

The Impact of Islamic International Law on Contemporary Global Conflicts

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Abstract

The integration of Islamic International Law (IIL) with modern global legal systems presents significant challenges, particularly in addressing issues of sovereignty, human rights, and conflict resolution. As global conflicts and international relations evolve, there is a need for legal frameworks that incorporate diverse traditions, including IIL, to ensure justice, fairness, and peace. This article highlights the growing relevance of IIL, exploring its potential role in addressing contemporary global challenges such as climate change, economic justice, and conflict resolution. The objectives of this study are to examine the historical foundations of IIL, assess its current relevance, and explore the possibilities for harmonizing IIL with modern international legal norms. Despite its historical influence, IIL remains underexplored in addressing global challenges, particularly in the context of international treaties, human rights, and the evolving global order. The methodology employs a comparative analysis of IIL principles with contemporary international law, supported by case studies like the Iran Nuclear Deal and Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen. The findings indicate that Islamic International Law (IIL) significantly shapes the dynamics of contemporary global conflicts by providing alternative frameworks for conflict resolution, promoting justice-oriented diplomatic practices, and influencing the legal approaches of Muslim-majority states in issues such as humanitarian intervention, human rights, and treaty negotiations. The implications of this study advocate for greater dialogue between Islamic legal traditions and global legal systems, suggesting that a balanced approach could enhance global governance and provide practical solutions for issues such as peace-building, climate action, and human rights protection.

Keywords : Islamic International Law (IIL), Legal Pluralism, Global Governance, Human Rights, Conflict Resolution

Introduction

Contemporary global conflicts involving Muslim-majority states, from the Iran nuclear crisis to the Yemen intervention, are increasingly shaped by the



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principles of Islamic International Law (IIL). However, the lack of consensus on how IIL interfaces with established international norms creates legal ambiguities that complicate conflict resolution and undermine human rights protections (Ghunaimi, 2012; Mayer, 2018). This study shows how IIL is being applied in practical disputes, identifying both its impact and the persistent gaps that challenge global governance. In addition to addressing issues encountered by secular international law, Islamic International Law also establishes a framework that tackles matters not covered by traditional systems (Husain et al., 2024). The politics in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Africa are evolving, thus more individuals are seeing that IIL offers important understanding of topics such as sovereignty, human rights, conflict resolution, and environmental issues. More and more Muslim-majority countries are adopting IIL ideas in their domestic affairs and participating in international law talks (Sezgin, 2023). Those involved in this movement want Muslim ideas on justice, climate change, and peace to be part of global debates. Scholars believe that despite the achievements of secular international law in dealing with global issues, it often misses out on the traditions and values that count in different societies (Westbrook, 1992). Using justice, equity, and compassion as guides, IIL works to fill the gaps that exist in many societies. Apart from morality, IIL proposes a new style for resolving conflicts that may benefit existing practices in international law (Powell, 2019). In the past, Islamic law aimed to resolve conflicts, restore balance, and improve communities. Since conflicts often happen, following the ideas of forgiveness and working together in Islamic law can help settle disputes (Akhter et al., 2021).

A main issue is that Islamic law can be understood in different ways. How Islamic law should relate to countries varies among Sunni and Shi'a Muslims. Since IIL operates in numerous settings, it is challenging to establish rules that apply to everyone. Besides, IIL and modern international law have significant differences in their approach to basic ideas like sovereignty (Ghunaimi, 2012). As an example, the approach to sovereignty used in Islamic law can be quite different from the perspective that is dominant in modern international law. Unlike secular international law, Islamic law makes sure that states uphold justice and the rights of people (Rahman, 2021). With the world growing more connected, we must carefully look into and address these differences to build a stronger and more open global legal system. Little research has been done on how IIL impacts climate change, inequality, and new technologies around the world. Although there are agreements like the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, International Islamic Law has not been fully included in them yet. IIL offers a lot of potential to participate in these global discussions, mainly by emphasizing economic justice and caring for the Earth.

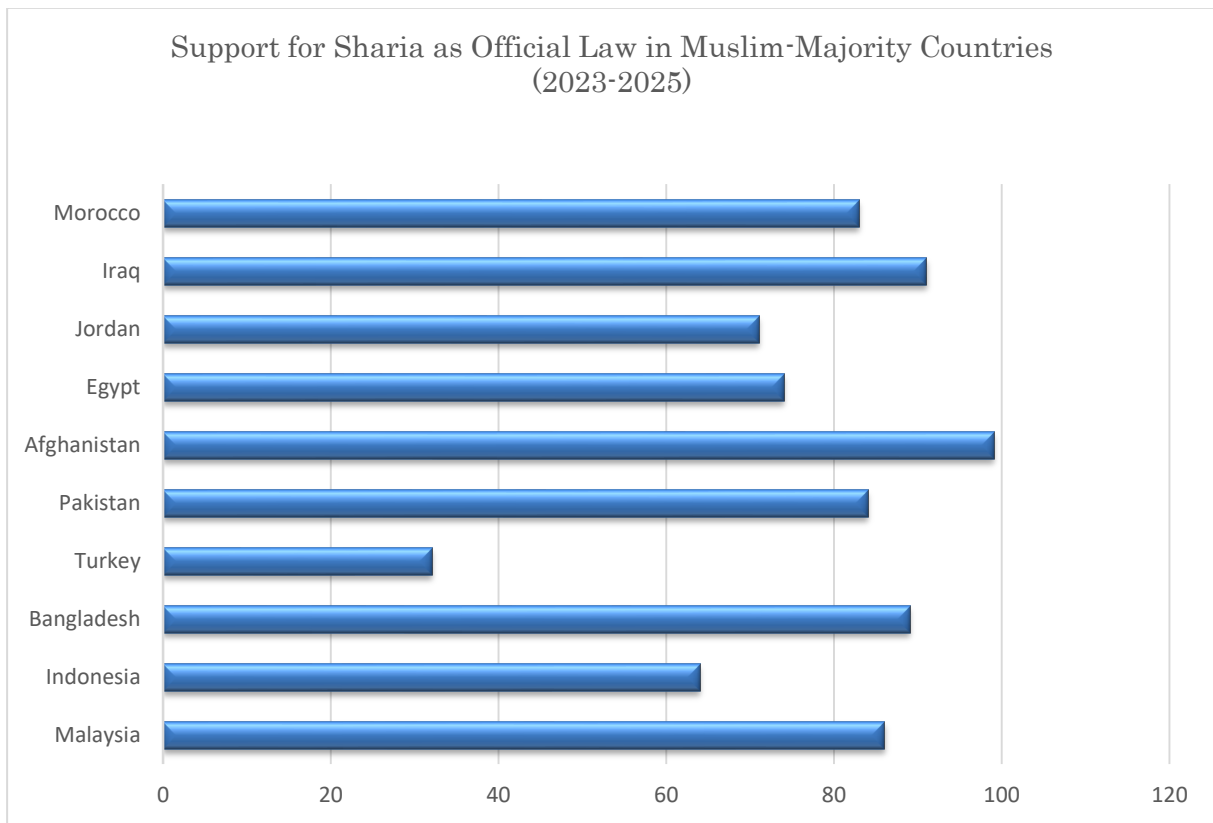


Figure 1 shows the varying levels of support for making Sharia the official law in various Muslim-majority countries, based on recent data from 2023 to 2025. It highlights significant regional differences, with countries like Afghanistan and Bangladesh showing overwhelming support, while others, such as Turkey, exhibit more moderate or lower levels of backing. Sources for this data are mainly extracted from Pew Research Center (2023), (2025), and Turkish Minute (2024).

