

## The role of economic convergence in the capability of the Islamic world

Sayed Mujiburahman Noori<sup>1\*</sup>, Ahmad Nabi Stanikzai<sup>2)</sup>, Gulaqa Anwari<sup>3)</sup>

<sup>1,2)</sup> Department of Finance and Banking, Faculty of Economics, Kunduz University, Afghanistan.

<sup>3)</sup> Faculty of Agriculture, Kunduz University, Afghanistan

\*Corresponding Author

Email: [mujibnorri1367@gmail.com](mailto:mujibnorri1367@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

*Achieving positive global development in today's world is possible through convergence. Major global competitors are moving forward by forming unions and agreements based on common interests. This is something that Islamic countries are in desperate need of. The focus of this research is also on the role of economic convergence in enhancing the capabilities of the Islamic world. In this research, a qualitative method has been used using articles, books and also according to detailed information from reliable global sources. The aim is for the Islamic world to reach a level of development through cooperation and solidarity among Islamic countries and by meeting the needs of the Islamic Ummah, freeing themselves from severe economic dependence. The results indicate that the Islamic world can effectively work towards common goals and maximize its economic potential. Islam, with its emphasis on Allah almighty, aims to bring honor and glory to Muslims and enable them to participate in international competition, utilizing their material and spiritual talents and abilities. With cultural, historical, and emotional ties among Muslim nations and the large group of 57 countries that make up the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, representing over one and a half billion people, accounting for nearly 60% of global strategic reserves, there is immense potential for economic convergence if they focus on common development-oriented interests and goals. By doing so, Islamic societies can thrive and make a significant impact in the international arena as a strong economic force.*

**Keywords:** *Capability, Convergence, Cooperation, Islamic world, Islamic countries*

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## INTRODUCTION

Relations and solidarity between countries in the present time is an international fact and it cannot be avoided because the incompatibility of economic systems in societies and exploitation of poor nations has caused economic insufficiency and instability in the world, which countries have created relations and solidarity in various fields are trying to get rid of this problem and achieve their rights. After all, at present, a country that does not have high economic power, in that case, it needs powerful countries to meet its needs. It is time that the glory and greatness of that country is questioned and it appears as a follower and needy country and it suffers serious damages from this area. Just as Islamic countries have suffered severe damages such as poverty, backwardness, and distance from competition in the world arena, now the Islamic world is trying to get relief from these anomalies by highlighting its position. The way out of these problems requires extensive relations, solidarity, order, and coherence in the Islamic world, Islamic countries, taking into account the foundations, goals, interests, and common ideals they have, are closer in matters related to order and economic and political integration.

Have a suitable platform for economic convergence, In addition to the many material and spiritual capitals that exist in the Islamic world, it has a significant effect in accelerating economic convergence to solve the challenges. Therefore, I found it necessary to research the role of economic convergence in the Islamic world's capabilities. It is hoped that this research,

along with the efforts of other researchers, will be fruitful in solving the existing challenges of Islamic countries and fulfilling the human and Islamic responsibility I have done.

The political and economic unity of the Islamic world continued for centuries, Despite the abundance of material and spiritual factors of the unity of the Islamic Ummah but gradually geographical factors, cultural conflicts, internal factors, the disappearance of the common goal and the presence of competing forces and organizations caused differences because each country confined its interests to a geographical area. and on behalf of the colonialist countries, in order to dominate the region of the Islamic world, they divided the Islamic lands into small countries by using ethnic and religious differences. In this way, the Muslims in this region were involved in a series of territorial and ethnic disputes, which became the cause of the loss of unity among the Islamic Ummah.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The ongoing research focuses on the role of economic convergence in the capabilities of the Islamic world. It takes a descriptive and analytical approach, utilizing library methods and drawing insights from the Holy Quran, the teachings of the Messenger of God, books, scientific literature, and research articles. By employing these sources of knowledge, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how economic convergence can contribute to the development and progress of the Islamic world. The main variable in this research is convergence, with the assumption that it has a positive effect on the ability of Islamic societies

In the context of its approach to anthropology, concerning comprehensiveness and universality, the religion of Islam cannot be indifferent to the issues and problems of the public arena, and therefore, as seen in the practical and theoretical methods of many Islamic thinkers, Islam in the arena. The general aspects of modern life deal with topics such as the war between good and evil, corruption and licentiousness, disregard for social ethics, environmental issues, and personal fields as an idealistic and happiness-oriented school.

