



Spiritual Authority and Integration in Theory and Practice

8TH WORLD ISLAMIC FORUM ISTANBUL DECLARATION (DRAFT)

The 8th World Islamic Forum was held in Istanbul on 01-02 March 2018 under the main theme of “Spiritual Authority and Integration in Theory and Practice” with the participation of NGOs and think tanks, researchers, political representatives, ministers, diplomats, bureaucrats and parliamentarians.

Simultaneously with the Forum; **World Muslim Women Summit and Exhibition | WISE 2018** (with the theme of “One Woman - One World | Politics For Building Power and Justice”), **World Muslim Youth Summit and Exhibition | POWER 2018** (with the theme of “Society 5.0 and Youth”), Award Ceremony of the third of **Islamic World Istanbul Awards** and the **9th Meeting of the World Islamic Forum Eminent Persons’ Group** was performed.

1. When looked at the basic trends, the global competition has been developing over “micro-nationalism”, “integration” and “unpredictability” in the new economy age based on the “knowledge and knowledge-based products” following the “earth and machine”; and the challenges determining the new nature of life and state are being formed as basic references as “source and sharing crisis”, unsustainability of the “production-consumption-development” formula, “elimination of middle class” with Chinese leverage, “energy, water and food insecurity”, going to the ‘4th Dimension’ in every field of life, “elimination of human source in labor”, “transforming to soft power from hard power” based on the changing nature of state and expectation management. Within all of these basic parameters; as transformations in technology is a candidate to change the human life and nature entirely by developing based on artificial intelligence, virtual/refined reality and mobility. It is obvious that “Industry 4.0” and “Society 5.0” concepts, which started be heard for several years and a new one was added in the recent year, are important titles in terms of managing the transformation of the world. Another factor is the turbulence that China created by getting effective in the world stage with each passing day. The New Silk Road project “Belt and Road” has been shaping as the global integration project involving 64 countries both from sea and land, and changing the distribution of the financial pie permanently.
2. In consideration of these basic variables, these are emphasized as the basic requirements;
 - Central Role Distribution and Sharing in the Islamic World,
 - Supporting the Brotherhood of Religion, Language, History and Geography with Interdependence,
 - “Political, Economic and Sectorial Unity” in National and Unity Based Policies,
 - Getting the Critical Thinking and Competence to the Centre in All Dimensions,
 - Developing New Models focused on Changing the Formula of “Production-Consumption-Growth” for the Demography and the Future of the World Civilization
3. Institution of religion, interaction of religion-politics and relevant concepts have unique properties within the scope of epistemological features of the religious texts. Within this scope, political and social institutions have won legitimacy within the scope of principles of protecting life, mind, generation and religion.
4. Unjust treatments suffered in the Islamic world in the last century have caused the formation of question marks concerning the protection of these five principles, and the erosion of legitimacy of political and social institutions.
5. The aforementioned legitimacy erosion causes some concepts such as “caliphate” and “jihad” to be exploited by some evil-minded or fanatic people or groups or foreign actors, who want to carry out operation over the Islamic world, in accordance with the concept as “the nature doesn’t allow emptiness.” Since 2000s, millions of innocent civilians were murdered as a result of exploitation of these concepts, and much more people have been displaced from their homelands. The account of the financial losses as a result of this turmoil could not be kept yet. The Islamic World has to close this legitimacy deficit no matter what happens.

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6. The concepts of “terror”, “terrorism” and “terrorist” have to be defined clearly and objectively within the scope of protecting life, property, mind, generation and religion. Both the subversive activities of the terrorist groups and the exploitation of these groups by foreign actors should be prevented at all costs.
7. Our age is the nation-states era. Despite all the developments and efforts that will cause the erosion of state sovereignty, nation-state is the current regime form of our era and it will continue to exist as a norm in the predictable future. This reality has to be considered in the recommendations and efforts aiming to close this legitimacy deficit.
8. It is just a waste of time and loss of power for the Islamic World to discuss the nation and ummah concepts, which are the basic glue of the nation-state, as the opposing concepts, and it is the misunderstanding of the verse of “O mankind, we created you from a single (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.” Races, nations, tribes and clans have existed throughout the history, and they will continue to exist. What important is acquaintance and taqwa. What need to be done is removing the obstacles before the Muslim societies to know each other, and enhancing their acquaintance.
9. Considering these facts, such as the religious texts and the historical characteristics of the relations between religion and politics in Islam, and the nation-state reality; it is not possible to envisage a “spiritual authority” declaring that it holds the representation monopoly of the Creator. Instead, the Muslims have resorted to the establishment of a political authority and spiritual representation within the consultations they carried out as the equal respondents of the divine inspiration and the era’s sociological and political requirements. In this context, it is required nowadays;
 - a. The interaction and acquaintance among the Muslim societies to be enhanced through cultural, academic, touristic activities and cooperation, and the NGOs and think tanks to be strengthened and their interaction to be enhanced, and the poverty to be prevented, and the activities, such as women’s rights and human rights to be developed.
 - b. The diplomatic and economic activities, and the visits to be enhanced at the official and leaders level, respectively, and the organizations, such as OIC, ECO, D-8, GCC, to be made more active, and the new ones to be established, if considered necessary.
 - c. The negotiations among those religious authorities in the Islamic world that have no legality issues in the eyes of administration and society to be institutionalized, and a consultation mechanism to be established; and the appropriate use of the terms resulting in confusion and separation of the Islamic world, such as “caliphate”, “jihad”, and “terror” to be ensured in the activities to be carried out within this framework.
10. The consideration that the institutions and organizations operating in the eyes of the Islamic world are non-functional and ineffective is not true. The steps taken and the ground gained in relation to the “Jerusalem Issue” by OIC have indicated how these institutions could be so functional.
11. Bringing any country or any country’s institutions and actors into the front with the assertion of being the leader may result in jealousy and separation in the activities carried out at the level of Islamic world. What matters most is to race for godness, not leadership. For this reason, it is required to show an utmost sensitivity in conforming to the principles of result orientation, comprehensiveness, equality, and brotherhood in the activities carried out in the eyes of the Islamic world.

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