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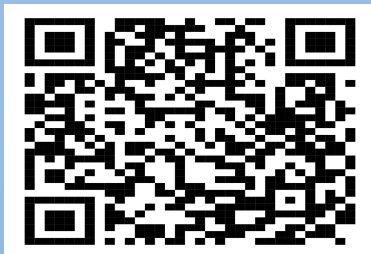
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Geopolitics and Muslim Countries: Navigating Challenges and Opportunities in Contemporary International Political Dynamics

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the role of Muslim countries in global geopolitics and how they navigate challenges while capitalizing on opportunities amid the international political dynamics in the era of globalization. As the world order undergoes significant shifts, Muslim countries face complex issues such as geopolitical tensions, regional conflicts, major power interventions, and changing strategic alliances. However, they also have opportunities to strengthen their diplomatic and economic positions through international collaboration, investment, and active roles in multilateral organizations. Using a qualitative analysis approach, this research examines foreign policy, diplomatic strategies, and international relations dynamics of Muslim countries, including their role in organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and their relations with major powers like the United States, China, and Russia. The study employs a qualitative analysis approach with a literature review method. Data is sourced from secondary materials such as academic journals, books, policy reports, and articles relevant to the geopolitical issues of Muslim countries. This approach enables the researcher to analyze various foreign policies, diplomatic strategies, and dynamics in international relations. The data is then analyzed using a descriptive-analytical approach to explore the role of Muslim countries in global geopolitics and how they tackle challenges while leveraging opportunities in the era of globalization. The findings indicate that despite significant challenges, Muslim countries possess the potential to act as critical players in global geopolitics if they can optimize available opportunities, such as enhancing economic cooperation and diplomacy based on shared interests.

Keywords: Contemporary International Political, Diplomatic Strategy, Geopolitics, Globalization, Muslim Countries.

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, global geopolitical dynamics are undergoing significant transformations.¹ Muslim countries, spanning regions such as the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, face substantial political and economic stability challenges. Regional conflicts, interventions by major powers, and multidimensional diplomatic tensions often shape their role in the international order. It is crucial to analyze how these countries navigate international relations and whether they can capitalize on available opportunities amidst the complex geopolitical landscape. Historically, Muslim countries have played a significant role in global geopolitics, mainly due to their strategic positions along crucial trade routes and vast energy and natural resources reserves.² However, internal political instability, inter-state conflicts, and interventions from major powers like the United States and Russia have frequently constrained their potential. This reliance on external forces often weakens their diplomatic standing, ultimately affecting their capacity to formulate independent and proactive foreign policies. Understanding these dynamics is essential to assess the potential of Muslim countries to emerge as influential actors in the evolving global geopolitical environment.³

On the other hand, global economic developments have opened new opportunities for Muslim countries to strengthen their positions in international geopolitics. Many nations, such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Indonesia, are beginning to leverage their natural resource wealth, foreign investments, and active roles in multilateral organizations such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the G20. However, questions remain about how Muslim countries can seize this momentum to form strategic alliances that could elevate their status in an ever-changing world order. One of the leading legal issues faced by Muslim countries is related to national sovereignty and foreign intervention. Many Muslim nations, particularly in the Middle East, are involved in conflicts fueled by

¹ Javad Etaat dan Hasan Karimi, "Geopolitical analysis of the muslim brotherhood failure in egypt," *Geopolitics Quarterly* 17, no. 62 (2021): 149-181.

² Zhang Shuo, Xi laiwang, dan Gao Junjun, "Impact of natural resource rents on global trade dynamics in RCEP: Economic and geopolitical interdependencies," *Resources Policy* 99 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2024.105365>.

³ Broto Wardoyo, "Dinamika Geopolitik Timur Tengah Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Indonesia," *Jurnal Lemhannas RI* 5, no. 1 (2017): 43-56.

external interference. The conflicts in Syria and Yemen, for instance, illustrate how the involvement of significant powers affects regional political stability and raises international legal concerns regarding human rights and violations of state sovereignty. This issue questions how Muslim countries can maintain their independence and stability amidst external pressures and international legal challenges.⁴

In terms of novelty, this study offers a fresh perspective on the role of Muslim countries in global geopolitics, particularly in the post-globalization era. While much of the previous literature has focused on conflict and tensions⁵, this research explores how Muslim countries can play a more proactive role through diplomacy, economic cooperation, and active participation in multilateral organizations. This study focuses on assessing how these nations can leverage new opportunities to strengthen their positions within an evolving international order. Although many studies examine the international relations of Muslim countries⁶, there is a significant research gap in understanding the diplomatic strategies they employ to navigate challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the globalized world. Earlier research has centered around issues such as conflict⁷, terrorism⁸, and radicalization⁹, with little exploration of how Muslim nations can develop geopolitical strategies rooted in cooperation and multilateral diplomacy. This study aims to fill that gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the foreign policies of Muslim countries in the modern era.

