

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Members, Headquarters

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Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is an intergovernmental organisation of 57 member states spread across four continents. It describes itself as the collective voice of the Muslim world and seeks to safeguard common interests while promoting international peace, harmony, cooperation, and development.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was established in 1969 and is generally described as the second-largest intergovernmental organisation after the United Nations in terms of membership. It works on political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, humanitarian, and human-rights-related issues affecting its member states and Muslim communities worldwide.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) About

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is an intergovernmental organisation representing 57 member states across four continents. It seeks to promote solidarity and cooperation among its members and represents their collective interests on international issues, particularly those concerning the Muslim world.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Headquarters

The headquarters of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It houses the General Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, which coordinates the implementation of OIC decisions and organises summits and ministerial meetings.

OIC Charter

The Charter of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the foundational treaty and constitutional document of the OIC, the second-largest intergovernmental organisation after the **United Nations (UN)**.

- **Amendment:** Originally adopted in 1972, the current amended charter was officially adopted on March 14, 2008, at the Dakar Summit in Senegal.
- **Objective:** The Charter emphasises respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. The Charter identifies the Palestinian cause and Al-Quds as key priorities.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation History

The formation of the OIC is linked to the arson attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem in August 1969. This incident generated strong concern among Muslim-majority countries and led to a summit of Muslim leaders in Rabat, Morocco.

- **Founded (1969):** The OIC was established on September 25, 1969, at the historic First Islamic Summit Conference in Rabat, Morocco, as the **Organisation of the Islamic Conference**.
- **First Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (1970):** The first conference of the Foreign Ministers was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, when the General Secretariat was founded, and Jeddah was selected as the temporary headquarters.
- **First Charter Adopted (1972):** The first OIC Charter was adopted, detailing the organisation's objectives, principles, and institutional framework.
- **Islamic Development Bank (1975):** The Islamic Development Bank was founded to finance socio-economic development initiatives in member states.
- **New OIC Charter (2008):** A revised Charter increased the OIC's mandate to encompass good governance, human rights, sustainable development, and countering extremism.
- **Name Change (2011):** The Organisation of the Islamic Conference was formally renamed the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to reflect its larger role beyond conferences.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Objectives

The objectives of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), as outlined in the OIC Charter, include promoting peace, sustainable development, and collective action on issues of common concern.

- **Strengthen Islamic Unity:** Enhance fraternity, solidarity, and cooperation among member states while safeguarding their common interests and coordinating efforts to address challenges facing the Islamic world.

- **Promote Peace & Protect Sovereignty:** Uphold the principles of self-determination, non-interference, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and peaceful international relations, while supporting member states under occupation in accordance with international law.
- **Support Palestine & Muslim Communities:** Support the Palestinian people's right to self-determination with Al-Quds Al-Sharif (Jerusalem) as its capital and safeguard the rights, dignity, and cultural identity of Muslim communities worldwide.
- **Advance Socio-Economic & Scientific Development:** Strengthen cooperation in trade, economic integration, sustainable development, and information fields, including the long-term goal of an Islamic Common Market.
- **Promote Human Rights & Global Cooperation:** Protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, preserve Islamic values and heritage, combat terrorism, extremism, corruption, and Islamophobia, and promote a unified position in international forums.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Members

The members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) include 57 member states spread across four continents—Asia, Africa, Europe, and South America, representing over 2 billion Muslims worldwide.

- **Asia (27 Members):** Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen
- **Africa (27 Members):** Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda
- **Europe (1 Members):** Albania
- **South America (2 Member):** Guyana and Suriname.
- **Observer States:** Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central African Republic, the Russian Federation, Thailand, and the Turkish Cypriot State.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Structure

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation functions through a multi-tier institutional framework that formulates policies, implements decisions, and promotes cooperation among its member states across political, economic, social, and cultural sectors.

- **Islamic Summit:** The OIC's highest authority, made up of the heads of state and government of its member nations. To decide on the organisation's overarching goals and aims, it convenes every three years.
- **Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM):** The foreign ministers of the member nations, which is the main decision-making body. It convenes once a year to approve the OIC budget, issue resolutions, and carry out Summit decisions.
- **General Secretariat:** The Secretary-General leads the General Secretariat, which has its headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and is in charge of carrying out OIC decisions, organising events, and overseeing daily operations.

- **Permanent Committees:** Specialised committees are in charge of important sectors like information and media (COMIAC), scientific and technological cooperation (COMSTECH), economic and commercial cooperation (COMCEC), and Al-Quds (Jerusalem) matters (Al-Quds Committee).
- **Subsidiary & Specialised Institutions:** The OIC operates institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ICESCO) to implement programmes and strengthen cooperation.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Functions

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation serves as a platform for political, economic, humanitarian, and socio-cultural cooperation among its member states, promoting the collective interests of the Islamic world.