Of course, such a view of humans does not mean that Islam is against categorizing and placing humans in different groups and forms, As Allah Almighty says in verse 13 of Surah Al-Hujrat [O mankind Lo! We have created you from male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is knower, Aware. Pickthal translation].

In this verse, while referring to the creation of the first human being from the same parents, namely Adam and Eve, the root of human unity is emphasized, and therefore it does not mean that humans are proud of each other in terms of lineage and tribe.

The author of the sample commentary stated that if Allah, the Exalted, created the characteristics for each nation and tribe to maintain the order of people's social life because these differences are the reason for identification, and without identification of individuals, the order cannot prevail in human society, because when everyone was the same and similar to each other, great chaos would cover the entire human society.(Sarkhil, 2018)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The concept of Islamic countries in political literature and common conversations is sometimes synonymous with the term "Islamic World" and is used interchangeably, although it can be said that the term Islamic World is more general and at the same time an approach based on the belief in the existence of the Islamic religion in that sense. It has been said that most of the ideological boundaries are of interest. However the term Islamic countries has found a more official and practical use. Anyway, apart from the various interpretations of this term, it can be said that Islamic countries include countries that are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. (Abu Al-Fazli Krizi & Sotoudeh, 2018)

In terms of geography, the Islamic world includes vast lands whose main body starts in the form of a rectangle from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and continues to the southwest and northeast of Central Asia and includes smaller units such as Albania which contains the Islamic countries, it has great importance in terms of length and width, it includes about 22% of the total landmass of the earth and large parts of the two continents of Asia and Africa and small parts of the America and Europe. In other words, the Islamic world covers more than 31 million square kilometers, more than a fifth of the land area of the earth.

Officially, 57 Islamic countries are members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and they are divided into three groups: Asian countries (South, Southeast, and Central) with an area of about 9.5 million square kilometers, African countries with an area of about 6.8 million square kilometers, and the group of countries Arabic is divided by 14 million square kilometers. The westernmost member country of the Organization of the Islamic Conference is Guyana in the Americas and North of South America, and the easternmost country is Indonesia, located in Southeast Asia. The northernmost country of Kazakhstan is located in Central Asia and the southernmost Islamic country of Mozambique is located in the south of the African continent. (Sadeghi & Shushtri, 2010)

The proven reserves of 57 Islamic countries include about 900 billion barrels of oil, i.e. 75% of the world's reserves, and 101 trillion cubic meters of gas, i.e. 57% of the world's gas reserves. Regarding the importance of these reserves, it can be said that the Middle East region, as one of the regions of the Islamic world, has made about 62 of the world's oil reserves by 2005, so that this region supplies 31% of the world's oil production daily. In addition, there are many reserves such as copper, phosphorus, tin, gold and precious stones in Islamic countries. (Sadeghi & Shushtri, 2010)

Or, based on other information, it has been shown that the share of Muslim countries in the world's oil reserves is approximately 55%, of which more than 90% is in the hands of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Libya. Further, the share of Muslim countries in the world's gas reserves is less than 50%, of which 90% is owned by Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Indonesia. (US Energy Agency, 2019)

The Islamic countries are geographically dispersed across both sides of the equator, resulting in a wide range of climates and geographical features. This diversity includes lowland and desert areas such as the Great Desert, the Arabian Desert, the deserts of Iran, and Central Asia, as well as mountainous regions like the Atlas Mountains, the Himalayas, the Pamirs and Tian Shan, the Hindu Kush, Alborz, Anti-Taurus, and the Albanian Alps. These varied landscapes contribute to the immense climatic diversity found within Islamic countries. Additionally, the presence of numerous seas, lakes, and rivers further enhances the natural capabilities and resources of these nations.

The population of Islamic countries (according to the latest information is more than one and a half billion) people, and Indonesia with (277,016,678) million people is the most populous Islamic country and Maldives is the least populous Islamic country with (392,593) people. This large population includes about a quarter of the world's population. It can provide a wide market of consumables and resources between Islamic countries. By facilitating international tariffs, such as reducing customs tariffs or with a single currency, the desired goals can be achieved faster.

Along with the introduction and translation of elements and texts of Greek and Roman civilizations, Muslims achieved tremendous success in scientific and intellectual fields such as philosophy, medicine, wisdom, music, and astronomy, to the point where they became the leaders of science, art, and philosophy. The existence of observatories and numerous libraries is proof of this.

