
Examining The International Relations and Quranic Vision: An Analysis of Principles of Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution

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Abstract

The establishment of peaceful coexistence is of utmost importance in today's world. Every nation strives for the strengthening of its position in international relations. Currently, new terms are being coined, and various organizations and institutions are actively pursuing their objectives in the quest for peace and its long-term effects worldwide. Despite all these efforts, lasting and comprehensive solutions seem elusive. This is because every state is focused on its own interests and is willing to take any measures, even at the expense of human rights, to establish its dominance and achieve its specific goals. In such circumstances, it is imperative to seek guidance from religion and, while adhering to its teachings, ensure the preservation of humanity. In this context, the Quran, an inspired book with timeless teachings, invites us to contemplate and act. In Islam, there are two primary sources guiding us in this world: the Quran, the book of Allah, and the methodology of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This research work explores international diplomacy and conflict resolution at the international level while drawing from both of these sources. Fundamentally, it has been acknowledged that if human dignity and rights are respected, regardless of one's affiliation with any region, group, tribe, race, or area, achieving peaceful coexistence in the world is possible. It is hoped that this research will provide valuable insights and guidance from the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to foster better relations among nations in international diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Introduction

International relations have been of fundamental importance in every era. The aim of the state is not only to establish law and order but also to ensure the welfare and collective justice of society, for which it builds and maintains relationships with other nations. The pressing question arises how can societies be effectively reformed to foster the development of harmonious international relations?

In pursuit of an answer, nations universally turn to religion and science as fundamental avenues for comprehending and shaping reality. Religion is necessary to fulfill the physical and spiritual needs of humanity, while scientific knowledge guides people through observation and experience. The combined influence of religion and science holds immense potential for societal reform and the establishment of robust international relations.

In this regard, the teachings of the Qur'an are timeless and unparalleled. The Qur'an is the only source of true, divinely revealed knowledge and encompasses all aspects of human life. The Holy Qur'an, being a divine book, not only explains the role of the state by subjecting the individual and collective life of human beings to Islam, but also highlights the true spirit of relations between the States.

The Quran, believed to be the divine word of Allah, encompasses timeless teachings and principles, addressing the moral, spiritual, and social aspects of human existence. The Sunnah, comprising the practices and teachings of Prophet Muhammad, serves as a practical guide for implementing the Quranic teachings in daily life. By adhering to these sources of guidance, Muslims seek to align their beliefs, ethics, and conduct with the teachings of Islam, fostering a harmonious and virtuous society.

Islam strongly advocates for its followers to treat other nations and religions with equality, compassion, and tolerance. It emphasizes the importance of not subjecting them to any form of abuse, discrimination, or mistreatment within the Islamic governmental system. The principles extend to safeguarding their lives, wealth, honor, reputation, property, and human rights.

In Quran Allah says “O mankind, we created you from one man and one woman and the divided you into nations and tribes so that you may recognize one another. Indeed, the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious of you. Surely Allah is all knowing, All-wise” (Al- Hujrat, 13).

The Creator divided human communities into nations and tribes, as it is a natural means of fostering cooperation and establishing distinctions between them. Only through this division can families, brotherhoods, tribes, and nations unite to cultivate a shared way of life and collaborate in global affairs.

Arshad Rabbani is:

"If they incline to peace, incline you as well to it" (al-Anfal 8:61).

"Defend with that which is good, so that between you and him there is enmity as if it were a righteous person" (Quran:41:34

(Recompense evil with good, and the person with whom you have enmity will become your warm supporter.)

Therefore, it is an indisputable fact that the formation of international relations originates from the interconnectivity of individuals. These connections have existed since the very beginning of human existence, extending beyond personal ties to encompass households, families, tribes, and nations. Through these interdependent relationships, people from diverse regions have been able to enrich their economic, social, political, and cultural affiliations, resulting in mutual advancement and development.

Findings

The contemporary international system is characterized by complex and multifaceted power relations, which are often characterized by inequality, domination, and oppression. It is also dominated by Western models, often neglects the perspectives and principles of non-Western cultures and religions. In this context, the principles of diplomacy and conflict resolution as envisioned by the Quranic vision offer important insights and perspectives on how to build more just, equitable, and peaceful international relations.

