

# Islamic International Relations Towards a Theoretical Framework

Gubara Said Hassan<sup>1</sup>

The end of the Cold War, in 1989-1991, was among the great events of the twentieth-century history marking as dramatic a shift in world affairs/international relations like the ends of World Wars One and Two. Such end has produced a new international political context and global developments, one being a prolonged historical globalization and religious resurgence that stand as major and highly visible features of the 'clash',<sup>2</sup> 'dialogue'<sup>3</sup> and 'alliance of civilizations'.<sup>4</sup> These developments run counter to the complex process of 'modernization'<sup>5</sup> and its concomitant 'secularisation'.<sup>6</sup> In this new context, religion, including Islam, becomes an increasingly significant factor not only in the public political arenas but also in trans-national and international relations. In other words, particularly in the post-bipolar era, Islam as a religion is intensively politicized, and thus pertinent to the study of international relations (IRs). That, it is imperative to include in our theoretical frames, understandings, and researches of international relations the various manifestations of religion, including Islam, and their tremendous influences on the range of intricate political, socio-economic, and cultural phenomena that the multi-faceted discipline of international relations seeks to explain.

Furthermore, in the Cold War years, the international relations (IRs) community was divided along the traditional lines of those who study the political economy of the global system and those focusing on conservative security and strategic studies. This debate did not take into account that religion, including Islam, if politicised, could become a significant ideology in international affairs. However, with the end of the Cold War and the demise of 'bi-polarity',<sup>7</sup> the international system and hence international relations have changed radically. Traditional international relations theory/theories, the balance of power in particular, is not well-equipped to deal with the new prominence and

---

<sup>1</sup> The author is a Lecturer at the Institute of Policy Studies, UBD. He has authored books include "Radical Islam" (2003) and "Darfur Conflict" (2007).

<sup>2</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Summer, 1993

<sup>3</sup> *UNO's Year of Dialogue among Civilizations*, available at [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

<sup>4</sup> *Vienna Forum Report- UN Alliance of Civilizations*, available at [www.unaoc.org](http://www.unaoc.org)

<sup>5</sup> Tin Allen and Alan Thomas, *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*, Oxford: The Open University, 2000

<sup>6</sup> Mustafa Kamal Pasha, "Nihilism and the Otherness of Islam", *Millennium- Journal of International Studies*, Vol.42, No.1, 2013

<sup>7</sup> Richard N. Haass, "The Age of Nonpolarity: What will follow U.S. Dominance?" *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008

challenge of religion in the form of Islam in an international system that is essentially based on a heterogeneity encompassing 'nation-states'<sup>1</sup> with different cultures and civilizations, including Islam. Moreover, religion, along with its vigorous global revival and politicization, and 'de-secularisation'<sup>2</sup> are among the issues that should be carefully investigated by international relations scholars.

Furthermore, it may be suggested that Islam contributes to the criticism of the Western secularization, "the process by which religious thinking, practices, and institutions lose their significance for the operation of the social system."<sup>3</sup> Islam is an active force in international relations because of the way it is used to frame political dialogue within and between states to stimulate diplomatic bonds, economic dealings, and cultural exchanges. In addition, because it is inherently transnational, connecting both Muslims and non-Muslims worldwide, Islam could also contribute to constructive criticism and revision of the post-Cold War international system and relations which 'perpetuate Western political, economic, military, and even cultural hegemony and question Muslims' dependence and subservience'.<sup>4</sup> Unlike, the era of decolonization, the current rise of Islam and the Muslims' revolt against the West are not only directed against Western political hegemony, but also and primarily against the dominance of Western norms, values, and rules as well as the world order or 'world system'<sup>5</sup> and international relations they underpin.

