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Some Thoughts on the Road to Islamic Solidarity

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Abstract

Having diagnosed the condition of the Islamic world as one suffering from political divisions, economic disparities, cultural parochialism and sectarianism, the author calls for a return to the Islamic concept of *ta'aruf*—i.e., the mutual familiarity and acceptance of all Muslims within the ummah. Four broad areas to implement *ta'aruf* are explored including education, travel, the hajj and language. The article concludes with some political and economic recommendations to pave the way for Islamic solidarity.

Keywords: Islamic solidarity, *ta'aruf*, Islamic education, hajj, Arabic language, Sunni-Shia relations.

Introduction

The first step towards unity is in the diagnosis of the general Islamic condition in the world today. Unfortunately, the diagnosis does not look good. The Islamic world in our time and generation is a world of political divisions, economic disparities, cultural misunderstandings, and sectarian schisms. Any attempt to consolidate the Islamic peoples of the world will be futile if these facts are ignored. Therefore, from the outset, we must acknowledge that we, the Muslims from the lands of the Orient to the lands of the Occident are divided, dispersed and segregated, and this is a fact beyond question or apology.

The Islamic world has imposed on itself a network of over sixty nation states. In the past century or so, this meshwork of nation-states has only worked to alienate Muslim peoples from each other. In this

regard, the passive acceptance of these nation-states is a main contributor to the overall condition of division among Muslim peoples and societies. The Islamic world also finds itself suffering from a common human problem that relates to class stratification.

Within this serious social bifurcation, the affluent upper classes in Islamic societies are out of touch with the impoverished lower classes. This contributes to an internal self-inflicted malaise only to feed the centrifugal divisions that tear apart any ordinary human society. In addition, the Islamic world is sliced along cultural lines. A particular culture in some regions of Asia or Africa can become so dominant that it assimilates Islam into its own limited paradigm, thereby substituting the cross-cultural tenets of Islam with its own self-centered cultural norms and priorities.

In this way, a particular culture more or less becomes "Islam", in the eyes of its own people and constituents, or at least indistinguishable from it. And finally, but not exhaustively, sectarianism is a crucial element of contemporary Islamic disunity. Although Muslims make up approximately two billion of the world's population, this number diminishes when they are labeled "Sunni" or "Shia", and even more so, when the many schools of thought or sub-schools are considered. The same is the case even at the local level when a regional "sheikh" or an "imam" or some "scholar" of sorts assumes the mantle guide, and instead of contributing to an Islamic feeling of integration and consolidation with the larger assembly, congregation or the ummah, embarks on a course of adding yet another splinter to the general adverse divisive state of affairs that the Muslims already find themselves in.

The above political, economic, cultural, and sectarian derelictions have rendered the two billion Muslims in the world consumers of the many divisive strategies and commodities that are presented to them. In the nature of things, this cannot go on for much longer. The past century, to be sure, has visited Muslim peoples with many a military invasion, economic strangulation, cultural alienation, and sectarian tension. That being the case, is there a solution to this state of division? We do not claim to have a magic answer to that, but we can shed some guiding light on a passageway out of this divisive status quo.

Taking a look at the larger picture, we suggest that Muslims everywhere—from whichever nation-state they inhabit, belonging to whichever class of society, identifying with whichever culture, and living within the paradigm of whichever sect—agree on and enhance the concept of ta'aruf. This is a Qur'anic and hence an Islamic concept, which demands that human beings get to know each other. The fuel for division is precisely the lack of knowledge or the misrepresentation of it with regard to other Muslims. If the concept of ta'aruf becomes a salient and rooted feature of Islamic societies and peoples worldwide, then one can hope that the justifications for nation-states, class divisions, cultural clashes, and sectarian misunderstandings will diminish—and in the long run, disappear altogether.

It shames us to know that many Muslims are familiar with European and American societies but are largely unfamiliar with Asian and African ones. Many Muslims plan their vacations, tourist activities and marketing projects within Europe and America. There is no "open-channel" of communication and transportation among the Muslim peoples themselves. An Egyptian Muslim, for example, knows much

more about Britain, the United States and France, than he does about Pakistan, Malaysia, Turkey or Iran. An Arab Muslim is more aware about the Latino minority in America than he is about the Muslim minority in China. A Turkish Muslim has an extensive understanding of European peoples, for which he is quite pleased with, but does not give much attention to the plight of Muslims in Central Asia or Eastern Asia, even though there are many more reasons for doing so.

