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TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE: ISLAMIC LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF MUSLIM RELATIONS, TREATIES, AND CONFLICT

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Abstract
This study seeks to establish the Islamic foundations of Muslims' contribution to global peace by examining the nature of relations with non-Muslims, their governing principles, mechanisms for putting human values into practice, and the rules governing engagement with international treaties. It employs a descriptive and analytical approach, a limited thematic examination of relevant texts, comparison of selected exegetical and juristic discussions, and the derivation of institutional recommendations from the analysis. It distinguishes the treatment of peaceful individuals, interstate relations, and the rules applicable during armed conflict. The study favours peace and fulfilment of covenants as the basis for contemporary international engagement, without presenting this preference as a juristic consensus or reducing disagreements over the grounds for fighting to a single position. It shows that dignity, justice, mercy and cooperation call for practicable measures, and that assessing a treaty under Sharia does not dispense with examining its entry into force, domestic effect and the admissibility of reservations. The study recommends preparing scholars and educational institutions for mediation and dialogue, developing humanitarian cooperation, and undertaking joint treaty reviews by specialists in Sharia and law. These recommendations are normative proposals, not findings from empirical evaluation.

Keywords: Global peace; international relations in Islam; Sharia foundations; human coexistence; objectives of Sharia.

INTRODUCTION

Examining Muslims' contribution to peace becomes particularly important when Islamic legal discourse is required to explain the basis of engagement with those who differ in belief and to connect that basis with institutional practices. The research problem arises from the potential conflation of Islam's normative values, diverse juristic positions, Muslims' historical practices and the legal obligations of contemporary states. Collecting texts about virtues is therefore insufficient without explaining their implications and the limits of their application.

RESEARCH PROBLEM QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The study asks: How can Muslims' contribution to global peace be grounded in Islamic sources and translated into practical mechanisms while taking account of juristic disagreement and international obligations? Subsidiary questions concern the boundaries of relations with peaceful persons, belligerents and persons protected by covenant; the principles governing those relations; the translation of these principles into institutional roles; and the distinction between the Sharia assessment of treaties, their legal effects and reservations to them.

The objectives are to clarify these levels of analysis, explain the foundations of dignity, justice, mercy and fidelity to commitments, and propose means of dialogue and cooperation. The study's significance lies in avoiding broad political or legal conclusions based on truncated texts or generalisations about legal schools, and in connecting foundational analysis with responsibilities that can be put into practice.

SCOPE AND KEY CONCEPTS

Here, global peace means efforts to reduce violence, resolve disputes and safeguard rights among communities and states. It does not mean merely the absence of fighting or imply that human conflict can be eliminated. Muslims' role denotes the contributions of individuals, institutions and states within their respective spheres of competence. The study distinguishes a peaceful individual, a political party bound by a covenant, and a combatant during conflict; rules applicable to one category cannot be transferred to another without evidence. This is a normative study of selected examples, not a comprehensive survey of the legal tradition or an empirical assessment of state performance.

PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP AND THE STUDY'S CONTRIBUTION

Comparative works of jurisprudence, including Bidayat al-mujtahid, analyse disagreements over categories of combatants and non-combatants and their underlying reasoning. They help avoid attributing a single position to the tradition. Al-Kasani examines the inviolability of life in the context of retaliation and protected non-Muslim status, which requires attention to differences between legal chapters when using juristic texts in international relations.[2],[3]

Among modern foundational treatments, Abu Zahra connects international relations with ethical principles and favours peace while discussing the abode of war and covenants. His work helps construct the study's ethical framework, but adopting his preference does not remove the need to address the disagreements presented in juristic sources.[4]

The study does not claim that peace in Islam is an unexplored topic or that previous scholarship is absent. Its limited contribution combines clarification of juristic reasoning, differentiation between levels of treaty commitment, and proposals for clearly defined institutional roles. The foregoing review is selective and related to the research questions; it does not claim comprehensive coverage of the literature.

METHODOLOGY AND ORGANISATION

The study uses description and analysis, a limited thematic examination of Qur'anic verses and reports concerning benevolence, covenants and fighting, and comparison of selected texts in exegesis, jurisprudence and legal theory. Texts were selected for their direct relevance to the questions, with priority given to original sources and examination of disagreement rather than excerpts supporting only the preferred position. The findings were then compared with the texts of the Vienna Convention and CEDAW and the record of Egypt's reservation to clarify the relevant legal distinctions.

The weighing of positions rests on textual meaning and context, reconciliation of evidence where possible, distinction between established principles and matters of juristic interpretation, and identification of the limits of transferring a ruling beyond its original legal context. Recommendations are derived as proposals requiring independent evaluation. The study has four sections: the nature of relations, their governing principles, the implementation of human values, and engagement with international systems and treaties. A conclusion presents findings and recommendations.