⁴ Prihandono Wibowo, Renitha Dwi Hapsari, dan Muchammad Chasif Ascha, "Pemikiran Geopolitik Islamic State of Irak and Syria (ISIS)," *Jurnal ICMES* 7, no. 1 (29 Juni 2023): 1-22, <https://doi.org/10.35748/jurnalicmes.v7i1.150>.

⁵ Elisabeth Ivarsflaten et.al., "Value Conflicts Revisited: Muslims, Gender Equality, and Gestures of Respect," *British Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 3 (2024): 836-50, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123423000637>.

⁶ Sana Rhoudri dan Lotfi Benazzou, "Adoption patterns of profit-sharing based deposits: empirical evidence from a Muslim majority country," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 15, no. 12 (2024): 3484-3514, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-05-2023-0163>.

⁷ Odeya Schuz dan Nesya Rubinstein Shemer, "Attitudes of Jewish and Muslim Religious Leaders Towards the Declaration of Principles as a Test Case for Judaism and Islam between Peace and Conflict," *Religions* 15, no. 10 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15101193>.

⁸ Michael Savelkoul, Manfred Grotenhuis, dan Peer Scheepers, "Has the terrorist attack on Charlie Hebdo fuelled resistance towards Muslim immigrants in Europe? Results from a natural experiment in six European countries," *Acta Sociologica (United Kingdom)* 65, no. 4 (2022): 357-73, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00016993221088447>.

⁹ Anselm Hager dan Kunal Sharma, "Can religious norms reduce violent attitudes? Experimental evidence from a Muslim-Christian conflict," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 40, no. 2 (2023): 134-61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/07388942221077914>.

Additionally, Muslim countries face challenges in balancing relationships with major powers such as the United States, China, and Russia. In many cases, these nations find themselves caught in bipolar or multipolar dynamics, which limit their ability to act independently on the global stage.¹⁰ The research questions raised in this study focus on how Muslim countries can develop more independent and sustainable geopolitical strategies amid competition between major powers. This inquiry is particularly relevant as many Muslim nations are exploring alternative strategic alliances to enhance their position in the international order. Another critical question is to what extent multilateral organizations like the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) can play a more significant role in strengthening diplomacy and cooperation among Muslim countries. While the OIC holds great potential as a diplomatic platform, its effectiveness is often questioned. Therefore, The second research question is how Muslim countries can utilize the OIC as a collective diplomatic tool to address global challenges, including security, economy, and human rights. In the context of economic cooperation, many Muslim countries are increasingly investing in strategic sectors such as energy, technology, and infrastructure. These investments create new opportunities to strengthen their geopolitical positions through closer economic ties with developed nations. The third research question explores how Muslim countries can capitalize on global economic opportunities to build stronger strategic alliances and increase their influence on the international stage. Considering these challenges and opportunities, this research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the role of Muslim countries in global geopolitics. The approach is expected to fill the gaps in previous research and offer new insights into how Muslim nations can adapt and thrive in the ever-evolving international landscape.

METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing a literature review as the foundation for analyzing the role of Muslim countries in global geopolitics. The data sources include a variety of secondary literature, such as academic journals, books, policy

¹⁰ Muhammad Almalik, "Refleksi Politik Islam Kontemporer di Negara Dunia Pertama," *JISIP UNJA (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Ilmu Politik Universitas Jambi)*, 1 November 2022, 20-31, <https://doi.org/10.22437/jisipunja.v6i2.20387>.