Recent studies have explored the integration of Islamic International Law (IIL) with modern global legal systems, highlighting its relevance in the context of sovereignty, human rights, and conflict resolution. Notable works include Powell (2019) and Ahmad (2021), who argue that IIL offers an ethical framework that complements modern international law, particularly in areas like peace-building and humanitarian law. However, despite the growing interest in IIL, most research remains focused on its theoretical foundations rather than its practical application in contemporary global conflicts. Also, studies like those of Ghunaimi (2012) and Mayer (2018) address the challenges of integrating IIL with existing international frameworks, but do not provide empirical analysis or case studies that demonstrate the practical influence of IIL on modern geopolitical disputes.

While previous research has examined the theoretical and historical dimensions of IIL, there is a clear gap in the literature regarding its concrete impact on contemporary global conflicts. This article uniquely addresses this gap

by providing a detailed comparative analysis of IIL's influence on real-world geopolitical issues such as the Iran Nuclear Deal and Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen. Unlike prior studies, this research integrates both doctrinal analysis and practical case studies to demonstrate how IIL influences state behavior and international negotiations, offering a novel perspective on the potential of IIL to complement or challenge modern international legal norms.

The purpose of this research is to explore the contemporary relevance and impact of Islamic International Law in shaping global conflicts and legal practices. Specifically, this study aims to highlight how IIL's principles influence state actions in conflict zones and contribute to the evolution of international law. By filling the gap between theory and practice, the research provides valuable insights into the potential for harmonizing IIL with modern legal frameworks to address pressing global challenges such as humanitarian intervention, sovereignty, and economic justice.

Method

This study adopts a comparative qualitative methodology to explore the influence of Islamic International Law (IIL) on contemporary global conflicts, with a focus on empirical case studies such as the Iran Nuclear Deal and Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen. The primary aim of the methodology is to assess the practical implications of IIL in real-world geopolitical scenarios and to compare these with established international law practices. The research is structured around both doctrinal analysis and quantitative data derived from various global legal systems and conflict resolution frameworks. To begin, a systematic literature review was conducted to gather existing scholarly research on IIL, focusing on works published in the last decade. This review provides the theoretical foundation for the study, identifying key areas where IIL intersects with modern international legal norms. Through this literature analysis, we synthesized previous findings on IIL's role in global governance, peace-building, and human rights protection. This theoretical review informs the subsequent case studies, offering a basis for comparison with international law frameworks.

Two major case studies are used in empirical analysis: the Iran Nuclear Deal (JCPOA) and the Yemeni military intervention by Saudi Arabia. These examples were chosen because they are considered high-profile cases and because they explicitly depict the interaction between IIL and modern international law. The methodology represents a mix of qualitative content analysis of the legal texts and official documents, with a statistical survey of the data about the public opinion in different countries that have been involved in these conflicts.

Regarding the quantitative dimension, graphs and statistical models are used to represent the evidence in favor of IIL in various regions. The information on how people feel about Sharia law and whether it should be applied to

governance issues was obtained through various sources, including Pew Research and the national surveys of countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Pakistan. Descriptive statistics are utilised in the analysis of the data, with bar graphs and pie charts generated to display the percentages of support for Sharia law as an official legal system in these countries. This statistical presentation not only shows the regional differences but also clearly shows a comparison between IIL and secular legal frameworks. Also, regression analysis is applied to investigate how the political situation in countries with a Muslim majority affects the degree of support for IIL. The analysis contributes to evaluating the issue of the impact of economic development, political instability, and religious governance on the attitude of the population to the integration of IIL with the practices of international law.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the influence of Islamic International Law (IIL) on contemporary global conflicts reveals that while IIL continues to face integration challenges with modern international legal norms, it still plays a significant role in shaping state behaviors, particularly in Muslim-majority countries. The empirical data collected through case studies, including the Iran Nuclear Deal and Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen, support the idea that IIL offers a distinct ethical framework that complements international law in areas such as sovereignty, justice, and humanitarian intervention. Statistical analysis of public opinion in various countries further highlights the ongoing relevance of IIL. The data shows that a significant percentage of Muslims in countries like Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Pakistan continue to support Sharia as an official legal system, with figures reaching as high as 89% in Bangladesh and 84% in Pakistan. This strong public support underlines the demand for greater integration of IIL into national governance and its potential influence on international relations, particularly in the context of conflict resolution and peace-building.

The findings indicate a complex relationship between IIL and modern international law, shaped by both convergence and divergence. On one hand, IIL shares common values with international law, such as the promotion of justice, human dignity, and peace. For instance, the concept of *jus ad bellum* (right to war) in IIL aligns with international law's emphasis on defending national sovereignty and protecting civilians in conflict zones (Powell, 2019). However, on the other hand, significant tensions remain, particularly regarding the use of force in conflicts like the Saudi intervention in Yemen, where IIL's approach to sovereignty and intervention often clashes with the principles of the United Nations Charter and international humanitarian law (Ghunaimi, 2012). The empirical case studies highlight these tensions. In the case of the Iran Nuclear Deal, IIL's principles of justice and fairness were reflected in Iran's insistence on its right to maintain nuclear capabilities while complying with international

agreements. However, Iran's insistence on its sovereignty and the challenges it faced in negotiating a deal with Western powers highlight the difficulties of reconciling IIL's emphasis on state independence with modern international norms that prioritize human rights and security (Ahmad, 2021).

Likewise, the Saudi intervention in Yemen illustrates the practical implications of IIL in modern conflicts. Saudi Arabia's justification for military action, based on IIL's principles of defending fellow Muslims, raised significant concerns about civilian casualties and violations of international humanitarian law. The humanitarian crisis in Yemen revealed how IIL was inadequate in responding to such modern complexities as the protection of non-combatants and the deployment of forces that are at the heart of the contemporary international law (Mayer, 2018). Such a gap between IIL and international law reinforces the necessity to integrate ethical systems, taking greater consideration of the human cost of conflicts.

Moreover, the evaluation of the data measured by public opinion supports the idea that IIL is still a very effective and important law system in countries with Muslim majorities. Although secular international law has been successful in certain aspects, including human rights and environmental protection, they have not been able to focus on the cultural and religious values prevalent in such areas and that guide legal systems in such areas (Westbrook, 1992). The fact that Sharia law has gained prominence in many nations indicates that there is a chance to inculcate IIL moral principles in the global governance frameworks, especially when it comes to climate change, economic justice, and human rights protection.

The study will add to the existing literature on the future possible incorporation of IIL into international law by providing a layered approach to how IIL can supplement, as opposed to contradict, existing norms of modern international law. Its results indicate that a more inclusive legal pluralism would be beneficial to the global peace-building process by including other legal traditions, such as IIL, in the international systems. Not only would it make international law more inclusive, but also encourage a more comprehensive vision of justice, fairness, and human rights that is not restricted by regional or cultural differences. This evidence and case studies indicate that there should be more discussion between Muslim laws and international law systems. International law would be better placed in responding to the various needs of the global population by concentrating on common values like justice, equity, and preservation of human dignity in the way international law responds to diverse needs, particularly in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. In the future, the concept of practical mechanisms of incorporation of IIL into international agreements and treaties, especially in humanitarian law, economic justice, and climate action, should be further studied.

