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Unity of Muslims encouraged in Islam

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By Ramzi Bendebka

The term “Muslim world” refers to the countries and regions where Islam is the dominant religion. People often use the word to refer to all Muslims around the world, but it can also be used to refer to countries and regions where Islam is the most popular religion. There are many countries and cultures within the Muslim world, as Islam is a global religion with a diverse following. The Muslim world includes countries in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and other regions.

The Muslim world is diverse and has a rich cultural history, with various languages, traditions, and practices. Muslims come from a variety of racial, ethnic, and national backgrounds, and there is a wide range of interpretations and practices within Islam. Even though Muslims are different, they all believe in the central teachings of Islam, such as that there is only one God, and that Muhammad was His last messenger.

Islam encourages unity and cooperation among its followers, so Muslim countries need to work together to be united. In the Islamic tradition, the concept of the ummah, or community,

emphasizes the importance of collaboration and solidarity among Muslims.

In the modern world, various regional organisations have pursued cooperation among Muslim-majority countries. Such as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), a group of 58 member states that aims to promote cooperation and coordination among its member countries on a range of issues, including economic development, cultural exchange, and political affiliation.

Several other regional organisations in the Muslim world aim to promote cooperation among their member countries. The Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council are two examples of regional groups. The Arab League is a group of Arab countries in North Africa and the Middle East, and the Gulf Cooperation Council is a group of Arab countries in and around the Persian Gulf.

In addition to these regional organisations, a number of international organisations bring together Muslim-majority countries to work on specific issues, such as the Islamic Development Bank, which provides financial assistance to member countries for economic development projects.

Also, and in other aspect, there are a number of Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and the southern Philippines. These countries have a history of cooperation and collaboration, both regionally and internationally.

One regional organisation that brings together Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional intergovernmental organisation aiming to promote regional cooperation and integration among its member countries. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei are all members of ASEAN, and the organisation has played a significant role in promoting cooperation and collaboration among these countries on various issues, including economic development, security, and cultural exchange.

In addition to ASEAN, there are also a number of other regional organisations that bring together Muslim-majority countries in

Southeast Asia, such as the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), which promotes cooperation in education and research, and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), which promotes cooperation in the development of sustainable fisheries.

Therefore, Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia have a long history of working together, both in the region and around the world. This cooperation is supported by several regional and international organisations that promote cooperation and coordination among these countries on a range of issues.

In this article, we focused on two significant factors that contribute to the situation of cooperation in the modern Muslim world: colonialism and bad governance. The first one covers the contemporary history of different Muslim countries when the bad governance dill with the practices and issues that concern cooperation.

The legacy of colonialism has indeed impacted cooperation in the Muslim world, as European powers colonised many Muslim-majority countries in the past. The experience of colonisation and subsequent decolonisation have shaped the political and economic development of many Muslim-majority countries and have impacted their relationships with other countries and organisations.

One way in which colonialism has been an obstacle to cooperation in the Muslim world is that it has often left behind a legacy of mistrust and resentment towards former colonial powers. This can make it difficult for Muslim-majority countries to cooperate with countries that have a history of colonialism in the region.

In addition, the experience of colonisation often resulted in the disruption of traditional social and economic systems, making it difficult for Muslim-majority countries to work together effectively. In the post-colonial era, the rise of modern nation-states has also led to competition for resources and power, which can sometimes make it harder for people to work together.

On the other hand, bad governance can be a challenge to cooperation in the Muslim world, as it can undermine the

effectiveness of regional and international organisations and hinder the ability of countries to work together effectively.

Bad governance can take many forms, such as corruption, lack of transparency, political instability, weak institutions, and lack of accountability. When governance is strong, countries can easily trust one another and work together effectively. It can also make it difficult for regional and international organisations to function effectively, as they rely on the cooperation and support of member countries.

Poor governance can also harm economic development and social progress in Muslim-majority countries, which can create challenges for cooperation. For example, suppose a government has weak institutions and cannot effectively address poverty, health, and education issues. In that case, it may not be able to cooperate with other countries, as there is no such platform to proceed with cooperation.

Rather than the above matters, there are some potential obstacles to cooperation in Muslim-majority countries could include the following:

1. Political instability and conflict: Many Muslim-majority countries have experienced conflict and political instability, making it difficult for them to cooperate with other countries or organisations.
2. Economic inequality: Some Muslim-majority countries have significant economic disparities, making it difficult for people from different socio-economic backgrounds to work together effectively.
3. Religious and cultural differences: While Islam is a religion that promotes unity and cooperation among believers, there can be differences in interpretation and practice among Muslims, which can sometimes lead to conflict or dispute.
4. Misunderstandings and stereotypes: Misunderstandings and stereotypes about Muslim countries and cultures can make it hard to work together.
5. Lack of trust: In some cases, there may be a lack of trust between Muslim-majority countries and other countries or organisations, making it difficult for them to work together effectively.

6. Geopolitical tensions: There may be geopolitical tensions among Muslim-majority countries making it difficult for them to cooperate on shared concerns.

To conclude, cooperation among Muslim-majority countries is an important aspect of the Islamic tradition. Several regional and international organisations work to promote cooperation and coordination among these countries on various issues. It is worth noting that these are just a few potential challenges to cooperation in the Muslim world and that different countries and regions may face different challenges depending on their specific circumstances. While colonialism is not the only factor that has affected cooperation in the Muslim world, it has undoubtedly shaped the relationships between Muslim-majority countries and other countries and organisations. Bad governance also can significantly challenge cooperation in the Muslim world. Addressing governance issues is essential to promoting cooperation and collaboration among Muslim-majority countries.

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