1 THE NATURE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND OTHERS

Within the approach preferred by this study, peace is a guiding principle of human relations, connected to the objectives of Sharia in preserving life and establishing justice. In this context, Islamic law regulates engagement with others through ethical rules grounded in human dignity, mercy and fairness. Establishing this approach nevertheless requires distinguishing the duty of benevolence towards peaceful persons, the conditions for initiating war, and the rules of conduct during war. Establishing one of these areas does not exhaust the rules of the others.

The juristic tradition cannot properly be reduced to a claim that all jurists treated war as the norm merely because of religious difference. In discussing categories of those who do not fight, Ibn Rushd reports disagreements among Malik, Abu Hanifa, al-Shafi'i and others, tracing part of the disagreement to the legal basis for killing: unbelief or capacity to fight. He presents arguments based on the general wording of verses about fighting and on specific texts prohibiting the killing of certain categories. This is an account of disagreement within the law of war, not a declaration permitting attacks on every non-Muslim. The attribution here is to Ibn Rushd's comparative presentation, not to an exhaustive examination of every school's texts.[5]

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[2] Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-mujtahid wa-nihayat al-muqtasid* (Electronic Arabic text, Islamic Library, Islamweb; accessed October 5, 2026), Book of Jihad, first division, chapter 3. https://islamweb.net/ar/library/content/97/334/

[3] al-Kasani, *Bada'i' al-sana'i' fi tartib al-shara'i'* (Electronic Arabic text, Islamic Library, Islamweb; accessed October 5, 2026), Book of Criminal Offences, "The Obligation of Retaliation and Its Conditions," 7:237–38, according to the pagination displayed. https://islamweb.net/ar/library/content/12/3405/

[4] Muhammad Abu Zahra, *al-'Alaqat al-duwaliyyah fi al-Islam* (Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 1995), 22, 26–27, 34, 38, 40, 42, 55–57. https://dspace.alquds.edu/bitstreams/88b059bd-b9b6-4b22-83ab-e9a2f6d129b0/download

[5] Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-mujtahid wa-nihayat al-muqtasid*, Book of Jihad, first division, chapter 3, on permissible injury to the enemy; discussion of elderly persons and monastics, 1:315–16, according to the pagination displayed.

In a different context—retaliation against a Muslim for killing a protected non-Muslim (dhimmi)—al-Kasani rejects treating unbelief as an unrestricted ground for making bloodshed lawful. He links such permission to unbelief that gives rise to belligerency, while affirming the inviolability of the dhimmi's life so long as the protection remains in force. This statement cannot be transferred from the law of retaliation into a complete theory of international relations without explaining the limits of the inference. The comparison shows that belligerency, safe conduct and covenants are essential to understanding juristic positions, and that historical context assists interpretation rather than replacing analysis of texts and rulings.[6]

Islam is a religion of mercy: "We have sent you only as a mercy to all worlds" (Qur'an 21:107). This mercy finds expression in benevolence and justice towards those who neither fight Muslims nor expel them from their homes, as in al-Mumtahanah 60:8, and in the instruction to respond to an inclination towards peace in al-Anfal 8:61. The study relies on these texts in favouring peaceful engagement with peaceful persons and fulfilment of covenants, not to set aside texts on fighting or deny juristic disagreement over their interpretation.

The statement, "O you who believe, enter into al-silm wholly" (Qur'an 2:208), cannot be understood as a text admitting only the meaning of interstate peace. Al-Tabari discusses interpretations of al-silm and prefers the meaning of entering Islam and observing its prescriptions. The verse therefore does not independently establish a theory of international relations, although comprehensive religious commitment is connected with justice and fidelity to commitments.[7]

Ethical obligations remain binding during war. In the Prophet's instructions to army commanders, he said: "Do not misappropriate spoils, do not act treacherously, do not mutilate, and do not kill a child." This passage must be read alongside the rest of the hadith, which includes invitation to Islam, jizyah and fighting; it should not be isolated to establish that all rules of war are confined to immediate defence.[8]

Malik transmits from Yahya ibn Sa'id Abu Bakr's instructions to Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan, including prohibitions on killing women, children and elderly men, and on destroying inhabited places. The account is cited here as a report attributed to a Companion (mawquf) transmitted in al-Muwatta', not as a Prophetic hadith or evidence that every historical practice conformed to this ethical ideal.[9]

Peace creates space for dialogue and mutual acquaintance, as expressed in: "We made you peoples and tribes so that you may know one another" (Qur'an 49:13). The texts on fighting, however, require examination in context. The verse granting permission in al-Hajj 22:39 refers to oppression suffered, and al-Baqarah 2:190 prohibits transgression. Meanwhile, al-Tawbah 9:5 and 9:29, together with the hadith concerning invitation and jizyah, raise questions about the scope and conditions of fighting that cannot be settled by invoking a general objective alone.