Islamic countries are present in the most important international organizations, and since 54 Islamic countries are members of the most important global organization, the United Nations, and make up more than a quarter of its members, they can make important decisions between taking on a prominent and sensitive role. (Sadeghi & Shushtri, 2010)

Convergence is a word that is conceptually opposite to "divergence" and is usually used in the field of human sciences.

Convergence is defined in the Oxford dictionary in two ways:

**One**, the combination of two things in each other so that one becomes an inseparable part of the other;

**Two**, full membership of a person in a society. (Valaiti & Mohammadi, 2010)

The general meaning of convergence is mutual cooperation within an Islamic society that includes all aspects of social life, each person finds the feeling that he is part of the fabric of a society and gives up individual selfishness and extremism. May takes away this feeling of fear only in emergency situations. Therefore, convergence in its general sense is the circle of cooperation within a society that adds to its solidarity and makes its foundation stronger in dealing with the change of good and bad conditions. The injured person is sympathized in the society, the oppressed is supported, the helpless is helped, the weak is pitied, each person is greedy for the benefit of the society, the society respects the dignity of the individual, advises the wrongdoing. If it is done, the command to do good things and the prohibition of bad things will be implemented, and... All this is a symbol of Takaful and convergence in an Islamic society.

Some researchers have defined convergence as follows: "convergence is mutual solidarity between all members of the society, between the government and individuals in order to achieve expediency or avoid harm in good or bad conditions."

So, the meaning of social integration in the economic sector is related to bilateral material cooperation between people within a Muslim society, it is an active and sustainable integration that requires mutual responsibility for public welfare and community development.

In the same way, words such as guarantor and Takaful are included under the meaning of convergence in the books, Takaful is derived from Kafel, kafel means responsible and kafil means guarantor. Takaful also means guaranty or mutual responsibility between two or more than two people. (Al-Marzooqi, 1395)

Economic convergence means increasing interdependence in a region based on indicators such as intra-regional trade and harmonizing business methods, standards and regulations. Economic integration evolves in the form of four types: Free Trade Area, Customs Union,

Common Market and Economic Union. Among them, the customs union is more influential. (Shirkhani & Safaei, 2017)

Convergence in the framework of political science culture refers to a process in which societies give up the will, power of independent guidance of their major and fundamental policies, and try to reach joint and coordinated decisions and transfer decision-making to new central institutions. Leave it. (Hafez Nia and Zarkani, summer 2011)

The terms "union" and "convergence" are often used interchangeably in texts. The word "union," which is derived from the Latin word "unio," is related to the concept of "unity" and the infinitive "union," which means the agreement and joining of multiple entities into one. In the context of economics, a union refers to the creation of an economic zone comprising several countries. In this union, customs regulations and other trade barriers are eliminated among member countries, while common customs tariffs are established for non-member countries. This allows for closer economic cooperation and integration among the member nations. (Emami, summer 2015)

The verses of the Holy Qur'an and the hadiths expressing this are important, which are stated below. There are many Shariah reasons for institutionalizing convergence in Islamic society. Like this saying of Allah In verse 10 of Surah Hujarat, (Translation: Only believers are brothers...).

Faith brotherhood paves the way for a sense of mutual responsibility among members of society. Among these is the saying of Allah Almighty in Surah al-Ma'idah verse 2, (Translation: And cooperate in good deeds and abstinence...),

The Messenger of God, May God bless him and grant him peace, said, "Translation: A believer is a constructive example for a believer that strengthens one another. (Al-Marzooqi, 1395) " Some verses indicate the need for unity among the Islamic Ummah, such as Allah's statement in Surah Anbiya, verse 92. (Translation: These (great prophets) are all one nation (and they have one religion and one plan) and I am the Lord of all of you, so worship me alone (because a single nation, with a single plan, must unite before God)).