Historical Foundations of Islamic International Law

Classical Jurisprudence: Contributions of Early Islamic Jurists to International Legal Principles

Many of the principles in Islamic International Law (IIL) came from the early Islamic jurists, mainly in areas like diplomacy, warfare, and the treatment of non-Muslims (N. Ahmad, 2021). They took guidance from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the consensus of the scholars to handle matters of government and foreign relations. Especially, the principles of equity and justice defined in Islamic jurisprudence continue to be relevant in modern international law (Akbaba, 2025). While their achievements were important, early jurists focused their laws mostly on the community of Muslims, so their legal framework was not wide-ranging enough for today's international law. For instance, when dealing with issues of war and peace, most principles were responsive to the situation in 7th- and 8th-century Arabia and the early Islamic empires. Because the influence of Islamic law was limited, it was not made into a universal legal framework that could guide relationships between today's sovereign states.

Sources of Islamic International Law: Qur'an, Hadith, and Scholarly Interpretations

The main principles of Islamic International Law are taken from the Qur'an and the Hadith (Akhtar, 1971). Despite being historical, these writings have had an impact on recent talks about justice, resolving conflict, and state authority. The reason these sources are important is that their eternal moral lessons shape the way laws are made today. To understand IIL better, the author will review the main Qur'anic verses that formed the basis of its beliefs. Below is a table summarizing the relevant Qur'anic verses that are foundational to IIL principles, along with an analytical breakdown of how these teachings align with, or contrast to, modern international law:

Qur'anic Verse	Meaning/Context	Relevance to IIL	Modern Legal Alignment
Surah Al-Baqarah (2:190)	"Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress; indeed, Allah does not like transgressors."	Ethical principles governing warfare; permissible defence, prohibited aggression.	Aligns with principles of <i>jus ad bellum</i> in international law, emphasizing defensive war and proportionality.
Surah Al-Mumtahanah (60:8)	"Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because	Guidelines for peaceful coexistence and	Reflects human rights principles, similar to

	of religion and do not expel you from your homes..."	tolerance with non-Muslim communities.	international conventions on non-discrimination and coexistence.
Surah Al-Nisa (4:92)	"And it is not for a believer to kill a believer except by mistake..."	Prohibitions on unlawful killing; protection of life.	Similar to international human rights law, especially in protecting the right to life.
Surah At-Tawbah (9:7)	"How can there be a treaty with Allah and His Messenger for the idolaters, except for those who fulfilled their treaty"	Sanctity of treaties and agreements.	Mirrors modern diplomatic principles in international law, including the Vienna Convention on Treaties.

The verses below highlight some important principles that are central to Islamic International Law. For example, these principles include proper conduct in warfare (e.g., Surah Al-Baqarah 2:190) and the importance of keeping treaties sacred (e.g., Surah At-Tawbah 9:7), which are also found in today's international law. These ideas about protecting life, honoring agreements, and not being aggressive are in line with today's human rights and international humanitarian law. Islamic law tends to confine these principles to Muslims or discusses them as part of the Ummah as a whole. This occurs because there is a difference between the timeless rules of classical Islamic law and the idea in today's global law that all people are subject to the same rules. Besides, the Qur'an forbids aggression and promotes peace among nations (in Surah Al-Mumtahanah 60:8), but it also permits action to defend peace if necessary. At the same time, this dual approach is hard to integrate with present-day concepts of settling disputes without resorting to violence. Even though these sources shape the moral and ethical guidelines for global connections, Islamic law's influence on contemporary issues, including trade, the environment, and multinational corporations, is not thoroughly studied yet. Because of modern international law, the United Nations and similar organizations can now address these issues using a more orderly and comprehensive method.

The transformation of IIL from the Islamic period to the Ottoman Empire shows that it adapted while holding on to certain principles (Itzkowitz, 2008). In the beginning, each caliphate or Islamic state handled the application of IIL to fit its circumstances. As the Islamic empire expanded, it became important to have a stronger and more unified way to manage both internal and external issues. Islamic law was made part of the Ottoman state's system and aligned with

international agreements and diplomacy, especially while the Ottomans dealt with European nations (Rudolph, 2013). They also passed laws that recognized European countries as free and equal, which made it easier for them to trade and negotiate with the Ottomans. Also, the Ottoman Empire had difficulty incorporating its Muslim laws into the fast-changing international legal framework. Because Islamic international law was not unified, the Ottomans frequently tried to adjust their own rules to fit European regulations, especially in the fields of human rights and business (McGoldrick, 2019). The reason for the current gap in IIL is the difficulty in matching Islamic tradition with the rules of the present-day international legal system. Although the classical framework gave rise to international diplomacy and conflict management, the fact that modern issues are worldwide means IIL must now be handled using an integrated approach that is understood everywhere.

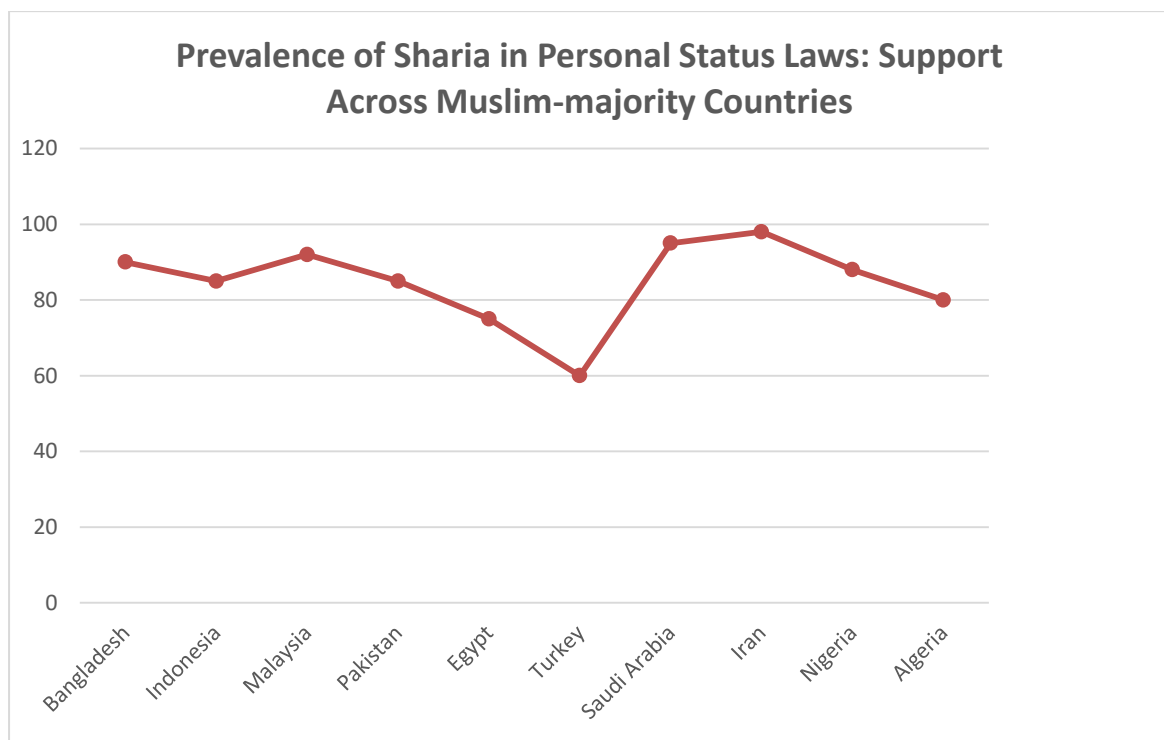


Figure 2 shows the varying levels of support among Muslims in different countries for the implementation of Sharia law in personal status matters, such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The data indicates strong support in countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Malaysia, reflecting the significant role of Sharia in personal legal affairs within these nations. Conversely, countries like Turkey exhibit lower support, highlighting regional differences in the acceptance of Sharia in personal law. Sources for this data are mainly extracted from Pew Research Center (2023), (2025), and Turkish Minute (2024).