In interpreting al-Baqarah 2:190, al-Tabari presents both the view that it was abrogated and the view that it remains operative. He favours not establishing abrogation without evidence and interprets the prohibition of transgression with reference to those who do not fight. This preference does not itself establish that all juristic rules of fighting are restricted to repelling an attack that has already occurred. Al-Tawbah 9:4 also exempts those who honour their covenants, while 9:6 provides for granting protection to a person who seeks it and conveying that person to safety. These texts affect the identification of those addressed and the boundaries of the command to fight.[10]

From the perspective of legal theory, it is insufficient to describe all texts on fighting as unrestricted (mutlaq) and then interpret them collectively through qualified texts (muqayyad). In al-Baqarah 2:191, the pronoun in "kill them" refers back to an earlier context, so interpretation begins by identifying its referent. In al-Tawbah 9:5, the issue concerns general wording alongside exceptions for those under covenant and provisions for safe conduct within the same context. These are contextual and general–specific relationships; they do not automatically correspond to every form of unrestricted and qualified wording.

Al-Zarkashi distinguishes cases in which the ruling and cause are the same from those in which they differ. He discusses disagreement where the ruling is the same but the cause differs, and reports differing views about the implication of a qualification and the basis for reading one text in light of another. It is therefore necessary first to identify the type of

[6] al-Kasani, *Bada'i' al-sana'i' fi tartib al-shara'i'*, Book of Criminal Offences, "The Obligation of Retaliation and Its Conditions," 7:237–38, according to the pagination displayed.

[7] al-Tabari, *Jami' al-bayan 'an ta'wil ay al-Qur'an* (Electronic Arabic text, Quran.com; accessed October 5, 2026), commentary on Qur'an 2:208. https://quran.com/2:208/tafsirs/ar-tafsir-al-tabari

[8] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim* (Arabic text and hadith numbering, Sunnah.com; accessed October 5, 2026), Book of Jihad and Expeditions, chapter on appointing commanders for expeditions, hadith 1731a. https://sunnah.com/muslim:1731a

[9] Malik ibn Anas, *al-Muwatta'* (Recension of Yahya, Arabic text, Sunnah.com; accessed October 5, 2026), Book of Jihad, chapter on the prohibition of killing women and children in military expeditions, report 971 in the site's Arabic numbering, corresponding to Book 21, Hadith 10 in its English numbering. https://sunnah.com/malik/21

[10] al-Tabari, *Jami' al-bayan 'an ta'wil ay al-Qur'an*, commentary on Qur'an 2:190, presentation of the two positions and preference against establishing abrogation without evidence.

textual indication, the ruling, the cause and the evidence connecting the texts, before examining specification, qualification or a claim of abrogation. This study reconciles evidence contextually where possible and does not claim that a single verbal rule resolves the entire juristic disagreement.[11]

In modern scholarship, Abu Zahra favours peace, distinguishes the designation "abode of war" from the rules governing relations, and connects those rules with justice and fulfilment of commitments. The study adopts an orientation towards peace, cooperation and covenants in contemporary relations while leaving disagreement over the grounds for fighting open to examination and not attributing this choice to a consensus. Nor does it treat doctrinal difference itself as a bar to benevolence, justice or dialogue in the best manner, in accordance with al-Mumtahanah 60:8 and al-'Ankabut 29:46.[12]

2 PRINCIPLES GOVERNING RELATIONS BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND OTHERS

Islamic Sharia establishes an ethical framework for regulating Muslims' relations with the world on lasting foundations. Islamic teachings call for mutual acquaintance, harmony and cooperation among people of different ethnicities and beliefs. Human diversity is a reality requiring mutual knowledge and justice: "Had Allah willed, He would have made you one community" (Qur'an 16:93). From this standpoint, Islam recognises dialogue as a means of achieving peace. Strengthening ties and cooperation on firm foundations enables Muslims to uphold justice, improve their relations with others, and advance humanity's aspirations to a secure life marked by fairness and stability. The principal foundations governing these relations are set out below.