There are evidences of the necessity of economic strengthening of the Islamic society and its importance. I will only mention one example; the establishment of Medina market is an example of the emphasis of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, on the convergence and formation of an economic union in the Islamic world. It is stated in a narration that the Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, identified a market and encouraged people to work in it, and ordered those who work in that market, in order to deal with the Bani Qinqaa market, which was very important in Madinah. No tax is charged. At that time, the main commercial center of Madinah was in the Bani Qinqaa area, and this caused the economic dominance of those who were not in the Islamic religion. But today's vast and complex society requires the existence of economic convergence and the formation of a union in which all Islamic countries are members and use new business facilities and methods, in order to reduce their need for exclusive and colonial poles of the world. (Emami, summer 2015)

According to many experts, the process of convergence involves shifting decision-making power from multiple centers to a single center. In this sense, convergence is a voluntary and conscious effort by independent political units, such as governments, to come together and pursue common goals. This may require sacrificing a portion of national sovereignty and practices in order to maximize mutual interests. The aim is to overcome divisive factors, such as extreme national loyalties, strong nationalism, political biases, and a sole focus on national interests. By expanding technical, economic, commercial, cultural, and political cooperation,

countries in the same region can establish a foundation for stability and a shared inclination towards unity.

The formation of the process of convergence and the emergence of an international and regional grouping and formation requires the existence of certain fields and factors, the main of which are as follows:

1. Common cultural and historical characteristics, such as language, historical experience, ideology, religion, race, ethnicity, family and common customs;
2. Natural and geographical unity and the possession of distinctive and integrated geographical units such as peninsula, gulf, island, plateau, continent, sea, ocean, subcontinent, etc., such as the Pacific Union, NAFTA, Organization of African Unity, Persian Gulf Cooperation Council the Union of Black Sea Countries, SAARC;
3. Common threat, including security, economic, political, cultural and Interests, interests and common role such as (Industrial Group 8), (Common European Market, OPEC, etc.);
4. Mutual needs and dependencies in different fields, such as ASEAN and Waco;
5. Dominant power and superior political and geopolitical forces that assume the role of establishment and leadership of convergence, such as colonial countries, world powers;
6. Emotional and political relations of leaders of countries such as the United Arab Emirates Federation;
7. Civilizational dependencies such as Islamic civilization, European civilization, Slavic civilization and the aforementioned fields and factors individually or collectively (combined), have a determining effect on the formation of the convergence process and the emergence of global and international and regional formations have.

Two economic principles, which are social security and social balance, clarify the concept of social justice in the Islamic economic system.

**1. Social security:** In the Islamic economic system, provision of the needs of the people of the society is foreseen in two ways, the intellectual basis and limits of each of them are based on two jurisprudential-economic principles.

**A. General takaful:** It means the mutual responsibility of the members of the Islamic society to provide for each other's vital needs or universal sponsorship and is based on the principle of brotherhood and unity of the members of the Islamic society. This responsibility is a binding obligation, as well as other obligations. Therefore, if the vital needs such as food, heat, clothes... threaten the life of a person or people in Islamic societies, it is obligatory for all Muslims to take action to eliminate the need and danger. With the action of a person or people and meeting the need, the duty is removed from other people. In this context, the government is not irresponsible, and in addition to the duties that it is directly in charge of, it is also responsible for the supervision of the good execution of the rulings and must provide the basis for the implementation of the legal duties of the people. For example, if some people lose their means of living as a result of natural disasters such as the earthquake, it is the duty of all people to provide for their vital needs. Otherwise, the government, in addition to its own duty in this field, is obliged to oblige the members of the society to perform their legal duties.

**B\_ Excellent guarantee:** It is the duty of the government to provide a suitable level of livelihood and means of living for the people of the society, which is done by creating facilities for their economic activities. Its limit is beyond the satisfaction of the necessary needs. The

theoretical and theoretical basis is the guarantee of the high participation of the people of the society in the natural resources and the common right of the society in it, which the Holy Quran has clearly declared.

Translation: He is the One who created everything on earth for you. Surah Al-Baqarah verse 23. For this reason, there is a lot of emphasis on those who are unable to use their rights and are deprived of their rights in the Holy Quran and other sources, and providing their livelihood is considered one of the first uses of tax revenues.

**2. Social balance:** The government's duty to create social balance, which is one of the goals of Islamic economic policy, is based on two facts.

**The first fact:** It is a natural fact, which means that humans are not the same in terms of talent and natural ability, they have different degrees of intelligence and power of initiative. Although the social structure and social conditions are effective in developing the natural talent and ability of a group of people in the society or depriving others of its growth and flourishing facilities, the inherent differences and natural differences of people cannot be ignored.