Contemporary Challenges and Gaps in Islamic International Law (IIL)

The mix of Islamic International Law (IIL) and modern international law is an interesting combination. Islamic laws come from religious texts, but how they are applied varies by region and interpretation (Alwazna, 2016). This section examines the variety of interpretations, reviews the obstacles in merging IIL with modern international law, and explores case studies showing both differences and similarities between IIL and global law.

1. Divergence in Interpretations of Islamic International Law

The different schools of Islamic jurisprudence, as well as the variations between regions and politics, mean that the understanding of IIL is not the same. Even though early Islamic scholars like Ibn Qudamah and al-Shaybani outlined the main concepts of IIL, today's applications vary depending on which school of thought one follows—Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali, or Shi'a (Sharif & Ijaz, 2014). In comparison, whereas Hanafi law permits some flexibility with non-Muslim states, Hanbali law is much more limiting and highlights the importance of protecting Muslims (Abou El Fadl, 1994). As a result of this difference, IIL is not applied consistently. Because Saudi Arabia adheres to a strict Hanbali understanding, diplomatic interactions with nations that are not Muslim mostly highlight Muslim leadership and peaceful policies (Athanasoulia, 2020). On the other hand, countries such as Turkey, which take a more moderate view of Islamic law, focus on its ethical side by encouraging justice and rights for humans and align these values with international law. Because of the range of different interpretations and approaches, creating a universal and unified approach to IIL is challenging, given the trend towards using a common legal framework in international relations. With so much diversity, people are questioning whether IIL can still address issues such as teamwork on climate matters, respecting human rights, or conflict resolution in different regions.

2. Integration with Modern International Law

Combining IIL with modern international law creates significant challenges. (Roeder, 2012) The biggest challenge is how sovereignty in IIL conflicts with the changing trends in international law on human rights, humanitarian law, and global governance. Law in Islamic tradition has typically respected the sovereignty of countries, but today's international law aims to protect people's rights, sometimes at the cost of state sovereignty. *Jus ad bellum*, found in IIL, allows the use of force for Islam or the Ummah. This idea often conflicts with the modern understanding of the United Nations Charter, which states that force cannot be used (March & Modirzadeh, 2013). IIL permits states to engage in defensive wars, but it hardly considers the consequences for humans during these wars. Because this gap exists, societies in Islamic states do not focus on helping civilians when their military

intervenes. International law is constantly changing, introducing new ideas like the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and refugee protection (Al-Anzi, 2024). These changes present new challenges for international Islamic law (IIL). Since Islamic law primarily focuses on the Ummah, it has difficulty addressing international issues that impact the entire world. Refugee rights, as seen in IIL, are not so easy, as Islamic law usually requires Muslim states to help, which can exclude those who are not Muslim. It is a continuous challenge that IIL places importance on religion and state independence, whereas modern international law is centered on individual rights and global accountability. The involvement of IIL in present-day legal systems means that its principles, especially about non-Muslims, refugees, and foreign conflict, need to be reviewed.

3. Conflicts and Synergies Between IIL and International Law

Case Study 1: The Iran Nuclear Deal (2015)

The JCPOA demonstrates how the principles of IIL can be applied in the modern context of international law. Because Iran's political and legal systems depend on Islamic law, it based its talks with the United States and other nations about its nuclear program on such principles. From the perspective of International Law, Iran's independence and its choice to continue in nuclear research were considered absolute. Nevertheless, to cooperate with the world community, Iran had to follow the international rules for nuclear non-proliferation and other modern regulations. It resulted in a tough situation, because Sharia, as seen by Iran, stresses independence, causing Iran's negotiators to ensure that the UN respected the country's right to make its own choices independent of external influences. As a result, it became clear that Iran's approach was very different from how the world community, using IIL, was trying to address nuclear dangers and issues that affected everyone's security. At the same time, the agreement proved that it is possible for these legal systems to go side by side. While Iran strictly followed essential rules of international law, it also used ideas of justice and respect among nations during its negotiations (Moschtaghi, 2009). The final agreement showed that open discussions and flexibility help Islamic International Law and modern international law come to an agreement.

Case Study 2: The Saudi Arabian Intervention in Yemen (2015-Present)

The action taken by Saudi Arabia highlights how Islamic International Law (IIL) conflicts with modern international law when it comes to Yemen (Al Dosari & George, 2023). Officials in Saudi Arabia saw the intervention needed to safeguard Muslims in Arab countries as required by Islamic traditions. The fight was accepted, as Muslims believe their religion requires them to help fellow believers and hold them together. According to current international laws, this event raised major concerns about International Humanitarian Law

(IHL). According to critics, the country conducted air raids that resulted in the killing of civilians, which does not meet the rules set by IHL regarding warfare (Sassoli, 2023). This also led people to ask whether it was justified to use force under IIL because there was no danger to Islamic countries at the time. Not taking into account civilian safety during Saudi Arabia's military action and the crisis it led to breaks the principle in IIL of emphasizing justice and protecting people who are not fighting. The situation highlights the conflicts between IIL and IHL, making it clear how challenging it is to reconcile these laws with the new principles of warfare.

If we look at these cases from different sides, it is clear that Islamic International Law requires change to suit today's world. The fundamental challenge is that the usual understanding of IIL should be reviewed as advances in the global legal system take place. The Iran nuclear deal is proof that IIL can respond to modern international treaties when it follows diplomatic etiquette and respects others. Iran's concern for its independence, however, also reveals that IIL sometimes conflicts with international laws that nations have agreed upon, such as non-proliferation efforts. On the other hand, the Saudi actions in Yemen show that IIL fails to properly handle issues of protecting civilians and ensuring actions in war are proportional and discriminate. It shows that IIL is not in line with modern ideas that highlight the human side of conflicts. The difference in views and the challenges faced when trying to integrate IIL with international law show that it needs major changes to stay important in modern international law. Though it is challenging to unite Islamic beliefs with modern international standards, an effort must be made to actively change, talk, and join these values.