First, human dignity. Islamic principles respect human dignity as an inherent right that is not lost merely through racial or religious difference. "We have indeed honoured the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, provided them with good things, and greatly favoured them above many of those We created" (Qur'an 17:70). This honour grounds the duty to protect people from humiliation and aggression; it does not entail eliminating distinctions among all detailed legal rulings. One illustration is the Prophet's standing for a Jewish funeral and asking, "Is it not a soul?"[13] In his sermon on the Day of Sacrifice, he also affirmed the inviolability of the blood, property and honour of those addressed. The sermon's implications should be understood within the limits of its wording, while benevolence towards non-Muslims rests on its own specific texts.[14]

Second, tolerance. Islam calls for a tolerance combining commitment to belief with good treatment of those who differ, without enabling injustice. This is illustrated by the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah and acceptance of a settlement despite some Companions' objections to its terms. It shows the possibility of giving priority to the interests of peace while doctrinal difference remains.[15] At the conquest of Mecca, safe conduct was granted to those who laid down their weapons or closed their doors. This illustrates restraint in the use of force and the provision of a route out of fighting; it does not imply that every event of the conquest involved an unconditional pardon.[16]

Third, the unity of the human family. Islam views humanity as one family sharing one Lord and one common ancestor: "O humankind, be mindful of your Lord, who created you from a single soul" (Qur'an 4:1). This outlook encourages mercy and justice and avoidance of aggression. Despite the diversity of peoples—"Among His signs are the creation of the heavens and the earth and the differences in your languages and colours; in that are signs for those who possess knowledge" (Qur'an 30:22)—difference does not justify hostility but opens the way to mutual acquaintance. "O humankind, We created you from a male and a female and made you peoples and tribes so that you may know one another. The most honoured of you before Allah is the most mindful of Him. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware" (Qur'an 49:13). Islam thus makes piety, rather than colour or language, the criterion of distinction and warns against discrimination that fragments the social fabric.[17]

Fourth, mercy and the prevention of corruption. Mercy provides an ethical starting point that resists cruelty: "They counselled one another to patience and counselled one another to mercy" (Qur'an 90:17). The Prophet said: "Whoever

[11] al-Zarkashi, *al-Bahr al-muhit fi usul al-fiqh* (Electronic Arabic text, Islamic Library, Islamweb; accessed October 5, 2026), section on unrestricted and qualified wording, discussions of wording occurring unrestricted in one place and qualified in another, and of reading the unrestricted through the qualified where the cause differs but the ruling does not. https://www.islamweb.net/ar/library/content/35/803/

[12] Abu Zahra, *al-'Alaqat al-duwaliyyah fi al-Islam*, 55–57.

[13] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, Book of Funerals, chapter on standing for a funeral, hadith 961a. https://sunnah.com/muslim:961a

[14] Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Arabic text and hadith numbering, Sunnah.com; accessed October 5, 2026), Book of Hajj, chapter on the sermon during the days at Mina, hadith 1739. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1739

[15] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Conditions, hadiths 2731–32, the Hudaybiyyah account. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2731

[16] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, hadith 1780c. https://sunnah.com/muslim:1780c

[17] Abu Zahra, *al-'Alaqat al-duwaliyyah fi al-Islam*, 22.

does not show mercy will not be shown mercy."[18] The Qur'an also commands reconciliation between believers when they fight in al-Hujurat 49:9 and prohibits ridicule, backbiting and unfounded suspicion in 49:11–12. These texts establish the ethics of the believing community. The extension of benevolence and justice to peaceful non-Muslims rests on al-Mumtahanah 60:8. The scope of a particular text should therefore be distinguished from a broader inference drawn from the evidence as a whole.

Fifth, human cooperation. The Qur'an emphasises cooperation in goodness: "Cooperate in righteousness and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and aggression" (Qur'an 5:2). Cooperation is governed by the lawfulness of its ends and means and can be put into practice through relief, education and the protection of people. The Prophet assisted those in need, as reflected in Khadijah's testimony that he helped people and honoured guests.[19] His statement, "Allah helps His servant as long as the servant helps his brother," occurs in the context of relieving distress. The permissibility of kindness towards peaceful non-Muslims does not depend solely on generalising the word "brother"; it is also supported by the texts on benevolence and justice discussed above.[20]

Sixth, human justice. Justice is the proper measure of relations and the foundation of tolerance. "Allah commands justice and benevolence" (Qur'an 16:90). Justice is also commanded towards opponents: "Do not let hatred of a people lead you to be unjust. Be just; that is nearer to piety" (Qur'an 5:8). The Prophet gave those who act justly glad tidings of elevated standing.[21] These principles require fairness towards those who differ in legal proceedings and fulfilment of their rights; hostility does not justify abandoning justice.

