



## ISSUE BRIEF

INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES ISLAMABAD

Web: [www.issi.org.pk](http://www.issi.org.pk)  
Phone: +92-51-9204423, 24  
Fax: +92-51-9204658

### OIC: UNITED FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

By  
**Fatima Raza**  
Research Associate

Edited by  
**Najam Rafique**

December 31, 2019

*(Views expressed in the brief are those of the author, and do not represent those of ISSI)*



**“United for Peace and Development”** was the logo under which the commemoration festivities of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) began at Jeddah on November 25, 2019.<sup>1</sup> The Golden Jubilee of OIC was celebrated under patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia in Jeddah.

This commemoration was an implementation of the resolution that was issued in the 46<sup>th</sup> Council of Foreign Ministers session held in Abu Dhabi in March 2019. In this resolution, the year 2019 was dedicated to the remembrance of the 50 years of OIC and its achievements in providing a platform for Muslims dwelling in all parts of the world.

The Secretary General of the organization, Dr. Yousef A. Al-Othaimeen reiterated, “OIC represents one of the largest international organizations, second only to the United Nations and benefits from the generous patronage of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whose financial and logistical support covered the full range of the OIC’s activities, all along the past fifty years.”<sup>2</sup>

OIC is unique in character as the only official body to envisage Islamic solidarity as one of its fundamental objectives. Adopting principles of social, economic and political harmony for collective

<sup>1</sup> News Desk, “OIC model for joint action – chief”, *MENAFN*, November 25, 2019. <https://menafn.com/1099326232/OIC-model-for-joint-action-chief>

<sup>2</sup> Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Chairman of the Islamic Summit, Patronizes OIC Golden Jubilee’s Festivities”. [www.oic-oci.org](http://www.oic-oci.org)  
<https://www.oic-oci.org/jubilee/?lan=en>

Muslim population all around the globe, OIC has maintained consultative and cooperative relations with the United Nations for settling disputes and differences among the Muslim countries. With a vociferous stance on issues of commonality targeting the collective Muslim world, OIC represents a unifying spirit of solidarity among Muslims living in any part of the world which makes it an immensely significant international body in which about 24.1% of the world population places their faith.<sup>3</sup>

Since its inception in 1969 after the arson attack inside Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, the OIC has been promoting values of cultural unity, peace, harmony and vowing to resolve issues that plague the collective Muslim population. Over the years, OIC has adopted progressive resolutions fitting the new-age problems of the Muslim World. OIC-2025 program has charted 107 goals with 18 areas of priority for the organization to focus upon; Peace and Security, Palestine and Al-Quds, Poverty Alleviation, Counter-terrorism, Investment and Finance, Food and Security, Science and Technology, Climate Change and Sustainability, Moderation, Culture and Interfaith Harmony, Empowerment of Women, Joint Islamic Humanitarian Action, Human Rights and Good Governance, among others.

Pakistan enjoys a distinct status within the organization from the very beginning due to its significant stature in the Muslim world as the only Muslim nuclear power with the seventh largest military in the world. It also conducts joint military trainings with several member countries. Most recently, Pakistan has sent a dedicated Permanent Mission to the headquarters of OIC in Jeddah.<sup>4</sup> OIC has endorsed Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir cause especially after India's August 5<sup>th</sup> decision to revoke the special status of Jammu & Kashmir with vehement fervor.

However, there remains a gaping margin of improvement regarding practical implementation of OIC resolutions and coalescing stances of different Muslim countries for addressing collective woes of Muslim communities all over the globe. OIC has been criticized by many for its role as a mere 'bystander' while Muslims in Palestine, Kashmir and other parts of the world experience human rights' violations.

Apart from these issues, the changing global dynamics have opened up a plethora of challenges for the Muslim world. Muslim refugees all over the world are being treated with the utmost derision and apathy due to land, ethnic and political disputes between home and host countries. Islamophobia has seeped into the collective non-Muslim psyche all over the world which has created

---

<sup>3</sup> WorldData.info, "OIC - Organization of Islamic Cooperation", <https://www.worlddata.info/alliances/oic-organization-of-islamic-cooperation.php>

<sup>4</sup> Radio Pakistan, "Pakistan establishes permanent mission to OIC in Jeddah", [www.radio.gov.pkhttps://www.radio.gov.pk/04-12-2019/pakistan-establishes-permanent-mission-to-oic](http://www.radio.gov.pkhttps://www.radio.gov.pk/04-12-2019/pakistan-establishes-permanent-mission-to-oic)

unwarranted troubles for Muslims everywhere. Poverty, displacement, famine and deprivation from basic necessities of life are a few among an abundance of issues that trouble the collective Muslim population all over the world.

It is high time that OIC with its already established networking structure decides to tackle the swarm of challenges, head on. Galvanization of the differing segments of Muslim countries through the platform of OIC is vital to the organization's utility in today's world. The 18 key areas of priority adopted by OIC this year are commendably current and relevant in nature. However, it is time to convert these conventions into concrete palpable actions. Muslim countries grapple with several diverse issues in their respective regions that require a comprehensive and multipronged approach in dealing with them. OIC would do well to apply valuable resources to legitimize country specific concerns by bringing them to the collective attention of all member states and by lending its international platform to individual issues of all countries. However, an essential pre-requisite to all such steps would be unification of all Muslim countries by setting aside mutual differences in face of the complex challenges that stand before them.