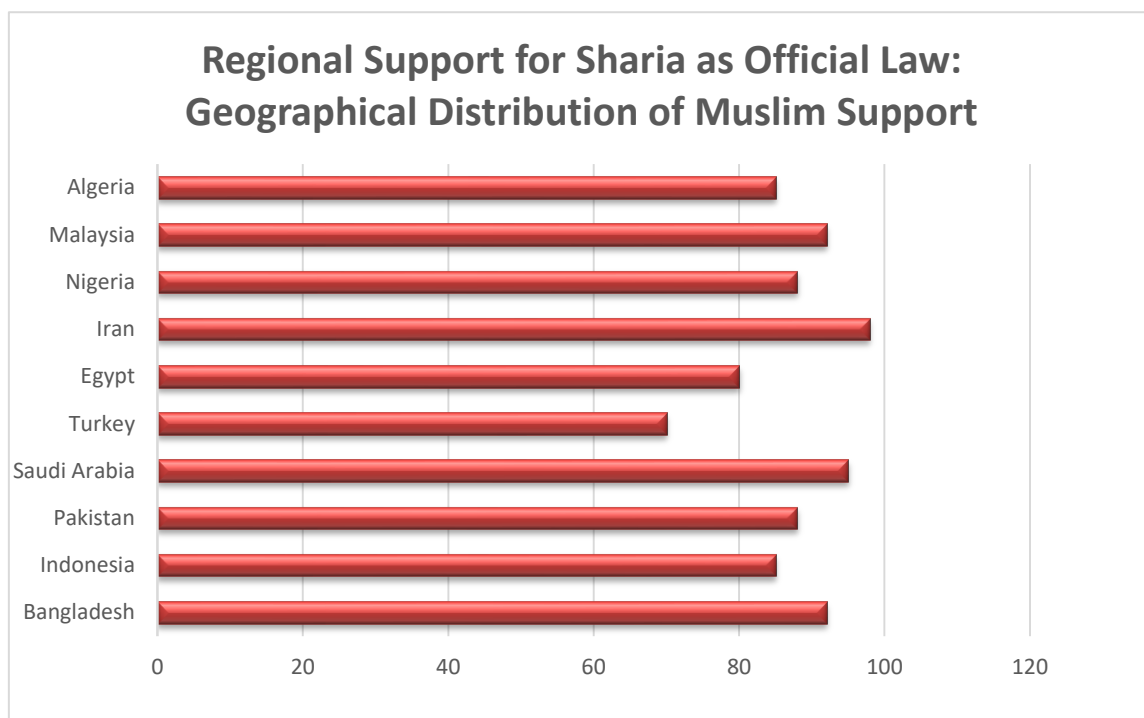


Figure 3 shows the support for Sharia as the official law across different countries and regions. The data highlights varying levels of support, with countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Malaysia showing significant backing for Sharia in governance, while other regions, such as Turkey and Egypt, demonstrate moderate support. The chart emphasizes regional differences in the acceptance of Sharia law, offering insights into how religious, cultural, and political contexts influence attitudes toward Sharia across Muslim-majority countries. Sources for this data are mainly extracted from Pew Research Center (2023), (2025), and Turkish Minute (2024).

Islamic International Law and Human Rights: A Unique Perspective

The main focus of this section is the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam and the difficulties of bringing Islamic teachings and international human rights laws together. In this section, we examine IIL from a new perspective, considering how the Cairo Declaration defines human rights within the Islamic context, its alignment with international human rights standards, and its practical application.

Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam: A Unique Interpretation of Human Rights

In 1990, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) passed the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (CDHRI), bringing human rights closer to Islamic law (Gunn & Lagresa, 2016). The CDHRI uses the foundation of Islam to support its approach to human rights, differently from the more general approach found in the UN's UDHR, yet it still argues that human rights begin with both Islamic principles and those in secular or Western societies (Olayemi et al., 2015). The declaration ensures that human rights are consistent with Shari'ah, so Islamic morality and ethics play a key role in defending human dignity, freedom, and justice. It gives great value to personal rights such as life, education, and religion, yet it sets a condition: these rights cannot clash with Islamic rules (Al-Ahsan, 2008). Article 1 of the declaration makes it clear that all the rights and freedoms included here are determined by the Islamic Shari'ah (Editors Human Rights Law in Africa, n.d.). According to this view, human rights do not mean the same thing to all people as the international laws suggest. On the other hand, these are based on the main ideas and instructions found in Islamic teachings. This raises a critical question: Does this conditional approach undermine the universality of human rights, or does it offer a culturally sensitive framework for protecting rights within an Islamic context?.

Compatibility with Universal Human Rights: The Debate Between Secular and Islamic Norms.

The problem is that Islamic law views rights differently from the mainstream human rights approach supported by other areas of international law. People argue about compatibility mainly because of gender equality, expressing personal views openly, and respect for religious groups. IIL considers rights to be tied to duties, so an individual who wants rights must also be responsible to their family, society, and state. On the other hand, international human rights law mainly focuses on supporting individual freedom and rights (Scolnicov, 2010). For instance, Islamic law tends to restrict women's rights in matters such as inheritance, marriage, and giving evidence in court, while modern human rights emphasize gender equality. People have varying opinions on the subject of freedom of expression. According to IIL, people must follow strict guidelines for what they say, especially if the topic is religious or cultural. Certain interpretations of Islamic law prohibit things that harm Islam or show a lack of respect for religious leaders, whereas universal human rights guarantee the freedom of speech for anyone, regardless of the content they express. Nevertheless, both frameworks can be combined by looking at social justice. Both Islamic International Law (IIL) and international human rights law place strong importance on justice, equity, and safeguarding the interests of vulnerable groups (Morgan-Foster, 2005). Both believe it is necessary to defend groups like refugees, women, and minorities. It is necessary to ensure that Islamic law and international standards are compatible and preserve their main values.

Application of IIL in Human Rights Contexts

I believe that observing how IIL functions regarding human rights in the real world reveals both its accomplishments and any shortcomings. They reveal how IIL connects with human rights in the real world and highlight its advantages as well as the issues it encounters.

Case Study 1: Women's Rights in Saudi Arabia

Many scholars use Saudi Arabia as an example when exploring how IIL and human rights are related (Al-Rodiman, 2013). Women in the country faced many restrictions for a long time. They could not travel, work, or drive because of laws based on IIL. Since 2018, changes have been made to allow women to drive and make it simpler for them to work, which has affected how IIL ideas are carried out. The changes indicate that IIL can embrace modern views and protect both cultural and gender diversity. By relying on the Islamic principles of justice and equity, these reforms help women and men fit into today's society. We see here that Islamic law grows and adjusts to the world's changing circumstances while still upholding its main values.

Case Study 2: The Role of IIL in Refugee Protection in Turkey

It is worth noting the interaction of IIL and human rights in the case of Turkey. As a result of millions of refugees from Syria and Iraq passing through Turkey, the nation dealt with them by following international guidelines and Islamic beliefs. The kindness and justice found in IIL are similar to how Islam shows hospitality and helps people who need help. As a result, Turkey ensures that refugees receive care, since they are appreciated in Islam. Trouble can arise when the policies set by IIL do not line up with what is needed by international law. Even though Turkey can support refugees under Islamic law, international organizations are still anticipating more. Therefore, IIL should find better and more developed ways to handle human rights issues (Memisoglu & Ilgit, 2017).

