

India's relations with Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

March 14, 2019

Manifest Pedagogy

The above topic becomes important because it is the first time India has accepted to participate as a guest at OIC. The issue becomes even more relevant because of Pulwama attack. Questions related to OIC are more relevant with respect to prelims.

In news

India as a guest to OIC

Placing it in the syllabus

Regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Static dimensions

- 1 History of OIC
- 2 Status of OIC in global politics

Current dimensions

India's Presence in OIC meeting

Content

Origin, history, and evolution of OIC

- The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the **second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations** with a membership of 57 states spread over four continents.
- The Organization is the collective voice of the Muslim world. It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.
- The Organization was **established upon a decision of the historical summit which took place in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco** in September 1969 following the criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem.
- In 1970 the **first ever meeting of Islamic Conference of Foreign Minister** (ICFM) was held in Jeddah which decided to establish a permanent **secretariat in Jeddah** headed by the organization's secretary general.

Charters of OIC

1. The first OIC Charter was adopted by the 3rd ICFM Session held in 1972. The Charter laid down the objectives and principles of the organization and fundamental purposes to strengthen the solidarity and cooperation among the Member States. The Charter was amended to keep pace with the developments that have unraveled across the world.
2. The present Charter of the OIC was adopted by the Eleventh Islamic Summit held in Dakar on 13-14 March 2008 to become the pillar of the OIC future Islamic action in line with the requirements of the 21st century.
 - The Organization has consultative and cooperative relations with the UN and other inter-governmental organizations to protect the vital interests of the Muslims and to work for the settlement of conflicts and disputes involving Member States.

Ten-Year Program of Action- It was launched by OIC to face the challenges of the 21st century, it was concluded in 2015. A successor programme for the next decade (2016-2025) has since then been adopted.

The new programme OIC-2025 is anchored in the provisions of the OIC Charter and focuses on 18 priority areas with 107 goals. The priority areas include issues of Peace and Security, Palestine and Al-Quds, Poverty Alleviation, Counter-terrorism, Investment and Finance, Food 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.

Objective:

- Raise the collective voice of the Muslim world.
- Collectively work to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony.

Key bodies of OIC

- The Islamic Summit.
- The Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM)
- The General Secretariat.

Specialized organs

- The Islamic Development Bank.
- The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other subsidiaries/ affiliate organs.

OIC position on Kashmir and its relation to Pakistan

- Pakistan has always used OIC as a platform to gather support on the Kashmir conflict against the Republic of India. In 1969 King Hassan of Morocco invited the Government of India for the 1969 Summit in Rabat. But

after Pakistan then ruler Gen Yahya Khan threatened to walk out, King Hassan requested the Indian delegates not to attend the meeting.

- During the OIC 1994 Conference in Tehran, Pakistan succeeded in persuading the member countries to create the "OIC Contact Group on Kashmir.
- In 2016 the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) had voiced its concern over alleged excesses of the Indian military and the paramilitary forces in Kashmir.
- The OIC's stand on the Kashmir issue questions the state of Jammu and Kashmir as a legitimate part of India. The organization has been generally supportive of Pakistan's concerns over Jammu and Kashmir. With regards to this, the OIC has been issuing statements criticizing alleged atrocities and human rights violations in the state. For instance, as recently as December 2018, the OIC General Secretariat had "condemned killing of innocent Kashmiris by Indian forces," further describing it as a "terrorist act."
- Pakistan enjoys a privileged status in the **OIC**.
- Pakistan has always supported the Palestinians against the Zionist colonization of Palestine. In line with OIC strong stance against the occupation of Palestine by Zionists, Pakistan has continuously adopted a stance against Israel, while maintaining moral solidarity with Palestine.
- Recently Pakistan elected OIC body's deputy chairman. It shows how Pakistan is close to OIC.

46th OIC meeting

- Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj was invited as "**Guest of Honour**" by UAE to represent India as an observer state. It is for the **first time that India has been invited** to a meeting of the OIC, Swaraj addressed the meet raising concern for spreading terrorism.

Positives

- India's presence at the OIC meeting could open doors for a broader engagement between the country and the Muslim world that could shore up New Delhi's interests in areas ranging from energy security to counterterrorism cooperation at a time when the world order is in a flux and new partnerships are being actively forged.
- India used the forum to send out a message on dismantling terrorism infrastructure in states that shelter terrorists

Negatives

- India's presence at the 46th OIC meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers is historic, but it still remains a stepping stone toward larger engagement with the OIC and the Muslim world. Article 4 (1) of the OIC Charter states the need for consensus among the OIC Council of Ministers for deciding on granting observer status to a state.
- Consensus-building for India's entry in the grouping without Pakistan's support is inconceivable. Thus, it remains in India's interest to engage positively with Pakistan on this issue and collectively work for the ideals to which the OIC is committed.