that they are promoting women's rights and encourage their active participation in all walks of life, in accordance with the laws of the Member States. They agree to inculcate Muslim children with Islamic values and to support Muslim minorities and communities outside the Member States in order to preserve their dignity and their cultural and religious identity.

The Charter's strategic targets seek "[t]o ensure active participation of the Member States [of the OIC] in the global political, economic and social decision-making processes to secure their common interests" (I-5) and "[t]o promote and defend unified position on issues of common interest in international forums" (1-17).

Among its targets, the OIC Charter specifies the propagation, promotion, and preservation of Islamic teachings and values, the spread of Islamic culture, and the preservation of the Islamic heritage (I-11). Article I-12 promotes the protection and defense of the true image of Islam, the fight against its defamation, and the encouragement of dialogue between civilizations and religions. The other objectives deal with protecting inherent Islamic family values (I-14) and the preservation of rights, dignity, and religious and cultural identity of the Muslim communities and minorities in non-Member States (I-16). This issue points to the OIC authority over immigrants abroad and its pressure on the governments of the non-Muslim host countries through the channel of dialogue, including the Alliance of Civilizations, whose Report backs OIC programs, and interfaith and immigration networks.

The OIC supports all the jihadist movements considered to be resisting "foreign occupation," including those in "occupied" Indian Kashmir, and condemns the "humiliation and oppression" of Muslims in India.

The Charter stipulates that the International Islamic Court of Justice shall become the Organization's main legal body (Chap. X, Art. 14) and that "[t]he Independent Permanent Commission on Human Rights shall promote the civil, political, social and economic rights enshrined in the organization's [OIC] covenants and declarations and in universally agreed human rights instruments, in conformity with Islamic values" (Art. 15). It implies that the covenants which do not conform with Islamic values will not be followed.

One can note that Sudanese President Omar al Bashir, accused (according to Western criteria of justice) of genocide committed in southern Sudan and Darfur, has not been troubled by the Islamic Court of Justice. His colleagues at the OIC do not consider him in any way a criminal and receive him with great respect, as does Turkish PM Erdogan.

The Islamic Court of Justice has an international mandate and could try foreigners, both Muslims and non-Muslims (blasphemers, apostates, resisters to jihad) who have broken the laws of *shari'a* anywhere. Moreover, the claim by the OIC to be the guardian and protector of Muslim immigrants living in all countries that are not members of the OIC implies an extension of its jurisdiction and political influence over all the Muslims of Europe, North and South America, and the other non-Member States. This situation exacerbates the danger incurred by non-religious European Muslims, whether atheists, apostates, or free thinkers.

Within its organization, the Charter presents characteristics similar to those of the EU; however, in terms of its spirit, functions, principles, and objectives, it is the EU's very antithesis. Even if it employs the language of international organizations, the meaning of the

words is different by their being rooted in the conceptual world of the Koran, which contradicts the basis of secular Western thought. Thus, Article 32-2 states, "The Council of Foreign Ministers [of OIC countries] shall recommend the rules of procedures of the Islamic Summit." This implies an Islamic view and understanding on policy.

Such a combined political and religious institution is at the very outer rim of Western thinking, anchored as it is in the separation between politics and religion. Even if interference between the two fields has persisted, the principle of such separation has facilitated emancipation in the intellectual and political arenas from religious authority and the development of critical thought.

Present-day aspiration of the Ummah to submit to a caliphate which embodies a combined political-religious institution can only surprise the Westerner and highlight the gap that separates the two. Rooted in individualism, Europeans cultivate the search for happiness and cherish freedom of thought and of rational, scientific exploration, which are perceived as a human being's greatest privilege and finest adventure.

Conversely, aspiring to the Caliphate indicates the longing for a supreme authority owing its infallibility to Allah and his human intermediary, Mohammed. According to Ibn Khaldoun, this institution placing politics at the service of worldwide, religious expansionism was created as instrument for the mandatory Islamization of mankind. Faced today with this political archaism, a divided and broken West seeks refuge in denial and grasps at the demise of tiny Israel as though at a lifebelt. Taking in water from every side, this West that abandons its own identity for multilateralism and multiculturalism and ruins its citizenry by buying security has little chance of survival.