reports, and relevant media articles. The selected literature focuses on foreign policy, international relations, and geopolitical issues involving Muslim countries at regional and global levels. Data collection was conducted by searching and selecting relevant literature, with inclusion criteria based on topics related to diplomatic policies, geopolitical strategies, and the role of multilateral organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The literature that explores the relationships between Muslim countries and major powers such as the United States, China, and Russia was also analyzed. This study pays special attention to the role of Muslim countries in international agreements, strategic alliances, and their involvement in resolving regional conflicts. Once the data was collected, it was analyzed using a descriptive-analytical approach, aiming to identify key patterns, connect core concepts, and provide a deeper understanding of Muslim countries' diplomatic strategies and geopolitical roles in addressing global challenges and opportunities.¹¹ This analysis aims to illustrate the patterns of international relations formed by Muslim countries and evaluate the effectiveness of their diplomatic strategies amidst the dynamics of global geopolitics. The data collected is analyzed comparatively to identify the challenges and opportunities Muslim countries face in enhancing their position on the international stage, whether through economic cooperation, diplomacy, or active participation in multilateral organizations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Global Geopolitical Dynamics and the Position of Muslim Countries

The dynamics of global geopolitics are continuously evolving alongside economic, military, and political power shifts. Muslim countries in vital strategic regions such as the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia play a significant role in global geopolitics. These regions are rich in natural resources, particularly oil and gas, which attract major global powers like the United States, Russia, and China. However, internal dynamics within many Muslim nations are often marked by domestic conflicts and sectarian tensions, which impact their standing on the international stage. Shifts in global geopolitics are also evident in the changing alliances within the Middle East, where countries like Saudi Arabia

¹¹ Matthew B Miles dan A. Michael Huberman, *Analisis data kualitatif : buku sumber tentang metode-metode baru* (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press, 2014).

and the United Arab Emirates have sought closer diplomatic ties with global powers, including Israel. The normalization of relations, known as the Abraham Accords, reflects political pragmatism to strengthen their positions in facing regional challenges, particularly threats from Iran. Iran, with its Shia leadership and distinct political agenda, continues to be a critical factor in regional dynamics, primarily through its expansionist policies in Yemen, Syria, and Lebanon.¹²

Outside the Middle East, Muslim countries in Southeast Asia, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, play distinct roles in global geopolitics. Indonesia, as the most populous Muslim-majority country in the world, often adopts a neutral stance in international conflicts, focusing more on multilateral issues like climate change and global peace. Nevertheless, Southeast Asian Muslim nations maintain close ties with the global Muslim community, particularly concerning solidarity with Palestine and economic cooperation through the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).¹³ The presence of Muslim countries in Africa, such as Egypt and Algeria, adds an essential dimension to global geopolitics. With its strategic position at the Suez Canal, Egypt plays a crucial role in international trade, while Algeria is a key energy supplier for Europe. Political instability in several African countries, such as Sudan and Libya, presents significant challenges in maintaining regional stability, affecting international economic and security dynamics.¹⁴

In general, the position of Muslim countries in global geopolitics is influenced by internal and external factors. On the one hand, they must address domestic challenges such as corruption, political instability, and economic inequality. On the other hand, they face pressures from global powers seeking to maintain or expand their influence in these strategic regions. Additionally, ideological factors, particularly related to the spread of radical beliefs, also come under scrutiny in the international relations of Muslim countries. The relationships between Muslim nations and major powers like the United States and

¹² N. Bakare, *Arab-Israel normalisation of ties: Global perspectives*, Arab-Israel Normalisation of Ties: Global Perspectives, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-7765-9>.

¹³ M. Negrón-Gonzales, "Organization of Islamic cooperation (OIC)," dalam *International Organizations and the Implementation of the Responsibility to Protect: The Humanitarian Crisis in Syria*, 2015, 90-109, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315709642>.

¹⁴ Ahmad Ash Shiddieqy, Padlan Padil Simamora, dan Dinda Difia Madina, "Contemporary Islamic Politics in Tunisia: The Journey of Islamic Democracy Post-Arab Spring," *MILRev : Metro Islamic Law Review* 3, no. 1 (11 April 2024): 119-40, <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v3i1.8976>.