Breaking down the psychological and cultural barriers among Muslims would, of course, be much easier if there were no political obstacles in the way. Nevertheless, it is our opinion that if efforts are placed in four keys areas, it will help us move in the right direction. These include: 1) education, 2) travel and tourism, 3) the hajj, and 4) the Arabic language.

Education

Our proposal is that all schools within Islamic countries remodel and refocus their social science curricula in order to give greater emphasis on the study of the various aspects of the Muslim world. Over time, it is hoped that a sufficient reservoir of information and interesting facts be accumulated regarding the different Islamic countries and their peoples, so that, in the end, an Egyptian Muslim will be thoroughly versed with and aware of all other Muslim countries and peoples the way he knows and is familiar with his own people. Of course, the same applies to all Muslims—Pakistanis, Turks, Persians, Arabs, etc.

For this to succeed, such changes must be applied to all the different levels of education from the elementary stages all the way to post-graduate studies. Government programs, scholarships, grants and research budgets must be allocated to the revamping of the social sciences throughout the Islamic world. No doubt, a program along this line will definitely run into difficulties and opposition from the political and economic elites, as well as from the cultural and sectarian gentries.

As they stand, institutions such as the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) do not seem to have the insight to develop such strategies nor the will to implement them through their member states. As for secular governments, they are most definitely hostile to the above proposal due to its Islamic emphasis. These guardians of the segregationist status-quo in Islamic territories cannot see the syllabi in history, geography, sociology and other social sciences revamped. Nevertheless, the call is to move towards a greater Islamic reality that goes beyond the “nation-state”, the economic class, the cultural background, or the sectarian indoctrination that all contribute to the multiple divisions of what is supposed to be one ummah.

Travel and Tourism

Another channel for reintegrating the ummah is to facilitate travel and tourism within the Islamic world. Any Muslim, who still values the social and ethical tenets of his faith, will agree that it is better to travel to the vast and exciting destinations within the Muslim world as part of one’s holiday plans instead of going

to the “red-light” districts of the casinos and amusement parks in America and Europe where one is often forced to compromise one’s own faith and morality. Islamic culture within the Muslim lands is deep, rich, versatile, and multifaceted and its territory is geographically vast enough to contain both summer and winter destinations. Moreover, travelling between and within Islamic lands allows Muslims to strengthen the bond of similarities and to discover, first hand, their larger social identity and character.

All this, of course, requires the ease of movement and transportation. A new grid of highways, an increase in air-travel destinations, and an expansion in other routes of navigation are only some of the changes that are required. One can only imagine twelve-lane highways between and among the major Islamic cities of interest, where people will have the freedom to move between these holy cities without restriction, or a reward program offering sincere and hard-working students, professionals and civil servants travel discounts to destinations across the Islamic world. Of course, like the previous step, political will and courage is needed for this to succeed. Governments in Islamic lands will have to drop visa requirements when Muslims want to visit.

No doubt, governments of the type that exist today are not going to favor this free and sizable flow of people from one country to the next. Unfortunately, many of the regimes today much prefer wealthy Western tourists travelling in their lands than their Muslim counterparts. But Muslim minds are going to have to think along such lines in order to put social pressure on these types of administrations.

The Hajj

The next channel for *ta‘aruf* is the hajj. This “institution” is one decreed by Allah (swt), the Most Gracious, Who designated this annual occasion as an open-ended meeting for all types of Muslims from the far corners of the earth. Before nationalism, sectarianism and our modern-day corporate culture, the hajj was the Islamic “melting pot” and the grand occasion of *ta‘aruf*. It was an open university for religious, social, economic, and political inquest and appeal.

This aim of the hajj dates back to the time of the Prophet (S), the first generation of Muslims, and Muslims who never lost sight of this central Islamic concern. In fact, the Prophet (S) used the opportunity of hajj to deliver his farewell speech (khutbah al-hajjah al-wada’) during his last hajj where he elucidated on the teachings and principles of Islam. It was the responsibility of the successors of the Prophet (S) to continue the same tradition during this season.

From the beginning, pilgrims would get to know each other and acquaint themselves with their fellow Muslims, no matter what part of the Islamic cultural mosaic they belonged to. But it wasn’t just the average Muslims who would gather for the pilgrimage; the hajj also brought together various individuals in leadership positions. In fact, it was during the hajj that the Caliph would have the opportunity for personal and face-to-face meetings with other governors of the Islamic empire, with the aim of facilitating shura (decision-making interaction) and the exchange of administrative opinions that concerned the Islamic public interest. The Islamic government would solicit advice and counsel for future

administrative decisions in general from this grand congregation of hajj.