Seventh, fulfilment of covenants. Keeping commitments is a foundation of trust in dealings: "Fulfil the covenant; the covenant will indeed be called to account" (Qur'an 17:34), and "O you who believe, fulfil your contracts" (Qur'an 5:1). Abu Zahra treats agreements of safe conduct and non-aggression as means of establishing lasting peace and stresses that their strength depends on the parties' resolve to fulfil them.[22] The Sunnah contains a severe warning against unlawfully killing a person protected by covenant, preventing religious difference from becoming a pretext for violating safe conduct.[23]

Eighth, reciprocity. Islam calls for reciprocity within the limits of justice: "If you retaliate, retaliate only to the extent of what you suffered; but if you remain patient, that is better for those who are patient" (Qur'an 16:126). Where aggression is unjust, a proportionate response is just if it respects the limits of Sharia. This does not conflict with pardon, since the aim is to protect virtue. Islamic virtue is active and rejects submission to wrongdoing. Reciprocity does not permit an independently prohibited act: the prohibitions of treachery and mutilation and the protection of non-combatants do not lapse merely because an opponent violates them.[24]

Ninth, freedom. Islam grants human beings a regulated freedom that safeguards their dignity and prohibits coercion in religion: "There is no compulsion in religion" (Qur'an 2:256). It calls for reflection and responsible choice and rejects imitation that renders reasoned evidence ineffective. Within this study, freedom concerns preventing coercion and persecution and enabling dialogue. This brief account is not intended to resolve every issue of freedom of belief or its detailed juristic rules.

Tenth, virtue. Islam treats virtue as an ethical rule that elevates human conduct: "The most honoured of you before Allah is the most mindful of Him" (Qur'an 49:13). During war, it stresses piety as a restraint upon the self: "Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress" (Qur'an 2:190), and "Whoever attacks you, respond to him to the extent that he attacked you, and be mindful of Allah" (Qur'an 2:194). Such protection extends to peaceful and vulnerable persons, connecting the use of force with moral responsibility.[25]

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[18] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Good Manners, chapter on showing mercy to, kissing and embracing children, hadith 5997. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5997

[19] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of the Beginning of Revelation, hadith 3. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3

[20] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, Book of Remembrance, Supplication, Repentance and Seeking Forgiveness, hadith 2699a. https://sunnah.com/muslim:2699a

[21] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, Book of Government, chapter on the merit of a just ruler, hadith 1827. https://sunnah.com/muslim:1827

[22] Abu Zahra, *al-'Alaqat al-duwaliyyah fi al-Islam*, 42.

[23] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Jizyah and Truces, chapter on the sin of killing a person protected by covenant without an offence, hadith 3166. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3166

[24] Abu Zahra, *al-'Alaqat al-duwaliyyah fi al-Islam*, 34, 38, 40.

[25] Abu Zahra, *al-'Alaqat al-duwaliyyah fi al-Islam*, 34.

3 MUSLIMS' ROLE IN STRENGTHENING HUMAN VALUES

Human values are standards regulating conduct and social relations. Islam gives particular attention to embedding justice, mercy and cooperation in its followers' conduct so that they are reflected in daily life. Having established the foundations in the previous section, this section considers the meaning and sources of values and the means of implementing them. Affirming their merit is insufficient without identifying the actors, means and boundaries of responsibility. The following proposals are normative deductions from the principles discussed, not claims about the effectiveness of programmes evaluated empirically.

3.1 The Concept of Human Values in Islam

First, defining values. In this study, values are the standards by which individuals and institutions assess conduct and direct it towards goodness and justice. This is an operational definition delimiting the inquiry, not an attempt to encompass all philosophical and sociological definitions. Describing these values as human indicates their connection to human dignity and relations with others, while their foundations here are drawn from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Second, the importance of values in building society. Values organise relations among members of society, guide conduct towards virtue, and help restrain desires and ambitions. In relation to peace, their normative function is to prevent group partisanship from justifying injustice, protect rights during conflict and build trust through fulfilled commitments. Merely proclaiming these values does not establish their realisation in practice or independently explain a society's stability or collapse. Such findings require separate empirical research.

Third, the characteristics of Islamic values. Within this study, the following characteristics may be highlighted:

Divine grounding: their normative foundations derive from revelation, while the authority of the text remains distinct from the correctness of human understanding. Interpretation and application are open to scholarly review, and the effects of institutional programmes can be evaluated.

Comprehensiveness and integration: they concern people's spiritual, intellectual and social dimensions. Justice in public relations is therefore inseparable from honesty and mercy in individual conduct.

Moderation: they take account of individual and social needs and balance the protection of rights with the possibility of pardon. Tolerance does not justify aggression, nor does responding to aggression justify exceeding limits.

Stability and flexibility: foundations such as justice and fidelity remain constant, while institutional means of realising them vary with circumstances. Flexible means do not abolish the principle, and a fixed principle does not require fixing one historical means of implementation.

Fourth, the sources of values in Islam. Values derive their foundations from two principal sources:

The Qur'an: the primary and foundational source, containing an integrated system of doctrinal, devotional, ethical, social and economic values that provides the foundations and rules for their implementation in life.

The Prophetic Sunnah: the second source. Through his life, words and actions, the Prophet embodied the highest values and provided a practical example of their application and explanation.