This study aims to address the gap by exploring Quranic vision and its application to diplomacy and conflict resolution. How does the Quranic vision of diplomacy and conflict resolution differ from traditional Western models, and what are the implications of these differences for contemporary international relations. This study focused on how do non-Muslim countries perceive the principles of Quranic diplomacy and conflict resolution, and what are the challenges and opportunities for promoting greater understanding and dialogue on these issues? This study analyzed the importance of Islamic international relations in the light of Quranic teaching. The Holy Qur'an, being a divine book, not only explains the role of the state by subjecting the

individual and collective life of human beings to Islam, but also highlights the true spirit of relations between the nations of the world.

Since one of the major causes of conflicts between nations is the failure of diplomacy. Therefore, in the light of the Qur'anic teachings which are divine, we can improve relations and make the whole world a haven of peace.

Research Methodology:

This comparative research illustrates the Qur'an's concept of diplomacy and conflict resolution in the context of international relations.

The nature of this work is qualitative and based on the collection of information from the authentic sources. The primary data sources employed in this study consist predominantly of secondary sources, such as journal articles, books, and various publications.

To arrive at a robust and practical conclusion, it is essential that these resources are diligently consulted.

Diplomacy and Qur'anic Teaching

As the world continues to change, diplomacy continues to adapt, reflecting the evolving needs and challenges of the international community.

Indeed, the nature of diplomacy can vary in the presence of different political systems and international power dynamics. Factors such as a unipolar, bipolar, or multipolar balance of power, as well as the existence of feudal international rules, can influence diplomatic interactions in modern times.

The history of diplomacy dates back to the origins of human civilization, making it an inseparable part of our collective past. The art of achieving diplomatic goals has been practiced by nations throughout ancient, medieval, and modern times. Throughout history, nations have employed various means and forms of diplomacy to effectively pursue their objectives and navigate the complexities of international relations.

Diplomacy has been an important part of Islam since the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It continued during the periods of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the Umayyad Dynasty, the Abbasid Empire, and the Ottoman Empire. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) followed the teachings of the Quran and respected existing traditions while dealing with other tribes and states. He preferred dialogue and negotiation over war and always acted with justice, honesty, tolerance, and fairness. He never adopted a rigid attitude and believed that peaceful solutions were better than armed conflict. One of the earliest examples of his diplomacy was the Charter (Constitution) of Medina. After arriving in Medina, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) negotiated with different tribes, including the Jewish community, to establish peace and cooperation. These agreements were later written down in a document known as the Constitution of Medina, which is considered a significant historical example of successful diplomacy.

Another important example was the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. When the Muslims wished to enter Makkah, the Quraysh prevented them from doing so. Instead of fighting, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) chose negotiation and signed a peace treaty. Although some terms appeared unfavorable to the Muslims, he showed patience, tolerance, and wisdom. This treaty later proved to be highly beneficial for Islam and demonstrated his exceptional diplomatic skills. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) also acted as a mediator in disputes among tribes and members of the Muslim community. His efforts helped prevent conflicts and promoted peaceful coexistence. Agreements were often made with Arabian tribes to avoid warfare and maintain harmony.

In the seventh year after Hijrah, the Jews of Khaybar revolted but were later brought under Muslim authority. They were allowed to keep their lands, practice their religion freely, and live peacefully after agreeing to pay a fixed land tax.

During the ten years that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) led the Islamic state in Medina, Arab society changed greatly. He appointed representatives and delegates to different tribes and regions to settle disputes and maintain order. This reduced the practice of personal revenge and tribal feuds, while encouraging peace, trade, and economic development.

Contemporary Diplomacy and Political Teaching of Quran

Even though there might be variations between the political teachings of the Quran and modern diplomatic practices, it's crucial to acknowledge that diplomacy is influenced by diverse cultural, historical, and geopolitical factors. The principles found in the Quran can offer valuable insights into ethical governance and justice in contemporary diplomacy, contributing to creating a more inclusive and compassionate international order.

The political teachings of the Quran exhibit certain distinctions from contemporary diplomacy.