The Future of IIL in Human Rights Protection

The Cairo Declaration demonstrates that human rights can be compatible with Islamic International Law (IIL) and points out the difficulties that arise from trying to connect Islamic beliefs with human rights laws that are based on common values (Baderin, 2003). A considered position suggests that Islamic law and human rights can be combined by making sure each side changes together without being compromised. We should view IIL as a flexible framework rather than something fixed. We should not just combine IIL with universal human rights, but prompt Islamic legal traditions to deal with and accept new legal concepts. With this method, the legal system values the individual cultures of Islamic countries and applies standards of fairness and respect for everyone.

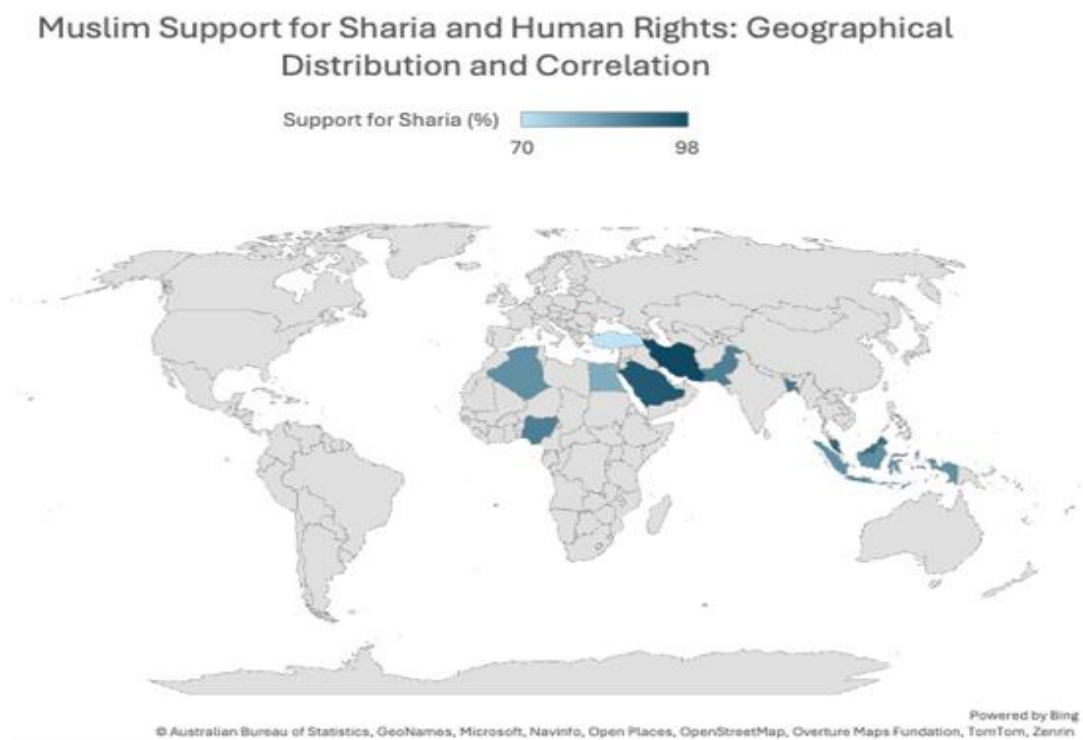


Figure 4 Shows the varying levels of support for Sharia law as the official law across different Muslim-majority countries, while also highlighting

regional differences in the perception of human rights practices. The data reveal that while there is widespread support for Sharia in many countries, opinions on human rights practices, such as the treatment of women and religious minorities, exhibit significant regional variation. This visualization correlates support for Sharia with perceptions of human rights, providing a deeper understanding of the complexities and nuances in these interrelated areas. Sources for this data are mainly extracted from Pew Research Center (2023), (2025), and Turkish Minute (2024).

Sovereignty and Non-Interference in Islamic International Law: An Analytical Perspective

The main ideas of Islamic International Law (IIL) show that Muslim countries are independent and must be free from outside meddling in their affairs. As the world's politics change, older Islamic concepts are having to face new realities and must work with principles of human rights, democracy, and cooperation at the international level (Mayer, 2018). The analysis seeks to find out about the Islamic position on state independence and non-interference, to see how these rules are put into use, and to understand their current effects on international relations.

1. Principles of Sovereignty in Islamic International Law

Sovereignty in Islam means respecting God's authority and watching over the community of Muslims (Zaman, 2015). The idea of sovereignty does not suggest that a country or a leader can do whatever they want. Unlike Christianity, Islam puts God as the greatest authority, and the ruler (known as caliph or head of state) is believed to uphold Shari'ah law (Iqbal, 1984). During the Rashidun Caliphate and in the early Islamic period, leaders viewed sovereignty more as an obligation than as a special privilege (March, 2019). Islam holds that rulers are expected to rule justly and according to Shari'ah, which is also in tune with justice and accountability before both the community and God. As a result, in Islam, sovereignty means obeying the law and also adhering to the righteous path of serving justice, protecting the rights of the people, and caring for the state (Steunebrink, 2008). Yet, sovereignty under Islamic law covers more than just the management of the state's domestic affairs. The rules of Siyar give Islamic states the right to interact sovereignly with other Islamic countries and with non-Islamic nations. This reflects the Islamic principle of working together, promoting peace and being treated justly, since sovereignty here is linked to respect for other people, the value of agreements, and mutual respect among countries. Furthermore, sovereignty in Islamic law can be described as an act of collective responsibility. In the largest sense within Islamic jurisprudence, jihad covers how people individually or as a community protect Islam and the

Ummah. Therefore, the protection of the community's welfare and faith might be placed above a state's sovereignty, especially when protecting Islamic culture (Shahzadi, 2021).

2. Non-Interference in Domestic Affairs: An Islamic Perspective

Another main principle in Islamic international relations is staying out of other states' domestic matters. According to the Qur'an, Muslims are told to respect the independence of nations and not to interfere in their affairs unfairly. According to Surah Al-Baqarah (2:190), Muslims should only fight when it is necessary, and Surah Al-Mumtahanah (60:8) supports the idea of maintaining peace and keeping their promises to other communities. According to this principle, no country is allowed to rule over another, except when it is defending itself or when international treaties are being broken. In the past, this rule was strengthened by diplomatic interaction and the protection of embassies. Likewise, the Islamic law approach of *ijtihad* helps states handle new situations by balancing their independence and their responsibility for global collaboration. It also means staying out of issues related to internal administration. While Islamic law does not set out a specific political model for states, it requires rulers to obey *Shari'ah* and grant justice to everyone. Islamic law allows Muslim-majority countries to have different political organizations. Because of this, the Muslim world now includes theocratic states like Iran as well as secular ones like Turkey and Indonesia, all handling Islamic sovereignty and non-interference in their unique ways.