Russia reveal a complex dynamic. For instance, the United States has a long history of intervention in the Middle East, while Russia seeks to strengthen its influence through involvement in the Syrian conflict and alliances with Iran. Meanwhile, China is becoming increasingly aggressive in expanding its influence in the Muslim world, mainly through the Belt and Road Initiative, which offers significant investments to Muslim countries in Asia and Africa.¹⁵

Additionally, global geopolitical dynamics are increasingly influenced by the rise of non-state groups, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, which have transnational agendas. Although the influence of these groups has begun to wane, they still pose a serious threat to political stability in several Muslim countries. Armed conflicts triggered by these groups also impact the perception of the Muslim world on the international stage, which is often associated with terrorism and extremism.

The position of Muslim countries in the world is further affected by intra-Muslim solidarity, which is often fragile. Sectarian differences between Sunni and Shia Muslims and varying political interests among states frequently hinder the achievement of political unity among Muslim nations. Despite efforts at cooperation through organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Arab League, the challenges they face remain substantial, particularly in formulating joint policies on global issues.¹⁶ Amid all these challenges, there are also opportunities for Muslim countries to strengthen their position on the international stage. Active engagement in multilateral forums, such as the UN and G20, and economic strengthening through diversification away from oil dependency represents one viable strategy. Additionally, economically and militarily strong countries like Turkey and Saudi Arabia can take on a leadership role in shaping a new world order.¹⁷

¹⁵ Suud Sarim Karimullah, "The Implications of Islamic Law on the Rights of Religious Minorities in Muslim-Majority Countries," *MILRev : Metro Islamic Law Review* 2, no. 2 (9 November 2023): 90-114, <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v2i2.7847>.

¹⁶ Saeid Naji, "Geopolitics of the Islam World and world Leadership in the post-Cold war geopolitical developments," *diakses* 23 Oktober 2024, https://www.academia.edu/3229265/Geopolitics_of_the_Islam_World_and_world_Leadership_in_the_post_Cold_war_geopolitical_developments.

¹⁷ Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *Globalization and Geopolitics in the Middle East: Old Games, New Rules* (London: Routledge, 2007), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203962534>.

Overall, the dynamics of global geopolitics indicate that Muslim countries find themselves at a crossroads between domestic challenges and external pressures. To maximize their position, a comprehensive strategy is needed to strengthen internal stability while forging mutually beneficial international alliances. More excellent stability and closer cooperation among Muslim countries will be vital in enhancing their role in the global geopolitical arena.

Geopolitical Challenges Facing Muslim Countries

Muslim countries are confronted with a range of complex and dynamic geopolitical challenges stemming from internal and external factors. Internally, many Muslim nations struggle with political instability, corruption, and deep-seated socioeconomic disparities. This vulnerability can lead to internal conflicts and foreign interventions. The inability of some governments to address their citizens' needs often triggers protests, revolutions, or even uprisings, as seen in the Arab Spring. If not managed effectively, these tensions can weaken the positions of Muslim countries in international relations. Additionally, sectarian differences, particularly between Sunni and Shia factions, continue to be a source of division among Muslim nations. Iran and Saudi Arabia, as leaders of their respective camps, often find themselves engaged in rivalries that impact stability in the Middle East. This competition extends beyond political and military dimensions, encompassing ideological and religious influence across the Muslim world. Such sectarian tensions also fuel conflicts in countries like Yemen, Iraq, and Lebanon, which can further jeopardize regional stability.¹⁸

External Factors Impacting the Geopolitical Challenges Faced by Muslim Countries. External factors also play a significant role in Muslim countries' geopolitical challenges. Interventions by global powers such as the United States, Russia, and China in the political and security affairs of Muslim nations often exacerbate existing situations. For instance, the United States has long been involved in conflicts in the Middle East, both through direct invasions, such as in Iraq, and by supporting specific regimes. Meanwhile, Russia, with its

¹⁸ Hersa Syulizar Andien, et.al., "Peran Muslim Dalam Konflik Geopolitik: Analisis Perang Israel-Palestina," *Pendas : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar* 9, no. 2 (28 Juni 2024): 152-68, <https://doi.org/10.23969/jp.v9i2.15182>.

solid geopolitical interests in Syria and alliances with Iran, seeks to maintain its regional influence. Additionally, conflicts triggered by competition over natural resources pose substantial challenges for Muslim countries, particularly those rich in oil and gas. The struggle for control over these resources often involves interference from global powers, which view regions like the Middle East and North Africa as critical to global energy security. However, this heavy reliance on energy exports leaves many Muslim countries vulnerable to fluctuations in oil prices, which can negatively impact domestic economic stability.¹⁹