International relations studies should challenge such Western hegemony and break the secular conviction that the study of religion traditionally belongs to divinity schools and departments of theology and comparative religion. This paper humbly takes up this tremendous challenge. Its point of departure and focus is that Islam is a comprehensive system of life with intrinsic grounds for being internationally political, economic, cultural, and civilizational, and hence pertinent to the study of international relations (IRs). It further seeks to offer a general overview about the evolution of international relations (*siyar*) in Islam as well as the basis of inter-state or/and international relations between Muslim polity and non-Muslim polities. The paper presents four juristic and scholastic options that can be the foundation of international relations between an Islamic polity

---

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Straumann, "The Peace of Westphalia as a Secular Constitution", *Constellations*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2008

<sup>2</sup> Peter L. Berger, *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, Washington D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999

<sup>3</sup> Nils Holm, *Islam and Christianity in School Religious Education*, Turku: Abo Academy, 2000: 11

<sup>4</sup> Richard Falk, "False Universalism and the Geopolitics of Exclusion: The Case of Islam", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 1, March 1997: 8-9

<sup>5</sup> For more on 'world system' see, for instance, Janet Abu-Lughod, "The Shape of the World System in the Thirteenth Century", *Studies in Comparative International Developments*, Winter 1987.

and its non-Muslim counterparts: peace, war, armistice (*hudna*) or treaty (*sulh*, *muwaddah*) and preaching (*da'wah*).

### **Islam: A Comprehensive System (*Nizam Shamil*) of Life**

A significant approach in the religio-political and ideological discourses of Muslims 'jurists'<sup>1</sup> (*fuqaha*) and 'scholars'<sup>2</sup> (*ulama*) is their stress on the imperative that Muslims must understand Islam as the best revealed religion and that it is their immanent and transcendental salvation because it is a practical religion, offering guidance in social, political, economic and international affairs. If contemporary Muslim recapture the comprehensive dimension and zeal of Islam, it will radically transform their political conditions as well as other facets of their lives. Islam should be seen as a righteous program of sublime principles, values and actions which can galvanise Muslims worldwide by the passion of its commitment to the fusion, not fission, of religion and state, the achievement of social justice through the constructive transformation of the socio-economic, political and cultural conditions of mankind, including the Muslim world. The Muslims jurists' and scholars' emphasis on the comprehensiveness of Islam (*shumuliyat Al-Islam*) is consolidated by the belief in the 'Unity of Allah'<sup>3</sup> (*Tauhid*) or monotheism. More than an important tenet in Islam, the 'Oneness of God' serves as a program of action in which Islam radiates as the proper point of reference or holistic referential framework for all walks of life in this world and the Hereafter (*al-akhirah*).

Since there is only One Creator and Divine Sovereign for Heavens, Earth, and mankind, it is not possible to separate religion (i.e., Islam) from society, economics, and politics, including international relations. The essential Divine and Prophetic message (*Risalah*), teachings and rules of Islam are all-inclusive and regulate all mundane matters, including relations between Muslims and non-Muslim polities on an international scale. For Sayyid Qutb, "Islam is not only rituals performed, an ethical call, a mere system of government, an economic system or a system of international relations. All these are some of the several aspects of Islam, not the whole of Islam."<sup>4</sup> Indispensable to the belief in the 'Unity and Oneness of Allah' (*Tauhid*) is the divine obligation that man, God's vicegerent on earth, "should organize his entire life and connections with the universe, creatures and his society, polity, and relations with Muslims and non-Muslims in accordance with faith (*Iman*) in God and the true application of His teachings and ordinances"<sup>5</sup> i.e., the

---

<sup>1</sup> See the Jurists of the Hanbali, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanafi schools of Islamic jurisprudence and their followers.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Y. Al-Qaradawi, H. Al-Turabi, A. Al-Awdah, M.S. Al-Awwah, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Iqbal Kailani, *The Book of Oneness of Allah* (Kitab Al-tawhid), Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers and Distributors, 1998

<sup>4</sup> Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Al-Tarikh Fikra Wa Minhaj* (On History: An Idea and A Method), Cairo: Dar Al-Shuruq, 1995: 22

<sup>5</sup> Hassan Al-Turabi, *Al-Iman: Atharahu Fi Hayat Al-Insan* (Faith: Its Impact on Human Life), Beirut: Mansurat Al-Asr Al-Hadith, 1984: 6

realisation of monotheism (*Tauhīd*) to ‘attain pleasure/happiness’<sup>1</sup> in this ‘world and the Hereafter’.<sup>2</sup>