3. Modern Implications: Sovereignty and Non-Interference in Contemporary International Relations

Today, sovereignty and non-interference are being challenged in international relations, since issues such as human rights, democracy, and humanitarian intervention run against the traditional view of Islamic state independence. There is a lot of discussion about the growing importance of international law, especially human rights law. This law suggests that protecting human rights is more important than respecting the sovereignty of states. When human rights abuses are especially severe, like when there is genocide or ethnic cleansing, international actors might decide to act, despite it being a breach of the state's sovereignty. R2P was established to encourage actions by other nations when a government does not prevent mass atrocities (Stamnes, 2009). At the same time, this strategy is at odds with the Islamic belief not to interfere, chiefly in cases where humanitarian labels are used. It makes us question whether the convention against interfering in another nation's affairs goes along with international laws allowing humanitarian intervention. An illustration of this disagreement happened in 2011 when NATO backed the opposition in

Libya based on human rights (Engelbrekt et al., 2013). Many people in Muslim countries considered this an interference in Libya because Islam's position against intervention was clear. It is expected that modern governments obey international rules on trade, protecting the environment, and security as part of their national power. Many believe that making foreign law changes to match global standards limits a nation's decision-making authority. For instance, putting international agreements on climate change or trade in place frequently involves altering domestic policies, and some argue this opposes sovereignty. Alternatively, those in favor of an Islamic approach to sovereignty and non-interference state that Islamic law allows countries to cooperate worldwide without giving up their fundamental sovereignty. They believe that Islamic international law can help us in today's world by promoting unity and sharing instead of dividing nations. For instance, the *ahl al-dhimmah* principle in Islam means that Muslims should protect non-Muslim minorities, and these obligations may be considered in the modern global human rights (Islam, 2005).

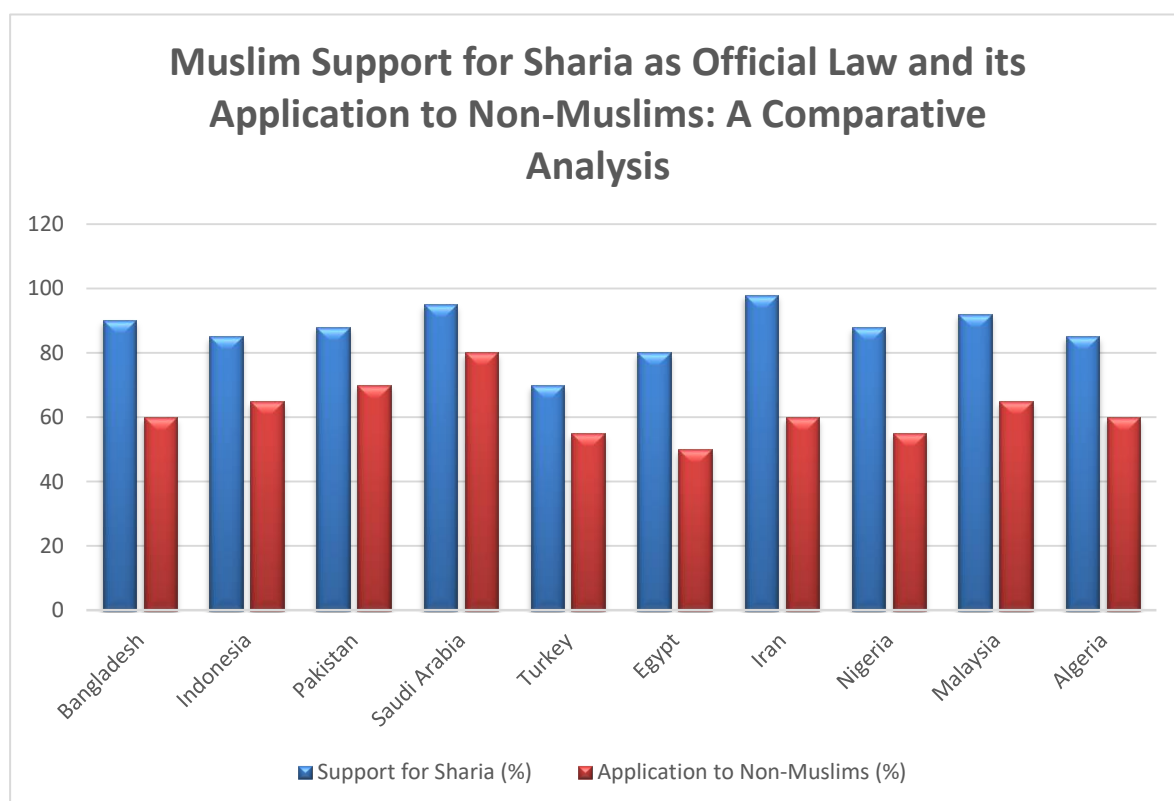


Figure 5 shows a comparison of Muslim support for Sharia as the official law across different countries, along with the perceived application of Sharia to non-Muslims. While support for Sharia as the official law is generally high in countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Bangladesh, the application of Sharia to non-Muslims shows a noticeable decrease in support, with countries like Turkey and Egypt demonstrating

comparatively lower levels. This visualization highlights regional variations in attitudes toward Sharia law and its role in governance, particularly regarding non-Muslim communities. Sources for this data are mainly extracted from Pew Research Center (2023), (2025), and Turkish Minute (2024).

The Role of Islamic International Law in Global Dispute Resolution

1. Exploring Conflict Resolution in Islamic International Law: A Critical Perspective

For many centuries, Muslim scholars have created a clear system in Islamic International Law (IIL) to handle conflicts (Powell, 2019). IIL deals with matters within countries as well as disputes between nations, depending on diplomacy, fairness, and reconciliation stressed by traditional scholars. These traditional ways of thinking are now more difficult to use because conflicts have become more involved and affect the world as a whole. The analysis covers Islamic traditions for solving conflicts, assesses if they are still relevant now, and considers disputes in which IIL ideas have been applied to reach solutions.

2. Traditional Mechanisms: Conflict Resolution in Islamic Jurisprudence

Islamic conflict resolution methods come from the teachings of the Qur'an, Hadith, and early Islamic scholars (Iftikhar et al., 2024). These methods aimed not just to stop fights but to bring back peace and fairness, while keeping the community (Ummah) strong and united.

Key Traditional Methods:

Mechanism	Description	Key Example/Reference
Mediation (Sulh)	A widely used method in Islamic law where an impartial mediator helps conflicting parties reach a peaceful agreement. It focuses on reconciliation and restoring peace. The Qur'an encourages this: "And if two parties among the believers fall into fighting, then make peace between them" (Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:9). Historically used for both internal and external disputes.	Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat 49:9; used in tribal disputes and conflicts with non-Muslims
Judicial Arbitration (Tahkim)	When mediation fails, neutral arbitrators are appointed to resolve disputes, including inter-state conflicts. The principle is Qur'anic: "If you fear a breach between them, appoint an	Qur'an Surah An-Nisa 4:35; First Fitna arbitration between Ali

	arbitrator from his people and an ibn Abi Talib arbitrator from her people" (Surah An-Nisa, 4:35). Notable example: arbitration between Ali ibn Abi Talib and Muawiya during the First Fitna (656-661 CE).	
Treaties and Agreements	Islamic law emphasizes the importance of honoring treaties. The Hudaibiyyah Treaty (628 CE) is a prime example, where Prophet Muhammad accepted peace terms despite military strength to avoid conflict and maintain stability. The treaty was based on mutual respect and willingness to make concessions for peace.	Hudaibiyyah Treaty between Prophet Muhammad and Quraysh tribe
Principles of Justice and Equity	Justice and fairness are central to conflict resolution. The legal maxim "Do not wrong or be wronged" (La Tadhlimu wa La Tudhlamu) highlights this. Islamic jurists apply these principles to state relations to prevent oppression and support the oppressed, ensuring conflicts are resolved equitably.	Islamic legal maxim "La Tadhlimu wa La Tudhlamu" (Do not wrong or be wronged)

3. Modern Applications: Relevance in Today’s Globalized World

Although traditional methods of conflict resolution in IIL were effective at one time, they now encounter various challenges in implementation. Currently, the reasons for international conflicts are more often about economics, politics, and helping people, whereas before it was mainly about religion or territory (I. Ahmad et al., 2024).