3.2 Human Values in Scriptural Texts and the Prophetic Biography

First, human values in the Qur'an. The Qur'an combines the honouring of humanity in al-Isra' 17:70, the command to justice and benevolence in al-Nahl 16:90, and cooperation in righteousness in al-Ma'idah 5:2. Taken together, these meanings indicate that differences among communities do not remove the duty of fairness, and that cooperation is assessed by its purpose and substance.

Second, human values in the Prophetic Sunnah. The Sunnah provides a practical exposition of values. Al-Bukhari reports in al-Adab al-mufrad: "I was sent only to perfect good moral character."[26] Sahih al-Bukhari also states: "Among the best of you are those with the best character."[27] These texts show the centrality of ethics, while requiring a distinction between establishing the report's authenticity and the practical conclusions inferred from it.

Third, examples of human values in the Prophetic biography. The following examples illustrate particular aspects of these values without generalising them to every historical event:

Mercy: the Prophet declined the destruction of those who had harmed him and hoped that their descendants would worship Allah, as in 'A'ishah's report concerning the day of al-'Aqabah and the angel of the mountains.[28]

Tolerance and restraint in the use of force: at the conquest of Mecca, safe conduct was granted to those who laid down their weapons or closed their doors, illustrating the provision of a way out of armed confrontation.[29]

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[26] Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, *al-Adab al-mufrad* (Arabic text, Sunnah.com; accessed October 5, 2026), chapter on good character, hadith 273. https://sunnah.com/adab/14

[27] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Virtues, chapter describing the Prophet, hadith 3559. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3559

[28] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of the Beginning of Creation, hadith 3231. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3231

[29] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim*, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, hadith 1780c.

Justice: favouritism in applying the law was rejected, as in the report about the Makhzumi woman and the Prophet's statement, "If Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, stole, I would cut off her hand."[30]
Human dignity: the Prophet stood for a Jewish funeral and asked, "Is it not a soul?" The source and significance of this example were discussed under the principle of dignity.
The encouragement of benevolence extends to animals, as in the Prophet's statement, "There is a reward in every living creature." This supports mercy towards living beings without independently determining every detailed political or legal ruling.[31]

3.3 Muslims' Roles and Mechanisms for Implementing Values

First, scholars and intellectuals. The study proposes preparing scholarly materials that distinguish doctrinal disagreement from human rights, present texts on war and peace in context, and train participants in dialogue to represent juristic disagreement faithfully. This role can complement the work of specialists in mediation and law, so that addressing conflict is not reduced to exhortation alone.
Second, Islamic and educational institutions. Mosques, schools and universities can support listening skills, precise identification of disputed issues and reliance on evidence, and incorporate practical cases concerning fulfilment of covenants and non-discrimination in relief. These proposals rest on the principles of justice and cooperation discussed above; their actual effect in reducing intolerance requires independent monitoring.
Third, learning from historical examples. Hudaybiyyah provides an example of negotiation, safe conduct at the conquest of Mecca illustrates the cessation of fighting, and texts prohibiting treachery provide a basis for trust. Learning from these events requires analysis of purpose, circumstances and means. It does not entail equating historical institutions with the modern state or generalising one example across all history.
Fourth, proposed practical mechanisms for strengthening peace.
Families and educational institutions: cultivate values through example, train young people to resolve disagreements without humiliation, and translate dignity and justice into standards of school and university conduct. Implementation may be monitored by documenting activities, complaints of discrimination and how they are addressed, without assuming that the number of activities alone demonstrates peace.
Civil society and humanitarian institutions: establish partnerships for relief and assistance to affected people on the basis of need, within the framework of benevolence, justice and lawful cooperation. The study proposes documenting beneficiary-selection criteria and mechanisms for complaints and accountability. These are organisational tools serving the objective, not devotional rules binding in their proposed form.
Scholars, mediators and the media: organise regular meetings around specific disputes, clarify areas of agreement and disagreement, and avoid incitement and generalisations about communities. Civil mediation remains within its own competence; it does not grant participants the state's powers to conclude treaties or use force.
States and competent authorities: give priority to negotiation and lawful settlement, honour safe conduct and treaties, and subject international positions to joint Sharia and legal review before commitments are made. The study proposes monitoring agreements' implementation and evaluating policy effects on civilians, thereby linking ethical discourse with accountable procedures and responsibilities.

4 SHARIA'S POSITION ON INTERNATIONAL LAWS AND SYSTEMS

Muslim societies face questions about reconciling adherence to Sharia with participation in international treaties. Examining these questions requires identifying the relevant legal provision, the party to whom it applies and the alleged conflict, rather than juxtaposing "Sharia" and "international law" as two homogeneous blocs. This section focuses on building trust, fulfilment of commitments and cooperation. It offers a limited family-law example to explain reservations, not a comprehensive study of family law.