Moreover, the threats of terrorism and radicalization present severe challenges for many Muslim countries. Groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda have exploited religious narratives to recruit followers and launch attacks, both domestically and internationally. Although ISIS's power has significantly diminished, its radical ideology persists, posing ongoing threats to security and stability in various nations. Counter-terrorism efforts necessitate robust international cooperation; however, they often place Muslim countries in challenging positions, as they must balance maintaining domestic stability while upholding their sovereignty. Furthermore, reliance on military and economic assistance from foreign powers, particularly Western nations, poses a challenge to the hegemony of Muslim states. Many countries in the Middle East and North Africa heavily depend on aid from nations like the United States or global financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank. This dependence is frequently accompanied by political conditions that restrict these countries' ability to make independent decisions, especially regarding foreign policy.²⁰

The advancement of technology and cybersecurity adds a new dimension to geopolitical challenges. Muslim countries, like others, face threats from cyberattacks that can paralyze their vital infrastructure. These cyberattacks are carried out by foreign states and non-state groups with political or ideological agendas. This situation compels Muslim nations to enhance their cybersecurity capabilities, often requiring substantial technological and human resource training investments. Climate change and the scarcity of natural resources,

¹⁹ Armyun Hasibuan, "Negara Dan Kawasan Islam Dalam Kontek Politik Global," *Jurnal At-Taghyir: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Pengembangan Masyarakat Desa* 2, no. 2 (30 Juni 2020): 263–80, <https://doi.org/10.24952/taghyir.v2i2.2725>.

²⁰ Nostalgawan Wahyudi dkk., "Problematika Kekuatan Politik Islam Di Maroko, Sudan, Dan Somalia," *Jurnal Penelitian Politik* 13, no. 2 (30 Desember 2016): 245–60, <https://doi.org/10.14203/jpp.v13i2.564>.

particularly water, further exacerbate the geopolitical challenges many Muslim countries face. The Middle East and North Africa are recognized as some of the most vulnerable regions to climate change, experiencing rising temperatures and increasingly erratic rainfall. Water scarcity often becomes a source of conflict, both domestically and between nations, as seen in the water disputes among Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia regarding the Renaissance Dam on the Nile River. Amid all these challenges, globalization and pressure from the international community regarding human rights issues also add strain on Muslim countries. Many Muslim nations face criticism for human rights violations, including restrictions on freedom of expression, women's rights, and the treatment of minorities. Although this international pressure is often viewed as foreign interference, it significantly influences the diplomatic relationships of Muslim countries with global powers and international organizations.²¹

In summary, the geopolitical challenges faced by Muslim countries are highly complex and multifaceted. They must navigate domestic instability and sectarian divides and manage foreign interventions, the threat of terrorism, and the impacts of climate change and technology. To address these challenges, comprehensive and collaborative strategies are essential at the regional and international levels to foster stability and sustainable development in the Muslim world.

Table 1. Summarizing the Geopolitical Challenges Facing Muslim Countries

Challenge Aspects	Explanation
Internal Political Instability	Many Muslim countries face problems of political instability, corruption, and socioeconomic disparities, which sparked protests and rebellions, weakening their position on the international stage.

²¹ N. Lalah Alawiyah dan Muhammad Sholeh Hasan, "Hak Asasi Manusia Di Dunia Islam: Isu Tentang Hak Perempuan," *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan* 6, no. 2 (11 Agustus 2022): 4142-55, <https://doi.org/10.31316/jk.v6i2.3679>.

Sectarian Conflict	The rivalry between Sunnis and Shiites, especially between Iran and Saudi Arabia, exacerbates tensions in the Middle East and fuels conflicts in countries such as Yemen, Iraq, and Lebanon.
Global Power Intervention	Major powers such as the US, Russia, and China are involved in politics and security in Muslim countries, often exacerbating the situation with geopolitical and economic clapping for influence, especially concerning natural resources.
Dependence on Natural Resources	Oil- and gas-rich countries, such as those in the Middle East, are vulnerable to foreign intervention and oil price fluctuations, which impact their domestic economic stability.
Threat of Terrorism and Radicalization	Terrorist groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda continue to threaten regional stability, even as their strength has diminished. Radical ideology is still spreading and poses a security threat.
Dependence on Foreign Aid	Many Muslim countries depend on military and economic assistance from Western countries, often accompanied by political conditions that limit their sovereignty.
Cybersecurity and Technology	Muslim countries face the threat of cyberattacks from state and non-state actors, forcing them to invest heavily in cyber defense.
Climate Change and Resource Scarcity	The Middle East and North Africa region is particularly vulnerable to climate change, with water scarcity being a source of domestic and interstate conflicts, such as the Renaissance Dam dispute between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia.
International Pressure Related to Human Rights	Muslim countries have often come under international criticism for human rights abuses, including freedom of expression, women's rights, and the treatment of minorities, affecting their diplomatic relations.