### Historical Evolution and Definition(s) of IR (*Siyar*) in Islam

International relations, recognised in Arabic language as ‘(*alaqat/mu’amalat*)’<sup>3</sup> or in Islamic international law as “*siyar*”<sup>4</sup> evolved in the early eighth century AD and became a branch of Islamic law. *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) is a source of Islamic law and represents the totality of jurisprudential explanations, deductions, and rational reasoning and judgments (*ijtihadat*) of competent and independent Muslim jurists (*fuqaha*) and scholars (*ulama*). *Fiqh* should not be confused with its fundamental sources, the Noble Qur’ān and the Prophetic traditions (Sunnah), which combined constitute the Islamic Sharī’ah, and ‘analogy (*qiyas*), and consensus (*ijmā*)’<sup>5</sup>. Islamic law provides rules regarding relations between Muslims states and non-Muslims ones during war, peace, and treaty.

For Abdulhamid Abu Sulayman, quoting Majid Khadduri’s introduction to al-Shaybani’s, *The Islam Law of Nations*, *siyar* juristically describes “the conduct of the believers (Muslims) in their relationships with the unbelievers of enemy territory as well as with people with whom the believers have made treaties, who may have been temporarily (*musta’man* - the subject of a state which was at war with a Muslim state and granted safe conduct to enter Muslim territory) or permanently *dhimmi* – (the non-Muslim subject of a Muslim state) in Muslim land; with apostates, *murtaddun*...and with rebels...”<sup>6</sup> *Siyar* also comprises the instructions or regulations and rules of enlightened interactions and dealings with nations and states having relations of friendship (*mawaddah*) with Muslims, which are contrasted in the Qur’ān and Prophetic traditions (Sunnah) with those of enmity or animosity. Imam Muhammad Ibn Ahmed Al-Sarkhasi (died 1090 AD)

---

<sup>1</sup> Majid Fakhry, *Al-Farabi: Founder of Islamic Neoplatonism*, Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002

<sup>2</sup> Surah An-Nahl: 96 and Surah Taha: 123-124

<sup>3</sup> Essentially, the concept of *siyar* evolved from its multiple lexicographical meanings, in particular from its connotation of behavior or conduct, practice. Expressed as a noun, this is *sira*, of which *siyar* is the plural. *Sira* in the singular came to be used by compilers of Prophetic traditions (*ahadith*), and historians or/and chroniclers in their narrative accounts to mean life or biography, i.e. the conduct of an individual, such as in the *Sīrah* of Ibn Hisham, which relates the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and military campaigns (*maghazi*). In its plural form, though, it also came to be used by jurists to denote the conduct of a state in its relations with other polities and communities.

<sup>4</sup> For an elaborate definition of *siyar* see, for instance, Muhammad Munir, “Islamic International Law (*Siyar*): An Introduction”. Available at <https://ssrn.com/abstract>, and Shaheen Sardar Ali and Javaid Rehman, “The Concept of Jihad in Islamic International Law”, *Journal of Conflict & Security Law*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2005: 321- 343.

<sup>5</sup> The secondary sources of *fiqh* include, for instance, public interest (*maslaha ammah*), custom (*urf*), the practices of early Caliphs, the practices of other rulers not repudiated by Muslims jurists, treaties, official or state military and diplomatic instructions, reciprocity, official declarations of unilateral and bilateral nature, etc. These are also the source of *siyar*. See Muhammad Hamidullah, *Muslim Conduct of State*, Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1977.

<sup>6</sup> Abdulhamid Abu Sulayman, *Towards and Islamic Theory of International Relations: New Dimensions for Methodology and Thought*. Herndon, Virginia: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993: 7. See also Muhammad Ibn Al-Hassan Al-Shaybani, *Kitab Al-Siyar Al-Saghir (The Shorter Book of Muslim International Law)*, trans., Mahmood Ahmed Ghazi, Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1998

of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence depicts *siyar* as “the behaviour of the Muslims in dealing with the polytheists from among belligerents as well as those of them who have made peace treaty (with Muslims) and live either as resident aliens or as non-Muslim citizens [of the Muslim state]; in dealings with apostates who are the worst of the infidels, since they renounce Islam after acceptance; and dealing with rebels whose position is less unworthy than that of the polytheists.”<sup>1</sup>