**The second reality:** The reality is a dream, with the explanation that in the Islamic economic system, work is the source of private ownership. The conclusion that can be drawn from putting these two facts together is that there is a possibility of some people getting rich and social balance being disrupted, and this imbalance can be caused by other means of exploitation and only through work and intellectual differences. Spirit and natural talents should be created. Although the decrees that make the establishment of property rights and priority in the use of natural resources and land subject to the direct work of the individual are effective in preventing the social balance from being upset, but with the emergence of advanced tools and equipment, the possibility of losing the social balance is greater will be.

Are there two distinct realities, the natural and the spiritual? In response to this question, it can be explained that the government possesses powers related to establishing rules and regulations for land and natural resource exploitation. It also plays a role in providing social security through mechanisms like general takaful and guarantees. The government has a responsibility to maintain social balance, which includes implementing fixed taxes like Zakat to ensure collective equilibrium. Additionally, the government is obligated to find a fair and balanced taxation system that promotes prosperity. This approach helps prevent wealth concentration, ensures social welfare, and maintains social balance. (Nouri, 2017).

No	Name of organization/union	member countries	established year	central office/ Headquarters	Aim	Active / Passive
1	Gulf Cooperation Council	Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and United Arab Emirates.	1981	Riyadh	Creating and developing cooperation and communication between member countries in economic, social and cultural fields in order to strengthen relations and achieve unity.	Active
2	Arab Cooperation Council	Iraq, Jordan, Egypt and North Yemen (before the unification of two Yemen's)	1989		Efforts for the economic development of the Arab world.	Passive
3	D-8	Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt and Nigeria.	1997		Economic and social development of the member countries based on principles such as: peace instead of conflict, dialogue instead of confrontation, cooperation instead of colonialism, justice instead of dual methods, equality instead of discrimination, and democracy instead of authoritarianism.	Active
4	Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)	Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.	1985	Capital Baghdad	Improving the standard of living, people's welfare and economic development of the member countries.	Active
5	United Arab Republic	Egypt and Syria	1958	Capital Cairo	The unity of two countries with a single president, a single constitution, a single parliament and a single army.	Passive
6	Arab Federation	Iraq and Jordan	1958		Unity in foreign policy, administrative system, military training and the formation of a single army called the United Arab Army, elimination of preliminary formalities and customs regulations between the two countries.	Passive
7	Arab Union	Egypt, Saudi Arabia,	1945	Cairo	The union is to strengthen the relations between the member states, coordinate their political programs,	Active



		Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen, Libya, Sudan, Maghreb, Tunisia, Kuwait, Algeria, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Mauritania, Somalia, Palestine, Djibouti and .Comoros			maintain the independence and national sovereignty of the members, and pay general attention to the issues and interests of the Arab countries.	
8	Islamic Cooperation Organization or Islamic Conference Organization	57 Islamic countries	1969	Jeddah	The organization is the collective voice of the Islamic world and a guarantee to protect and support the interests of the Islamic world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among different people of the world. Or the expansion of Islamic unity, cooperation between member countries in economic, social, cultural and scientific fields, fighting racial discrimination and colonialism, and supporting the rights of the Palestinian people.	Active

**Table 1. Convergence experiences of Islamic countries**  
(Hafez Niya & Zarkani, summer 2011)

## CONCLUSION

Convergence is a process that involves unity, solidarity, sympathy, compassion, and integration within Islamic society. It entails the Islamic Ummah making joint and coordinated decisions to maintain its position. Islam, as a true religion, brings Muslims together and provides necessary guidelines for their common interests, enabling them to plan and take practical steps in a coordinated and united manner.

The Islamic world holds a unique strategic position between the East and West. It encompasses around 300 important and strategic ports worldwide, representing over one and a half billion people, or roughly a quarter of the global population. Islamic countries possess significant proportions of the world's oil and gas reserves, accounting for less than 65% and 50% respectively. They are also rich in mineral and underground resources. The diverse climates and fertile lands in the Islamic world contribute to its agricultural capabilities. Moreover, 52 out of the 57 member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are also members of the United Nations, giving them influence in important global decisions.

Now is the opportune time for Islamic countries to define their boundaries, understand their position, and achieve greatness and a special status through convergence. By directing resources towards economic development, Islamic nations can eradicate poverty and overcome backwardness. In today's world, economic relations and solidarity are crucial, and a country's success is often measured by its ability to foster relationships and convergence. Given the numerous commonalities within the Islamic world, it is easier for them to work towards this common goal.

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