4.1 The Objectives of Sharia and Their Relationship to Law

First, the concept and categories of objectives. Sharia gives attention to human welfare. Al-Shatibi divides its objectives into necessities, needs and refinements, and includes the preservation of religion, life, progeny, property and intellect among the necessities. Needs concern the removal of hardship, while refinements concern good customs and moral

[30] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of the Accounts of the Prophets, hadith 3475. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3475

[31] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Watering, chapter on the merit of providing water, hadith 2363. https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2363

conduct. This classification enables examination of conflict's effects on people and inhabited life, but does not replace detailed texts or turn every imagined benefit into valid evidence.[32]

Second, welfare in Sharia and law. Sharia and legal rules may converge in protecting life, property and dignity while differing in sources of obligation and methods of interpretation. The study presents welfare (maslahah) as a means of understanding objectives and applying rulings, not a pretext for overriding a text with an established meaning. An example is: "Allah instructs you concerning your children: the male is to receive the share of two females" (Qur'an 4:11), in the situation addressed by the verse. This cannot be transformed into a rule that every woman receives half of every man's share, nor can an opposing rule be attributed to a treaty without examining its relevant provision.

Third, objectives and fulfilment of treaties. The protection of rights is linked to the stability of covenants: "Fulfil the covenant; the covenant will indeed be called to account" (Qur'an 17:34). The Sunnah states, "Muslims are bound by their conditions," while the report on settlement includes an exception for what makes the unlawful lawful or the lawful unlawful.[33] These are foundations for assessing commitments under Sharia. The creation of international obligations and the consequences of breach require a separate legal inquiry that cannot be resolved through juristic reasoning alone.

4.2 International Agreements and Treaties and Their Legal Effects

First, the nature of international agreements. Within its scope, the Vienna Convention defines a treaty as an international agreement in written form between states and governed by international law. It identifies several means of expressing consent to be bound, including signature, ratification and accession, each subject to its own conditions. Ratification therefore cannot be treated as the only route to obligation in every treaty.[34]

Second, international obligation and domestic effect. Expressing consent must be distinguished from a treaty's entry into force under its provisions. Once in force, a treaty must be performed in good faith, and internal law cannot be invoked to justify non-performance, subject to the narrow exception in Article 46: a violation of internal rules concerning competence to conclude treaties must be manifest and concern a rule of fundamental importance. Enforceability before national authorities is examined under the state's constitutional and legislative system. Ratification alone does not establish a uniform domestic effect, and an asserted religious or domestic conflict does not automatically exempt a state from its international obligations.[35]

Third, an example from social conventions. Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) concerns equality in marriage and family relations, including freedom to choose a spouse and rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution. The article does not specify inheritance shares or expressly refer to a Muslim woman marrying a non-Muslim man. Its wording must therefore be distinguished from interpretive inferences drawn from it.[36] In the Islamic foundations of marriage law, "Do not give [women] in marriage to polytheist men until they believe" (Qur'an 2:221) concerns marrying women to polytheists. It is supplemented by al-Mumtahanah 60:10: "These women are not lawful for those men, nor are those men lawful for these women," concerning believing women and unbelieving men. The argument does not rely on the part of the verse concerning marriage to polytheist women, nor assume that "polytheist" and "non-Muslim" are interchangeable in every ruling. Detailed analysis requires bringing together the relevant texts, including the rules on women from the People of the Book in al-Ma'idah 5:5.

Fourth, agreements' effects on national legislation. Examining compatibility requires identifying what calls for legislation, amendment or interpretation and distinguishing the scope for juristic interpretation from legal implementation procedures. The study proposes conducting this review before undertaking commitments and identifying the available alternatives where conflict arises, rather than assuming that treaty provisions can be suspended unilaterally after entry into force.

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[32] al-Shatibi, *al-Muwafaqat* (Electronic Arabic text, Islamic Library, Islamweb; accessed October 5, 2026), Book of Objectives, part 1, first category, first issue, 2:17–22, according to the pagination displayed. https://www.islamweb.net/ar/library/content/99/117/

[33] Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abi Dawud* (Arabic text and hadith numbering, Sunnah.com; accessed October 5, 2026), Book of Judgements, chapter on settlement, hadith 3594. The two expressions occur in distinct additions identified in the report; the site displays al-Albani's grading as "hasan sahih". https://sunnah.com/abudawud:3594

[34] United Nations, *Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties* (May 23, 1969), arts. 2(1)(a), 11 and 12–16. https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1_1_1969.pdf

[35] United Nations, *Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties*, arts. 24, 26, 27 and 46.