- The Quran offers guidance on diverse facets of human existence, encompassing governance and political matters.
- It highlights values such as justice, fairness, compassion, and accountability in the behavior of leaders and the functioning of governance.
- The teachings of the Quran prioritize the well-being of society, safeguarding human rights, and the establishment of an equitable and impartial system.
- It draws upon a range of diplomatic tools and approaches to address global challenges, foster cooperation, and resolve conflicts.

Principles of Diplomacy in Quran

To Respect Geopolitics of The Nonaligned Nations

“They wish that you should disbelieve just as they disbelieved so that you may all be alike. Do not, therefore, take allies from them until they emigrate in the Way of Allah, but they turn their backs (on emigration), seize them and slay them wherever you come upon them. Take none of them for your ally or helper. Unless it be such of them who seek refuge with a people who are joined with you by a covenant, or those who come to you because their hearts shrink from fighting either against you or against their own people. Had Allah so power over you and they would have fought against you. If they leave alone and do not fight against you and offer you peace, then Allah does not permit you to harm them. (Al-Nisa 4:89-90)

Peace Loving

“If they incline to peace, incline you as well to it. (Al-Anfal 8:61)

To avoid creating mischief on earth and to establish one's supermacy.

“As for the Adobe of the Hereafter, we shall assign it exclusively for those who do not seek glory on earth nor wat to cause mischief. The God-fearing shall have the best end. (Al-Qasas 28:83)

Friendly attitude toward non-aggressive nations.

“Allah does not forbid that you be kind and just to those who did not fight against you because of religion, nor drove you out of your homes. Surely, Allah loves those who are equitable. (Al-Mumtahina 60:8)

Reciprocal Attitude of Goodness

“Can the reward of goodness be any other than goodness? (al-Rahman 55:60)

Not to exceed while responding to a hurt caused by others.

“Thus, if someone has attacked you, attack him just as he attacked you, and fear Allah and remain conscious that Allah is with those who guard against violating the bound set by him. (Al-Baqara 2:194)

- “Make no mischief on the earth after it has been set in good order” (al-Araf 7:85)
- “And fulfill the covenant, for you will be called to account regarding the covenant. (al-Isra 17:34)
- “Do not revile those other than Allah whom they invoke. (al-Anam 6:108)
- “Do not kill any person whom Allah has forbidden to kill, except with right.” (al-Isra 17:33)

Respect for agreement.

“Behave in a straight manner with them so long as they behave with you in a straight manner for Allah loves the God-fearing.” (Al-taubah 9:7)

“And recall when you were encamped at the nearer end of the valley (of Badr) and they were at the farther end and their caravan was below you (along the seaside). Had you made a mutual appointment to meet in an encounter, you would have declined. (Al-Anfal 8:42)

Honesty and Righteousness in Human Affairs.

“Do not make your oaths a means of deceiving one another. (al-Nahl 16:94)

Internal Justice

“And do not let the enmity of any people move you to deviate from justice. Act justly, that is nearer to Allah-fearing.” (al-Ma'idah 5:8)

Conflict Resolution and Qur'an

In the context of international relations, Islam wants to promote human and moral values among nations. In the Holy Qur'an, stories of past nations have been narrated in many places so that lessons can be learned from them.

Islam has a great religious, political, social and spiritual movement which the world has witnessed as it spread from Arabia to the east and west and the Islamic government dominated more than half of the world for a long time. The society was formed on the basis of justice and fairness by removing man from the slavery of man. Fundamental rights, freedom of belief and their protection were guaranteed. Political, economic and social differences were eliminated. Distinctions of color and caste were erased, from the status of slaves to the emancipation of women, giving rise to a system where principles and constitution took precedence over everything.

Islam has strongly urged its followers to deal with other nations and religions with equality, compassion and tolerance, and not to treat them with any kind of abuse, discrimination in the Islamic government system. Their life and wealth, honor and reputation, wealth and property and human rights should be protected.

In the present era, when we analyze the relations between nations, it becomes evident that each nation, in one way or another, seeks to gain advantages at the expense of other nations to achieve its objectives. The question is, despite efforts made at the national and international levels to improve relations for the betterment of all, why do nations not abide by principles and regulations when it comes to seeking power and influence? In this context, we need to consider the following matters for reflection:

- Nations' pursuit of interests often involves seeking dominance or control over others.
- The lack of adherence to principles and norms when seeking power.
- Overlooking regulations and established norms in the quest for authority.
- The relentless search for self-interests.
- The ultimate goal of maximizing benefits for one's own nation.