- **Political Cooperation:** The OIC coordinates common positions on regional and global issues through the Islamic Summit and the Council of Foreign Ministers. For example, the 51st Council of Foreign Ministers (Istanbul, 2025) adopted resolutions on Palestine and Israel's acceptance of Somaliland.
- **Conflict Resolution & Humanitarian Assistance:** Through the Islamic Finance Fund (ISF) and affiliated organisations, the OIC organises mediation and coordinates humanitarian aid in areas impacted by war.
 - For instance, it provides relief support for Sudan's humanitarian crisis.
- **Economic and Development Cooperation:** Through institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and COMCEC, the OIC finances infrastructure, health, education, and climate-resilient projects, exemplified by
 - For Example, IsDB's multi-billion-dollar financing for Türkiye's post-2023 earthquake reconstruction and continued support for sustainable development.
- **Counter-Terrorism and Combating Islamophobia:** The OIC strengthens cooperation against terrorism by advancing international initiatives such as the UN International Day to Combat Islamophobia (15 March) and condemning incidents like Qur'an burnings in Europe.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and India

India and OIC share significant economic and people-to-people ties despite India not being a member of the OIC. Their relationship is shaped by strategic engagement with OIC member states, India's large Muslim population, and differences over issues such as Jammu & Kashmir.

- **The 1969 Snub:** India was invited to the inaugural OIC summit in Rabat, Morocco, in 1969, but was disinvited at the last minute due to pressure from Pakistan.
- **Guest of Honour (2019):** In 2019, India participated for the first time in an OIC Council of Foreign Ministers meeting, when the then External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj was invited as the Guest of Honour at the Abu Dhabi session.
- **Bilateral Success:** India has strategically bypassed the OIC as a collective bloc, instead building massive economic and security ties directly with the Gulf and Arab nations.
 - For example, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are key partners in the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) initiative.

- **Indian Diaspora:** Over 10 million Indians reside and work in OIC member nations, especially in the Gulf, making significant contributions through remittances and fostering interpersonal relationships.
- **Kashmir Issue:** India consistently rejects the OIC's locus standi on its internal affairs, stating that the organisation has no mandate to comment on matters regarding sovereign Indian territories.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Criticisms

The OIC faces political, institutional, and geopolitical challenges that limit its effectiveness in promoting unity and addressing issues affecting the Islamic world.

- **Political Divisions:** Consensus and group action are frequently hampered by rivalries among member states, such as the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and Conflicts between Saudi-backed Yemeni government forces and UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) forces in southern Yemen.
- **Weak Crisis Management:** Despite the organisation's stated mandate to protect the interests of Muslims, it has repeatedly failed to make a tangible impact on protracted issues, including the **Israeli-Palestinian conflict** and the humanitarian plight of the Rohingya in Myanmar.
- **Selective Approach to Issues:** The OIC has been criticised for frequently issuing resolutions on Jammu & Kashmir while remaining comparatively muted on issues affecting Muslim communities, such as the Uyghurs in China's Xinjiang.
- **Limited Coordination on Global Issues:** The OIC struggles to coordinate effectively on global challenges like climate change, pandemics, and **cybersecurity** due to varying priorities, resources, and capabilities among member states.
- **Economic Disparities:** Wide variations in the economic capacities of member states, from high-income Gulf countries such as Qatar and the UAE to least-developed members such as Niger, Chad, and Somalia, have constrained deeper economic integration and delayed initiatives like the Islamic Common Market.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Way Forward

OIC can enhance its effectiveness by strengthening institutional capacity, fostering greater unity among member states, and promoting inclusive cooperation to address emerging global challenges.

- **Institutional Reforms:** Strengthen the implementation and monitoring of OIC resolutions by improving the effectiveness of the General Secretariat and specialised institutions.
- **Greater Political Unity:** Promote dialogue and confidence-building among member states to overcome regional rivalries and adopt a more coordinated approach to common challenges.
- **Balanced & Consistent Diplomacy:** Adopt an impartial and rules-based approach to international issues, ensuring consistent responses to humanitarian and geopolitical crises across regions.
- **Deeper Economic Integration:** Accelerate intra-OIC trade, investment, **digital economy**, and the long-term goal of an Islamic Common Market through institutions such as COMCEC.
- **Enhanced Counter-Terrorism Cooperation:** Strengthen intelligence sharing, cybersecurity, capacity building, and coordinated efforts to combat **terrorism**, violent extremism, and transnational crime.