The hajj was also a meeting place of ideas, a spectacular arena of opinions, and a university the likes of which the world has never known. Scholars of hadith would meet during the hajj to compare their narration of the hadith, while students seized the opportunity to meet with these renowned scholars. The fuqaha gathered each year during this time to compare and contrast their "better judgment" with their peers. If there was something called the "socialization of knowledge" it was there and then in the way that people interacted during the hajj. Pilgrims would not be prohibited from probing the intellectual depths of their own colleagues. In this "break-the-barrier" get-together, we have the example of Abu Hanifah, who after having an intellectual discussion with Malik during the blessed opportunity of hajj, would describe him with the words, "*ma ra'aytu asra'a minhu bi jawabi sahih*" ("I did not see anyone faster than him in responding correctly"). From that same encounter, Malik's description of Abu Hanifah is equally complimentary: "*innahu la faqih*" ("Indeed, he is a scholar"). The hajj was also where Abu Hanifah would meet Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and his son Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, and where al-Shafi'i would encounter Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

The long and short of it is that the hajj was the stimulating and extraordinary public meeting place for open discussion. Unlike today, Islamic ta'aruf was an essential component of this pilgrimage. If those first contemporaries combined their rituals with their responsibilities, their devotion with their deeds and their relationship with Allah with their relationship with each other, then surely it can be repeated today.

The reorganization of the hajj is going to need an Islamic government that will make this possible. Unfortunately, the current laws and policies serve only to alienate the haramayn in Mecca and Medina. We have not seen, nor do we expect to see the current government in Arabia interested in bringing together the qualified Islamic scholars who are capable and willing to stimulate and reinitiate the hajj as it has been elucidated in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Mecca, hundreds of years ago, used to be the geographical mind and heart of the Muslim masses. Today, and we say this with regret and sorrow, Mecca has become not only intellectually impoverished but also socially fragmented as pilgrims are driven in and out by royal feat and imperial decree. We may venture further and say that there are probably no governments in the Muslim world who have the courage and wisdom to reinitiate a hajj of ta'aruf—a hajj that will radiate with Islamic conferences, symposia and the cross-fertilization of ijtihad. Mecca—our cradle, our retreat, and our *qiblah*—needs the minds of its sons, the scholars, and intellectuals in all fields of knowledge, "that they may witness the benefits for them, and mention Allah's Name during the known days over the livestock He has provided them."

The hajj is so important and crucial for Islamic familiarity, togetherness and understanding that its meaning and cogency in our social selves must be reconstructed. The first thing we must realize is that it will take time for us to know each other. We cannot come together in a day or two nor a week or two, during what the administration may officially define as "the hajj period" and expect an element of *ta'aruf* therein. Perhaps for this reason, as well as others, the hajj has been defined, according to the Qur'an as

a matter of months:

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ

The hajj is in months well-known. 2:197

For how are we to know each other if we are stampeded into and then stampeded out of the hajj? Who is willing to open up the time-span of the hajj? Who is willing to challenge the official policies that have chained Mecca and Medina and to replace them with the commands and directives from the Divine Writ and the Impeccable Prophet (S)?

Beyond the hajj, we have the *'umra*. This is the minor hajj which may be performed by willing and able Muslims at any point throughout the year. The *'umra* is a constant contributor to Islamic inter-familiarization and strategic unity of purpose. Year-round, a stream of people travel to Mecca to perform their *'umra* rites, numbering in the millions, if not tens of millions. One would hope that the current government does not place any time-restrictions on this movement of the masses of the Muslims.

The hajj and *'umra* in our current times are anemic. It is a sad fact that there are only one or two airports to receive and send-off the flow of people who flock to this sacred sanctity, that there are only four-lane highways to and from Mecca and Medina, instead of fourteen-lane ones, that there are no train transportation routes augmenting the other modes of transportation to and from these holy sites, and that there is only one seaport to process those who travel by sea. This is yet another manifestation of how the cities of Mecca and Medina have become estranged to their own people—the ummah of Muhammad (S).

Something is fundamentally wrong with us when Muslims become the victims of massacres in countries within Asia, Africa and Europe—sometimes at the hands of other Muslims—and yet we cannot express our solidarity with each other, our love for each other, and our care for each other in our common city and our consolidating *qiblah*!