Some important areas under the chapters on *siyar* by Muslim jurists (*fuqaha*) including al-Sarakhsi, Kasani, an-Nawawi, Imam Abu Ishaq al-Shirazi, etc., comprise *peaceful relations* with non-Muslims, dealings (*mu’amalat*) in social life and business, peace and trade treaties (*mu’ahadat*) with non-Muslims, territorial jurisdiction, and protection of diplomatic envoys. For Usman Jum’ah Zamiriyya, these, i.e., areas of *siyar*, “are the rules for relations with non-Muslims in *dar-al-harb* and *dar as-salām* during war and peace.”<sup>2</sup> Other definitions of *Siyar* have been provided by ‘Muslims scholars’<sup>3</sup> (*ulama*) across space and time. These scholars have attempted to modify al-Sarakhsi’ above-mentioned definition and make it relevant to the present environment of international politics and relations. For instance, Muhammad Munir illustrates *siyar* as “that set of norms and rules of Islamic law that regulate relations of a Muslim state with other states and that are binding on the Muslim state under Islamic Sharī’ah. This can be stated to be Muslim international law”.<sup>4</sup> In other words, these rules and norms lay at the heart of relations that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ developed and that emerged in subsequent decades as the classical bipartite division of the world and its complex relations into (*dar al-Islam/al-salam*) and (*dar al-harb/al-adawah*).

### **Relations between Muslims and Non-Muslims: Peace (*salām*), War (*harb*), treaty (*a’hd, sulh, hudna, mawaddah*), and Preaching (*da’wah*)**

Islam establishes the foundation of relations (*alaqat*) between peoples or nations on the ground whether they are believers or non-believers. Labeeb Ahmed Bsoul, quoting Ibn Al-Qayyim, in his *Zaad al-Ma’ad*, states that, ‘relations between the Prophet and the unbelievers remained ill-defined until a portion of *surah at-Tawbah*,<sup>5</sup> was revealed, dividing the unbelievers into three groups: *muharibun* (those in a state of war with Muslims), *ahl al-a’hd* (people in a treaty relationship with Islam), and *ahl al-dhimma*

<sup>1</sup> M. Ibn Ahmed Al-Sarkhasi, *Kitab Al-Mabsoot*, Beirut: Dar Ehya Al-Turath Al-Arabi, Vol.10, 2002: 5. Imam Abu Hanifa, the founder of the Hanafi School of *fiqh* is believed to be the first jurist who used the term *siyar* for the set of rules governing relations between a Muslim state and non-Muslim states during war and peace.

<sup>2</sup> Usman Jum’ah Zamiriyya, *Usul Al-Alaqat Al-Duwaliyya*. Amman: Dar Al-Ma’ali, 1990: 33

<sup>3</sup> Nagib Arminazi, Muhammad Munir, Majid Khadduri, Muhammad Hamidullah (died 1n 2002), and others

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Munir, “Islamic International Law (*Siyar*): An Introduction”. Available at <https://ssrn.com/abstract>.

<sup>5</sup> *Surah at-Tawbah*: 1-4

(non-Muslims who are protected with a treaty of surrender). On that basis, Muslim jurists and scholars divided the world into domains or abodes, one known as (*dar al-Islam/peace*) and the other called (*dar al-harb/enmity*). In theory, (*dar al-Islam/peace*) was at permanent war with (*dar al-harb/enmity*). Furthermore, the above-mentioned classical division of the world into (*dar al-Islam/al-salam*) and (*dar al-harb/al-adawah*) is not laid down explicitly in the Qur'ān. Instead, it is understood to be a legal and political structure for international relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. It is developed by means of Muslim juristic and scholastic *ijtihād*, essentially the Hanafi School of jurisprudence. For Samy Ayoub, “most classical legal schools, Hanafi, Shāfi'e, Māliki and Hanbali, perceive the world as a dichotomy of *dar al-Islam* vs. *dar al-harb*.”<sup>1</sup> With this background in mind, it is understandable that that the notion of *dar al-Islam* is the one side of the coin which inevitably defines the meaning of the other side, *dar al-harb*.