- a. A serious challenge in resolving conflicts today under Islam is the conflict between nations’ independence and international guidelines for humanitarian protection. The current international legal order puts human rights first and expects states to abstain from interfering in the internal matters of each other. Islamic law places great importance on the authority of the state and demands that its ruler keep justice in the land (Kuran, 2013). As a result, international pressure over human rights, democracy, and minority protection can cause problems for Muslim-majority countries. According to Islamic law, non-interference conflicts with the norm of intervening to stop major human rights abuses, as allowed by the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).
- b. Traditional methods such as Sulh and Tahkim were meant for state-centric conflicts or private issues between individuals (Rasyid et al.,

2023). Today, the presence of non-government groups, big international corporations, cyber attacks, and environmental challenges can turn conflicts into complex matters (Haider, 2024). Islamic ways to settle disputes are not well suited for conflicts or governance problems involving non-state actors.

- c. Because international organizations like the United Nations and the International Criminal Court have evolving roles, it is not simple to use Islamic principles when solving disputes. The idea of Sulh in Islam sometimes goes against the secular rules of international law, which focus on the enforcement of treaties and bringing war criminals to justice regardless of their beliefs.

Comparative Analysis: Areas of Convergence and Divergence

We should start by understanding what is similar and what is different between IIL and international law. The main objective of both systems is to maintain peace, support justice, and ensure the dignity of people (Haider et al., 2023). However, how they work towards these objectives is not always the same.

1. Convergence

- a. Both international and Islamic law give importance to justice. In Islamic International Law, justice is emphasized in a way that supports international law's goals of protecting human rights and treating all people fairly. Both the Qur'an and international law support equal rights for everyone, as stated in the Qur'anic principle of justice.
- b. Both IIL and international law support countries working out their disagreements by talking and finding peaceful solutions, as seen in Sulh and the UN's diplomatic actions.

2. Divergence

- a. A major divergence is found in the principle of sovereignty. The IIL stresses that the Muslim state is independent and that its leaders are required to apply Islamic laws within their territory. Instead, modern international law tends to encourage everyone to be involved and share responsibility, especially for matters such as human rights, environmental conservation, and security worldwide. This can lead to problems when a state's laws do not match up with international standards.
- b. In Islamic law, there are often difficulties in promoting equality for women and minorities compared to the international human rights standards, which advocate for equal treatment regardless of gender, race, or religion. Focusing on community groups or religious communities sometimes leads IIL to act against individual rights as stated by international documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Proposed Integrative Approaches: Harmonizing IIL with International Legal Standards

In many aspects, Islamic International Law can be compatible with the standards of today's world without having to let go of its main principles. The idea is to identify options that let both legal systems live side by side and support each other.

1. Embracing the Flexibility of IIL:

Reviewing IIL concepts by applying modern concepts, such as gender equality and concern for freedoms, is helpful. Putting justice and equality at the forefront, Islam does not agree with traditions that restrict women's rights. So, it becomes clearer for IIL to adapt and use modern human rights standards.

2. Building on Shared Ethical Foundations:

Justice, peace, and human dignity are emphasized in international as well as IIL. The framework could highlight the important values that nations agree on. In both Islamic law and today's international law, protecting people caught in conflicts is important. Both systems strive to ensure safety and avoid harm. By noticing what they share, countries can combine their insight from both traditions when solving problems at the international level.

3. Bridging International Institutions and Islamic Law

If Islamic values are accepted in global organizations, it may help bring people closer and reduce disputes. Muslim-majority nations could get involved in global organizations and offer their views on justice, peace, and human rights. The international community can work with Islamic scholars to mix Islamic values with modern rules in its laws. The United Nations might find it valuable to apply reconciliation and the restoration of justice ideas in its peacebuilding work and initiatives after conflicts (Haider, 2023).

Future Prospects: A Unified Legal Framework Incorporating Elements of Both Systems

1. Adapting to Global Challenges

Because of globalization, it is important for states to cooperate internationally on matters such as the climate, trade, and security (Haider et al., 2024). We can come up with new answers by linking the principles of IIL to human rights in international law. Khilafah, which is a UNESCO-recognized term in Islam, could be used to support global efforts for sustainable development and fighting climate change. Using both religious

ethics and international law, we can find better ways to deal with global problems.

2. Practical Applications in Conflict Resolution

A common system of laws could greatly help when settling disputes. For many years, Sulh and Tahkim from Islamic law have been used to solve issues between countries peacefully. These principles can be put into modern diplomatic processes to make global peace efforts more effective. Because the principles of Islamic law focus on coming together, adopting them may lead to countries cooperating more, especially in regions where political issues or group disagreements lead to violence.

3. Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue

Building a common set of rules would encourage dialogue between legal experts and Islamic scholars to demonstrate the place of religious laws in the global leadership. Both countries should put emphasis on respect and understanding to make sure their legal systems adapt when needed. Focusing on goals such as justice, peace, and working together, countries and international organizations can develop solutions for Muslim-majority countries that fit within the wider communities' standards.

Conclusion

This article takes an important and timely step in bringing Islamic International Law (IIL) back into the conversation about today's global legal challenges. This work connects old Islamic legal traditions with today's international relations. It shows how Islamic international law can work with and even improve current legal systems, filling an important gap in the literature. While some researchers either idealize the old foundations of IIL or dismiss them as outdated in today's secular world, this study identifies a thoughtful middle ground. It does not argue that one system should dominate the other; instead, it suggests a respectful coexistence where Islamic values like justice, fairness, and human dignity are meaningfully woven into international law. One of the key contributions here is the focus on how flexible and evolving IIL is. By examining issues such as conflict resolution, sovereignty, human rights, and non-interference, the article shows that Islamic legal principles are not trapped in the past—they are vibrant and able to tackle today's most pressing problems, ranging from nuclear agreements to refugee crises. Using examples like the Iran Nuclear Deal and Saudi Arabia's involvement in Yemen, it highlights both the tensions and potential collaborations between Islamic law and international law, encouraging us to move beyond seeing them as simply compatible or in conflict. Legal experts, lawmakers, and students need to understand that learning about International Islamic Law (IIL) is now more

important and practical. As cultures and influences become more global, Muslim-majority countries are playing a bigger role in shaping international laws. Therefore, IIL should adapt to meet global needs. This article not only points out the problems, but it also suggests solutions that respect classic Islamic beliefs and also accept modern principles like supporting human rights, helping the environment, and promoting peace. The main lesson for anyone interested in interfaith or intercultural dialogue is that each situation requires a unique approach to justice or peace. The principles and tools found in Islamic law promote peace and good leadership and should be explored in other legal systems. This article connects different legal approaches and helps us understand each other better, contributing to a more global and ethical legal framework.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. All research and findings are presented honestly and without any personal or financial bias.

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