Source: Author's interpretation

This table provides an overview of the various internal and external challenges Muslim countries face in global geopolitical dynamics. Muslim countries face complex geopolitical challenges, both from internal and external factors. Internally, many countries are grappling with political instability, corruption, and socioeconomic disparities that weaken their positions, as well as sectarian conflicts between Sunnis and Shiites, especially between Iran and Saudi Arabia, that fuel regional tensions. On the external side, the intervention of global powers such as the US, Russia, and China often exacerbates the situation, especially regarding the scramble for natural resources such as oil and gas. The economy's dependence on natural resources also makes Muslim countries vulnerable to fluctuations in oil prices. In addition, the threat of terrorism from groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda is still a problem, although their strength has weakened. Reliance on foreign aid, often on political terms, undermines the sovereignty of these countries. In the digital era, cybersecurity threats are a new challenge that forces Muslim countries to improve their defense capabilities. Meanwhile, climate change exacerbates the scarcity of resources, especially water, which is often a source of conflict, such as the Renaissance Dam dispute on the Nile. Lastly, international pressure on human rights issues adds to the diplomatic challenges for Muslim countries, especially regarding freedom of expression, women's rights, and the treatment of minorities.

The Significance of Muslim Countries in International Islamic Organizations in Global Geopolitics

Muslim countries have great significance in various international Islamic organizations, especially in the context of global geopolitics. Organizations such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Arab League, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) serve as the primary platform for Muslim countries to coordinate on political, economic, and social issues in the international arena. The OIC, which consists of 57 members, is the largest and most representative organization, formed to strengthen Islamic solidarity, promote peace, and defend the interests of the Muslim world. In global geopolitics, these

organizations serve as the collective voice of Muslims, although internal challenges often limit their effectiveness.²²

The OIC plays an essential role in building political cooperation among Muslim countries, especially in addressing global issues that affect them directly, such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the violence in Syria, and the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar. In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the OIC has consistently supported Palestine and condemned the Israeli occupation, although diplomatic efforts to resolve this conflict often do not result in concrete solutions. However, the OIC's moral and political support for Palestine strengthens the position of Muslim countries in fighting for Palestinian rights in international forums, including at the United Nations (UN).²³

In addition, Muslim countries, through the OIC, are also trying to respond to the challenges that arise in other Muslim-majority areas. For example, the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar triggered a response from the OIC, which prompted the international community to act on human rights abuses experienced by Rohingya Muslims. Although concrete action is still limited, the OIC has succeeded in putting this issue on the global agenda, strengthening the role of Muslim countries in international advocacy. This effort shows how the OIC can be a multilateral diplomacy tool for Muslim nations to respond to global humanitarian issues.²⁴

On the other hand, the Arab League, as a regional organization representing Arab countries, has a narrower focus on the Middle East and North Africa issues. Although it was established to promote Arab unity, political and economic differences among its member states are often a significant obstacle. However, the Arab League remains an important forum in overcoming regional crises, such as the conflicts in Syria, Libya, and Yemen. In global geopolitics, the Arab League has often been a bridge between the Arab

²² Arief Wicaksono, "Islam Politik dalam Politik Global: Sebuah agenda penelitian dalam Studi Hubungan Internasional," *Jurnal Politik Profetik* 1, no. 2 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.24252/profetik.v1i2a2>.

²³ K. Abbas dan Z.S. Ahmed, "Examining the dynamics of Muslim solidarity: A comparison of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League," dalam *Research Handbook on International Solidarity and the Law*, 2024, 297–311, <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781803923758.00017>.