On the one hand, *dar al-Islam* is juristically defined, for instance, by as-Shaybāni (died 805 AD) as the domain that “comes under Islamic authority or one where the *zuhur* (emergence) of Islamic rulings apply, or where Muslim live in a state of protection.”<sup>2</sup> An exemplary definition of *dar al-Islam* that has been agreed upon and applied by modern Muslim scholars runs as follows: “*dar al-Islam* includes the territories where the principles of Islamic rulings are enforced or where Muslims are able to practice the legal rulings of Islam...Any place or territory populated by a majority of Muslim residents, or any place that is conquered by Muslims and ruled by them, and any place where Muslim residents are able to implement Islamic rulings is *dar al-Islam*. In contrast to *dar al-Islam* and peace, Muslim jurists and scholars are in agreement that *dar al-harb* is the territory where the rulings (*ahkām*), based on non-Islamic principles and legal structures, are authoritatively imposed and implemented and where Muslims feel insecure to practice Islam and apply its laws. In these senses, the main legal distinctions between the two antagonistic abodes, *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb*, are the safety or security and protection of Muslims residents and ‘the applicability of Islamic laws.’<sup>3</sup>

Conversely, one could claim that the juristic and scholastic traditional notion of a dualistic division of the world on pure religious grounds into *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb* is not an integral part of the contemporary Muslim approach to international relations (IRs) and is rejected by the majority of contemporary Muslim scholars. This divisional paradigm has been ‘effectively abrogated’ because Muslim nations-states have adopted Western

---

<sup>1</sup> Samy Ayoub, “Territorial Jurisprudence, *ikhtilaf al-darayn*: Political Boundaries & Legal Jurisdiction”, *Contemporary Islamic Studies*, No. 2, 2012

<sup>2</sup> Labeeb Ahmed Bsoul, “Theory of International Relations in Islam”, *Digest of the Middle East Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 2007: 74

<sup>3</sup> See Tina Roeder, “Traditional Islamic Approaches to Public International Law- Historic Concepts, Modern Implications”, Max-Planck-institute, 2012: 528, available at <http://www.zaoerv.de>.

principles of territorial sovereignty and territorial laws and adapted to the legal structures and fundamental rules of the hegemonic and predominantly secular West. Another reason for such abrogation (*naskh*) is the fact that the origin of Muslim relations with non-Muslims is not founded on hostile but rather on peace or peaceful relations. According to Muhammad Tal'at Ghunaymi, a contemporary Muslim scholar, "the relationship between Muslim and other nations is based on how the other nations perceive Islam. If these nations have the intention of arriving at a peaceful agreement with Muslims such as truce or *muwaddah*, this would determine the type of mutual relations. Upon the establishment of such relations with given nations, Muslims are prohibited from taking any type of offensive action against them."<sup>1</sup> As an alternative to the bipartite paradigm, Muslim scholars resort to the earlier crafted juridical or legal labels to represent the kinds of relations with non-Muslim states and their subjects, such as *hudna* or *muwaddah* (truce), *sulh* (armistice or treaty), *amn* (safety), *mithāq* (covenant or pact), *dhimmi* (non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic state) and *'ahd* (covenant or pledge). All these *relations* are forms of *'aqd* (contract) that are considered binding, provided that they do not stipulate anything that contradicts the fundamental sources of Islamic law.

These contracts or treaties can be either written or oral, depending on the nature of the treaty. Differently expressed, a rather large number of Muslim jurists and scholars adopt a tripartite paradigm of the world and its relevant international relations, consisting of *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb* and a third abode with a multitude of names that usually denotes non-Muslim nations that have contractual agreements with *dar al-Islam*. This third abode is commonly termed or labelled the abode of treaty or the abode of agreement or truce or armistice (abode of *sulh*) in order to illustrate the varying contractual nature of relations with *dar al-Islam*. Such abode (*dar*) seems to have evolved mainly within the Shafi'e school of Islamic jurisprudence and the various works of its prominent followers, e.g., Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Habib 'al-Mawardi'.<sup>2</sup> It, i.e., *dar al-sulh* or *al-ahd* has created a heated dispute and variance in opinion among classical and modern scholars regarding its status which they associate with the existence or absence of an effective agreement or contractual relations with non-Muslims or *ahl al-dhimmah* or dhimmis (people under the protection of *dar al-Islam*).

