

Abstract

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) was founded in 1972 when the Third conference of Foreign Ministers finally adopted its charter. Since then, OIC has been functioning, its membership increased, its activities and organizational network became more diversified.

OIC is the only international governmental organization which comprises “Muslim States” and claims to represent “Islam” at the international level. The OIC is based on a charter which came into force in 1972.

OIC is the world’s largest muslim body consisting fifty-seven sovereign muslim states situated in 4 continents: Asia, Europe, America and Africa. Moreover there are more than twenty observers including Thailand, other sovereign states, non sovereign states and international organizations.

Although OIC is a religious body but OIC’s foundations lies in the modern concept of sovereign nation-states system as well, in theory, OIC base on classical Islamic concept of Ummah, and the modern concept of international organizations. In general, Ummah means a “community or a nation” but not in the modern sense of a nation. Ummah, can be explained as a committed ideological groups amongst the people doing the same right thing or believing in the same just belief, for the same righteous cause.

OIC undertook to achieve four main goals: the peaceful resolution of disputed between member states, collective security, the formulation of joint foreign policies between member states and the promotion of technical cooperation between them.

OIC is composed of the following main bodies namely, the Conference of Kings and Heads of States, Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers and the Conference of the General Secretariat.

Thailand as an observer of OIC and as a country where muslim are minority receive much of attention from OIC particularly when there were a tragedies in Tak Bai and Krue Se Mosque in the year 2005 and in that event Thai government cooperates with the OIC in solving these problem.

Regarding the violence in the deep south OIC had focused on solving the problem with peace on the principles of non-discrimination. In addition, OIC Secretary-General had emphasized on Thailand' sovereignty. According to his OIC does not provide any supports to either separatist groups or cult that massacre innocent people without the faith in religion.

OIC Delegation was invited to Thailand during June, 11-13 2005. The main objective of the meeting is to discuss means and ways to insure that all Thai-Muslim are clearly deserved the equal right of citizens and also to enhance a multilateral effort to bring lasting peace and stability to the area.

On educational aspect, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) which affiliated to OIC as specialized organ has provided scholarships for Thai-Muslim students including financial support for Islamic schools and Universities especially in the deep south.

On economic and trade cooperation, Thai Islamic Trade and Industrial Association which is membership of the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the OIC hosted its Forth Meeting in Thailand in the year 2005. The main objective of the meeting is to discuss and find out appropriate measures to enhance Thai-Muslim Industry.

However, as the world –wide communities which mostly adhere to Islam numbering approximately 1.4 billion people, the OIC membership spreads across ten geographical regions in four continents Asia, America, Africa and Europe. Therefore OIC is not simply an Afro-Asian organization anymore. Moreover, in term of expanded structure (subsidiary and specialized organs) OIC is second only to United Nations and Europe Union. Due to this OIC can boast of many organs and working for cooperation in various fields.

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