²⁴ Z.S. Ahmed dan S. Akbarzadeh, "Pakistan, Pan-Islamism, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation," *Religions* 14, no. 3 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14030289>.

world and the international community in dealing with regional challenges that have global implications.²⁵

The GCC, which consists of oil-rich countries in the Gulf, also plays a vital role in global geopolitics, especially regarding energy. GCC member states, such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait, greatly influence the world's energy markets and are often strategic partners to significant powers such as the United States and the European Union. Through this cooperation, the GCC strengthens its member countries' economic stability and positions them as essential actors in the global geopolitical arena, especially in maintaining oil price stability and ensuring a stable energy supply.

Although these organizations have great potential to influence global dynamics, differences in interests among their member states are often a significant obstacle. Political and sectarian conflicts among Muslim countries, such as the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, create fragmentation that hinders the achievement of mutual agreements. For example, in the context of the war in Yemen, the GCC countries and Iran have opposite interests, making it difficult for organizations such as the OIC or the Arab League to take a coherent stance.²⁶

Nevertheless, international Islamic organizations remain essential as a forum for diplomacy and negotiation, allowing Muslim countries to collaborate amid existing differences. They also provide a mechanism for smaller Muslim countries to gain international support in dealing with domestic or regional issues. For example, small countries such as the Maldives or Somalia often leverage their membership in the OIC to champion issues that matter to them on the global stage, such as the impact of climate change and sustainable development.²⁷

In addition to their political and diplomatic role, international Islamic organizations also serve as a forum for strengthening economic and development cooperation between Muslim countries. The OIC has initiated various economic and social development

²⁵ M. Sabuj, "The Islamic Conception of Peacebuilding (Hifz Al-Salam) Under the Auspices of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nation's Sustaining Peace Agenda," *Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies* Part F1446 (2023): 151-71, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-38596-4_8.

²⁶ I. Sharqieh, "Can the organization of Islamic cooperation (OIC) resolve conflicts?," *Peace and Conflict Studies* 19, no. 2 (2012): 219-236.

²⁷ T. Kayaoglu, *The Organization of Islamic Cooperation: Politics, problems, and potential*, The Organization of Islamic Cooperation: Politics, Problems, and Potential, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315751467>.

programs to reduce inequality among its member countries. Economic cooperation through the OIC and related agencies, such as the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), helps less developed Muslim countries access financial assistance and technical support to boost domestic development.²⁸

Ultimately, the significance of Muslim countries in international Islamic organizations lies in their ability to unite the voices of the Muslim world in the face of global challenges. Although not consistently effective in addressing all issues, these organizations remain important in strengthening Islamic solidarity, promoting shared interests, and improving the bargaining position of Muslim countries in the international arena. To increase their effectiveness, more vigorous efforts are needed to address internal differences and strengthen coordination between Muslim countries so that they can play a more significant role in shaping a more just and peaceful world order.

CONCLUSION

Muslim countries can develop more independent and sustainable geopolitical strategies despite competition between major powers like the United States, China, and Russia. This independence can be achieved through diversifying strategic alliances, not solely relying on these powers but also fostering strong regional cooperation among fellow Muslim nations. By adopting this approach, Muslim countries can enhance their diplomatic positions and strengthen their influence in the international arena. Multilateral organizations, such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), hold significant potential to serve as more effective collective diplomacy tools, although their current roles remain suboptimal. Muslim countries must leverage the OIC to address global challenges such as security issues, economic stability, and human rights. By strengthening the OIC's capacity and enhancing coordination among its members, multilateral diplomacy can become vital for Muslim countries to bolster their geopolitical standing collectively. In the economic sphere, investments in strategic sectors like energy, technology, and infrastructure open opportunities for Muslim countries to enhance their economic strength. By capitalizing on global economic opportunities, these nations can forge stronger strategic alliances with

²⁸ V.L.G. Castillo dan J.C. Angeles, "Islam and international organizations: The Organization of Islamic Cooperation," dalam *Evolutions in the Law of International Organizations*, 2015, 171-91, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004290198_008.

developed countries and reduce dependence on specific significant powers. This economic cooperation can also serve as a means to reinforce geopolitical positions and increase the influence of Muslim countries on the international stage. Overall, Muslim countries have the potential to play a more significant role in the global order, provided they can optimize multilateral diplomacy, capitalize on economic opportunities, and develop sustainable and independent geopolitical strategies.

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