In addition to contractual relations with non-Muslims, Muslims have known and used preaching or call (*da'wah*) throughout the history of Islam. Virtually, jurists, scholars, and students of Islam, as well as Muslims in general, acknowledge that Islam is a missionary

---

<sup>1</sup> Ghunaymi Muhammad Tal'at, *Qanun Al-salam fi Al-Islam (The Law of Peace in Islam)*. Alexandria: Munshurat Al-Ma'arif, 1988: 104

<sup>2</sup> See Al-Mawardi, Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Habib, *Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyyah: The Laws of Islamic Governance*, translated by Asadullah Yate. London: Taha Publishers, 1996. Also translated as the *Ordinances of Government: A Translation of Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyyah Wa Al-Wilyat Al-Diniyyah* by Wafaa H. Wahba. Reading: Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization, 1996.

religion i.e., “one in which the spreading of the truth and the conversion of unbelievers are raised to the rank of a sacred duty by the founder or his immediate successors.”<sup>1</sup> That, since the Noble Qur’ān urges Muslim believers to absolutely avoid ‘compulsion’<sup>2</sup> or coercion in calling non-Muslims to embrace Islam, it would logically follow that the most convenient method to convert non-Muslims to Islam would be to peacefully persuade them of Islam’s universal mission of mercy (*rahmah*) and guidance (*hidayah*). Muslims are also Qur’ānically ordered to practice preaching by adopting wisdom (*hikmah*) and good advice: “Invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good advice.”<sup>3</sup> In these senses, the Hanafi scholar Al-Kasani (d. 1191 AD) indicates that the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims should be based on, first, ‘fair preaching’<sup>4</sup> (*da’wah*) or an invitation to Islam and the appropriate understanding of its message (*risālah*), principles, and rules (*ahkām*). Preaching, according to him is divided into two kinds: one is by *binān* (fight) and the second is by *bayān* or *lisān* (tongue). The latter variety of preaching is far preferable and desirable since the consequences are less severe for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

## Conclusion

To conclude, according to classical Muslims jurists, *siyar* means the conduct of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his guided successors during wars and peace in their relations with non-Muslim states, rules of dealing with rebels, apostates, and foreigners as well as non-Muslim citizens of a Muslim state. A relevant definition of *siyar* would be, the rules of Islamic law that regulate relations of a Muslim state with other states and that are binding on the Muslim state under Islamic sharī’ah. This paper also attempts to present a general perspective on the evolution of *siyar* and of its key concepts *dar al-harb* and *dar al-Islam*. It shows how highly complex legal structure evolved out of a much-localised effort at dealing ethically with the adversaries of the emerging Islamic state. The simplicity of the bipartite worldview i.e. its division into *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb* contradicts the juristic and scholastic exertions (*ijtihādāt*) that went into developing an ideal paradigm and practice of peaceful coexistence and constructive cooperation (i.e., *sulh*, *’ahd*, armistice, *mawaddah*) that had at its core not just the protection of the Muslim state, the preservation of Muslims’ freedom or even the non-violent preaching (*da’wah*) and widespread of their faith, but the safeguarding of fair dealings (*mu’amalat*) with other Non-Muslim sovereign nations and national groups worldwide. Indeed, a constant pillar in the debate over *dar al-harb* and *dar al-Islam* is the dominant concern for

<sup>1</sup> Egdunas Racius, *The Multiple Nature of the Islamic Da’wa*. Helsinki: Valopaino Oy, 2004: 5

<sup>2</sup> Surah al-Baqarah: 256

<sup>3</sup> Surah An-Nahl: 125

<sup>4</sup> See Al-Kasani, Imam Ala’ al-Din Abi Bakr Ibn Mas’oud, *Bada’i al-Sana’i fi Tarteeb al-Shara’i*, Beirut: Dar al-Hadith, 1986.

"protection" or safeguarding not only of Muslim territory but also communities of dhimmis with whom Muslim leaders had entered into contractual relations or agreements. That such a commitment should have been paramount in the face of constant conflict and shifting boundaries is testimony to the respect in Islamic law and culture for contractual obligations that secure internationally interdependent, peaceful and cooperative relations (*siyar*) between Muslims and non-Muslims.