It is crucial to analyze these issues in-depth to understand the dynamics of power-seeking and its impact on international relations. Only by addressing these underlying aspects can meaningful progress be made towards more harmonious and cooperative global relations.

To comprehensively analyze inter-ethnic conflicts, a crucial aspect to consider is the examination of religious teachings embraced within the global community by different nations. Each nation's formulation of principles and laws, rooted in their respective religions, plays a significant role in setting them apart from others. Consequently, studying these religious affiliations within societies provides valuable insights into their inclinations and attitudes. Such academic scrutiny allows for a deeper understanding of the complexities underlying conflicts among nations and their socio-cultural underpinnings.

Difference Between The Qur'an And Other Divine Books.

“The Qur'an is the last of the divine Books sent down by Allah and has been preserved in the exact form in which it was revealed to Prophet Mohammad (SAW). The holy Quran, being a divine book is still available today in its original Arabic text and remains protected for future generation. It is preserved in the hearts of a large number of Muslims. There are some very pertinent differences between it and the previous Books. As the original texts of many earlier divine books were lost and only translations or partial records remained. In some cases human words became mixed with the original message of God. Another important difference is that many earlier divine books were revealed in ancient languages that are no longer spoken by any community. Today, only a small number of scholars can understand those languages. In contrast, the Qur'an continues to be read, memorized, and studied in its original language by millions of people around the world.

Challenges and opportunities for Muslim countries in applying the principles of Quranic diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Applying the Quranic vision of diplomacy and conflict resolution in Muslim countries presents both challenges and opportunities. The Quran emphasizes principles of justice, peace, and dialogue, offering a framework for resolving conflicts. However, the practical implementation of these principles can be complex due to various factors. Here are some challenges and opportunities:

Challenges:

Political Instability: Many Muslim countries face political instability, which hinders the establishment of consistent diplomatic efforts based on Quranic principles.

Extremism: The rise of extremist groups in some Muslim countries can obstruct diplomatic efforts, as they often reject peaceful dialogue in favor of violence.

Regional Conflicts: Geopolitical tensions and regional conflicts can make it difficult for Muslim countries to adopt Quranic principles in their diplomacy, especially when international interests are involved.

Economic Disparities: Economic disparities within and between Muslim countries can lead to resource-based conflicts, making it challenging to apply Quranic principles of justice.

Interpretation Differences: Different interpretations of Quranic teachings can lead to disagreements on how to implement diplomatic solutions, creating internal divisions.

Opportunities:

Islamic Diplomacy: Muslim countries have an opportunity to develop a unique brand of diplomacy grounded in Quranic principles, emphasizing justice, fairness, and peace.

Cultural and Religious Ties: Shared cultural and religious ties can facilitate diplomacy and conflict resolution among Muslim countries, fostering cooperation.

International Mediation: Muslim-majority countries can play a role in mediating conflicts in the broader Muslim world and beyond, drawing on Quranic values to promote peace.

Humanitarian Initiatives: Muslim countries can leverage their resources and influence to engage in humanitarian efforts, addressing root causes of conflicts and promoting Quranic values of compassion and justice.

Education and Awareness: Promoting education and awareness about Quranic principles of diplomacy and conflict resolution can help shape public opinion and encourage leaders to adopt these principles in practice.

Interfaith Dialogue: Engaging in interfaith dialogue and cooperation can help Muslim countries to promote peace and understanding in regions with diverse religious communities.

International Partnerships: Collaborating with non-Muslim countries and international organizations that share similar values can enhance the effectiveness of Quranic-based diplomacy.

In conclusion, while there are challenges to applying Quranic principles of diplomacy and conflict resolution in Muslim countries, there are also significant opportunities to promote peace, justice, and dialogue within and beyond their borders. Achieving these goals will require a concerted effort from governments, civil society, and religious leaders to bridge the gap between Quranic ideals and practical diplomacy.