[36] United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (December 18, 1979; official text), art. 16(1), especially subparagraphs (a), (b), (c) and (h). https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1981/09/19810903%2005-18%20AM/Ch_IV_8p.pdf

4.3 Rules on Reservations and the Limits of Historical Comparison

First, reconciling international participation with established principles. Under the Vienna Convention, a reservation is a unilateral statement intended to exclude or modify the legal effect of certain provisions in their application to the state. Not every reservation is permissible: the treaty may prohibit reservations, restrict those permitted, or the reservation may be incompatible with its object and purpose. Its effect is also influenced by other states' acceptance and objections and the rules governing them.[37]

Second, Egypt's reservation to Article 16 of CEDAW. The depositary records Egypt's reservation linking equality in marital relations to the condition that it must not prejudice Sharia provisions and explaining the state's position on the complementary nature of rights and duties. This describes the reservation recorded when consulted on 5 October 2026; it is not a ruling on its legal or juristic validity. The same source records objections by states, including the Netherlands, to reservations that include Egypt's reservation to Article 16, on grounds of incompatibility with the Convention's object and purpose.[38] Article 28(2) of CEDAW also prohibits reservations incompatible with its object and purpose. A general reference to Sharia is therefore insufficient to establish a reservation's international acceptance.[39]

Third, principles for Sharia and legal examination of reservations. The study proposes identifying the provision at issue, specifying the conflict, explaining the status of the Sharia evidence and the scope for juristic interpretation, and then examining the reservation's admissibility, wording, timing and the effects of objections. A definitive text, juristic interpretation and public policy must be distinguished. Describing a position as "Sharia-based" does not exempt it from scholarly criticism, and a Sharia ruling does not replace compliance with legal requirements.

Fourth, the limits of learning from Hudaybiyyah. The Hudaybiyyah account illustrates the permissibility of negotiation and acceptance of settlement terms despite continuing doctrinal disagreement.[40] Negotiating a bilateral agreement's text, however, is not the same as making a unilateral reservation to a multilateral treaty within the Vienna Convention's terminology. The event may inform consideration of welfare and fulfilment of commitments, but it is not direct evidence of the validity of every contemporary reservation.

4.4 Prospects for Integrating Sharia and Human Values

The objectives of preserving life, property and dignity create space for cooperation in relief, protecting affected people and preventing aggression. The study recommends working groups comprising Sharia scholars, lawyers and mediation specialists to analyse agreements and develop practicable proposals. Their success should be assessed through sound commitments, protection of rights and actual effects, rather than repeated declarations of shared values. These remain prospects for action and research, not empirical results demonstrated by this study.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Muslims' contribution to global peace begins by clarifying the relationship between values, rulings and institutions. In answering the question about the nature of relations, it favours peace and fulfilment of covenants as the basis for contemporary international action, while distinguishing the treatment of peaceful persons, the grounds for fighting and the constraints applicable during fighting. Examination of selected exegetical and juristic discussions shows that disagreement cannot be reduced to a single dichotomy. Claims of consensus, or of resolving the issue through the unrestricted–qualified rule alone, exceed what the analysis establishes.

Regarding governing principles, dignity, justice, mercy, cooperation and fulfilment of commitments regulate engagement with others. Religious difference does not remove the duty of benevolence and justice towards peaceful persons. Establishing a Sharia norm is also distinct from demonstrating that societies have observed it throughout history.

At the practical level, the study proposes complementary roles for families, education, scholars, civil society and the state, translating principles into dialogue, mediation, relief and accountability. These roles are recommendations derived from the analysis and requiring empirical evaluation, not descriptions of programmes whose success has been demonstrated.

On the legal question, it is necessary to distinguish the permissibility of a commitment under Sharia, the creation of an international obligation, the treaty's domestic effect and the admissibility of reservations. Egypt's CEDAW example shows that the existence of a religiously reasoned reservation does not establish its acceptance by all other parties or settle disagreement over its effects.

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[37] United Nations, *Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties*, art. 2(1)(d) and arts. 19–23.

[38] United Nations, *United Nations Treaty Collection, Chapter IV, Treaty 8* (Reservations and objections; accessed October 5, 2026), "Egypt," reservation concerning Article 16; and "Netherlands," objection concerning reservations to Articles 2, 9 and 16. https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&clang=_en

[39] United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, art. 28(2).

[40] al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Conditions, hadiths 2731–32.

The study recommends training participants in dialogue to read texts in context, establishing joint Sharia and legal review of treaties before commitments are made, and developing transparent humanitarian partnerships. It also recommends subsequent empirical research to evaluate these mechanisms' effects on building trust and reducing conflict.
The findings are limited to analysis of selected texts and juristic and legal examples. The study neither comprehensively surveys legal schools or treaties nor measures a causal relationship between religiosity and peace. Its contribution lies in connecting ethical and juristic foundations with legal and institutional distinctions that can guide a carefully grounded contemporary contribution.

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