The Arabic Language

The final channel for solidarity and unity is a common language. We know that there are cultures, ethnicities and sects who are sensitive to this issue, but the task is to look beyond these sensitivities. In saying what we do, we do not speak with any trace of nationalism or loyalty to cultural or ethnic interests; rather, we speak thoroughly our Islamic conscience on this matter, and say, with humility and meekness, that the Arabic language—the language of the Qur'an—has to serve as the medium for the communication of feelings and ideas amongst the Muslims. Today, for all intents and purposes, English has become the lingua franca of the world. Why is it that Arabic is not so for the Muslims? When we say this, we do not mean that other languages should be annihilated. After all, other languages are an

expression of Allah's will in as far as His creation is concerned:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ

Among his signs is the creation of the Heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colors. 30:22

The rise of nationalism amongst the Muslims is a byproduct of Western colonialism and imperialism. Never was the Arabic language meant to be a nationalist, ethnic or racial language, and in a sense, the voluntary adoption of the Arabic language is meant to undermine nationalism itself. Those "national" heroes who appropriated the language of the Qur'an were in the service of colonialism and imperialism as their policies spread the bug of nationalism inside and outside the Arabic speaking realm. All we are saying in simple terms is that the non-Arabic speaking Muslim be given the opportunity to learn the language of the Qur'an besides his mother tongue. This learning opportunity will serve as a basis for cross-cultural, trans-national and inter-Islamic communication and understanding. There are many peoples in the world who speak two or three languages besides their mother-tongue. Why are we Muslims discouraged or prohibited from acquiring the language of the Qur'an as our second or third language?

It is a sad state of affairs when a Muslim from one part of the world comes across a Muslim from another part, and their common language of communication is English. Ironically, the Hebrew language to a certain extent was rehabilitated and revitalized by reference to the Arabic language, thus giving Zionists their medium of communication, while Muslims have, for all practical purposes, abandoned this common language, and in the process allowed for the usurpers to occupy their lands in Palestine.

The effective and actual consolidation of the Muslims needs a common conversational language, and this must be Arabic. We say this not out of bias or favoritism towards Arabic or of one language over another. The Arabic language is the language of choice here because it is the language of the Qur'an, the language of the Prophet (S), the language of the Imams (AS) and the language of our daily prayers—which is in reality, our communion with Allah (SWT). There is no Muslim who can offer his Salah without reciting the *Fatihah* in Arabic. There is no Muslim who says "*Allahu Akbar*" in a language besides that of the Qur'an. And there is no Muslim who can recite the Qur'an, a devotional recitation, in a language other than Arabic. In fact, it can be argued that a total ignorance of Arabic amounts to a partial ignorance of Islam.

The Arabic language is not only the language of Islamic devotion, the Qur'an and the Sunnah; it is also the language of the Islamic intellectual heritage. All the important Islamic scholars who gained mastery in their respective field of specialization authored their works in Arabic. This is equally true of Islamic exegetes, philosophers, and Sufis. Abandoning the Arabic language is tantamount to deserting the Islamic intellectual legacy and to dispense with the likes of 'Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, Abu al-Faraj al-

Isfahani, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, al-Sharif al-Radhi, Abu Bakr al-Razi and other great personalities. For this and many other reasons, one cannot deny that Arabic is the language of Islam and hence must be the language that will facilitate the process of *ta'aruf*.

Political and Economic Implications

The above is a brief sketch of preliminary ideas that will assist us in closing our ranks and expelling the disturbed thoughts we often have regarding each other. Of course, such a task is not easy due to the many political and social obstacles that prevent *ta'aruf* from becoming a reality. Hence, it becomes the issue of the hour to concentrate on pertinent political issues and developments that have always been a barrier among the Muslims of the world.

From the outset, Muslims must realize that they are duty-bound to have a central Islamic point of reference, a type of political consensus which entails a corresponding economic system. Though we are often eager to join other commonwealths (perhaps due to the less than favorable opinion we have of ourselves), we do not have as of yet an Islamic Commonwealth. The following is a rough outline that will help jump-start an Islamic solidarity movement:

1. Muslims are required by their faith to be independent of other power blocs in the world and to rely on their own potential and power. Never should Muslims depend on their enemies nor refer to them in matters of inter-Islamic disagreements, as the following verse attests to:

لَّا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّـهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّـهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ۝ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّـهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوْهُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَـٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

As for such [***of the God-deniers***] ***as do not fight against you on account of*** [***your***] ***commitment and faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, Allah does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity; verily, Allah loves those who act equitably. Allah only forbids you to turn in alliance towards such as fight against you because of*** [***your***] ***commitment and faith, and drive you forth from your homelands, or aid*** [***others***] ***in driving you forth; and as for those*** [***from among you***] ***who turn towards them in alliance, it is they, they who are truly offenders. 60:8-9***

This Qur'anic "common sense" inhibits and disallows Muslim policy-makers from taking sides with enemies who are guilty of expelling Muslims populations from their countries, or who are guilty of excluding a portion of a Muslim population from their country. They may not ally themselves with allies of such imperialist and Zionist powers. They may not find common purpose with powers who attack Muslims and oppress them. And they may not offer such aggressors and occupiers any of their territories or facilities for such acts of aggression and war.

2. No Islamic head of state may place his confidence in advisers, consultants or experts who have no confidence in Allah and who do not submit to Allah (swt). The Qur'an is very clear on this issue:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بِطَانَةً مِّن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ ۚ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿﴾ هَا أَنتُمْ أُولَاءِ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ وَإِذَا لَقُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۚ قُلْ مُوتُوا بِغَيْظِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّـهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿﴾ إِن تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِن تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّـهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

O you who are securely committed to Allah! Do not ally yourselves with people who are not your kind. They spare no effort to corrupt you; they would love to see you in distress. Vehement hatred has already come into the open from out of their mouths but what their hearts conceal is yet worse. We have indeed made the demonstration [***of this fact***] ***clear unto you, if you would but use your reason. Lo! It is you who*** [***are prepared to***] ***love them, but they will not love you, although you are committed to all of the revelation. And when they meet you, they assert, "We believe*** [***as you believe***]***"; but when they find themselves alone, they gnaw their fingers in rage against you. Say: "Perish in your rage! Behold, Allah has full knowledge of what is in the hearts*** [***of men***]***!" If good fortune comes to you, it grieves them; and if evil befalls you, they rejoice in it. But if you are patient in adversity and conscious of Allah, their guile cannot harm you at all; verily, Allah encompasses*** [***with His might***] ***all that they do. 3:118-120***

3. Muslims are obligated due to their relationship with Allah to solve their own problems in their own court. A Muslim power-faction should never be permitted by the general Muslim public to offend and aggress against any other Islamic power bloc. As the Qur'an says:

وَإِن طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ فَإِن بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّـهِ ۚ فَإِن فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّـهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّـهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

Hence, if two camps of committed Muslims fall to fighting, make peace between them; but then, if one of the two [***camps***] ***goes on acting offensively towards the other, fight against the one that acts offensively until it reverts to Allah's commandment; and if they revert, make peace between them with justice and deal equitably*** [***with them***]***; verily, Allah loves those who act equitably. All committed Muslims are but brethren. Hence,*** [***whenever they are at odds***] ***make peace between your two brethren, and remain conscious of Allah, so that you might be graced with His mercy. 49:9-10***

4. Muslims throughout the world should view an attack on any of their lands to be an attack on all of them. In the early days of Islam, the Prophet (S) waged war against the Byzantines because they had

killed people who, of their own volition, became Muslims.

5. Muslims, the world over, should act in unison whenever other Muslims are humiliated. There should come into being a united Islamic Front that will wage war, if necessary, to liberate Muslims from humiliation and the systemic loss of their civil rights. Again, the Qur'an says:

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّـهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَـٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا

And how could you refuse to fight in the cause of Allah and of the utterly helpless men and women and children who are crying, "O our Sustainer! Lead us forth [***to freedom***] ***out of this land whose people are oppressors, and raise for us, out of Your grace, a protector, and raise for us, out of Your grace, one who will bring us succor." 4:75***

As far as building a strong economic basis between the Muslim nations, the following points should be considered:

1. Islamic natural resources and potentials should be accessible to all Muslims. This applies equally to such natural resources as petroleum as it does to human resources such as professionals and technology.

2. Islamic companies should be independent and financed exclusively from Islamic assets and wealth.

3. There should be an Islamic common currency. This does not mean that local or regional currencies cannot co-exist. In the same way that focusing on a common Arabic language does not diminish other languages, so too an Islamic currency does not exclude other currencies.

4. All customs and tariff barriers should be done away with.

5. Muslim countries should have commercial priorities over other countries.

6. Relocation should be a right of all Muslims living anywhere within the Islamic world.

Of course, implementing these steps and procedures is not an easy task for there are many powers in the world that will not permit such transitions or transformations to happen peacefully. Nevertheless, it is towards these ends that we should exert our efforts and be prepared for the inevitable.

May the Almighty guide the feelings in our hearts, the thoughts in our minds, the transactions in our societies, and the journey towards Him. In Him do we place our trust, with Him do we proceed and unto Him we will return.

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