

# GLOBAL COMPACT



Global Compact Network  
Pakistan

## THE UNGC PRINCIPLES IN THE LIGHT OF THE **QURAN** & **ISLAM**

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# GLOBAL COMPACT Network Pakistan

The Ten Principles of UN Global Compact which were launched in the year 2000 by the then secretary General **Koofi Anan** were derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment & Development and the United Nation's Convention Against Corruption. They sought to embrace and enact a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti corruption.

The Global Compact, as a voluntary initiative to promote sustainable development and good corporate citizenship has succeeded during the last decade in developing a network of companies and stakeholders now numbering around 8000 in over 135 countries and the current UN Secretary General **Ban Ki Moon** is targeting to bring 20'000 companies within UNGCs ambit by the year 2020.

Embedding the Ten Principles into organizational strategies, operations and culture has emerged, therefore, as "an essential part of the solution" in the words of George Kell, the Executive Director of UNGC, to the challenges in the way of sustainable and inclusive global markets.

A lot, however, needs to be done "to bring mass scale to the discipline of corporate responsibility helping to chart a future where sustainable development, a healthy planet and peaceful cooperation prevail".

The message of UN GLOBAL COMPACT has been well received around the world in over 135 countries but it is important to note that out of them number of countries falling in the Muslim block is very meager and far too meager is the number of companies embracing the UNGC in these countries.

The purpose of this Article is to highlight how close are the Ten UNGC Principles to the teachings of the Holy Quran, Sunnah and other sources of Islamic learning. As we make this analysis below, it may be worthwhile mentioning that what is now being invoked by the UNGC in the form of Ten Principles to be voluntarily adopted by business already forms the Muslim Code of Conduct outlined 1400 years ago in the Holy Book of Quran and ordained in the teachings and practices of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) as the recommended principles of Personal Responsibility and Governance to be voluntarily adopted by every Muslim in personal and collective living to seek the pleasure of Allah, the Almighty both in this world in the Hereafter.

Let us have a look at the following comparison of UNGC Principles with those of Islamic Teachings:-

## HUMAN RIGHTS:-

The first TWO Principles of UNGC derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN in December, 1948 at Paris asks business to support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights. The principles envisage that employees at work are treated with common decency and just as employers expect their own business rights to be upheld, employees expect the same from employers. Let us look at the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah in respect of mutual rights and obligations in respect of Human Rights ordained for every Muslim:-

Islam has taught equality of mankind based on the principles of universal brotherhood and has laid down rules, regulations, rights and obligations relating to all aspects of human behavior, for example, towards the parents, the children, the husband, the wife, the servants, the guests, the neighbors, the poor men and brethren in faith. The following references from the Holy Quran support the above contention:-

1. There is no distinction of master and servant, rich or poor, high or low. The only distinction, if any, is based on piety. The Holy Quran preaches equality of respect and universal brotherhood of believers.

The Holy Quran says:-

The believers are not else than brothers. Therefore make peace between your brethren and observe your duty to Allah that happily may obtain mercy.

(Sura Hajarat chapter 49, verse 10, part 26)





The Holy Quran says:-

And hold fast, all of you together to the cable of Allah, and do not separate. And remember Allah's favor unto you: how ye were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts so that you became as brothers by His grace: and (how) ye were upon the brink of an abyss of fire, and He did save you from it. Thus Allah make His revelations the clear to you, so that you may be rightly guided.

**(Chapter 3 , Sura Al-Imran, Verse 103 , part 4)**

2. In his last Sermon, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) struck at the very root of social distinction by proclaiming that you are sons of Adam and Adam was created of clay. Arabs as Arabs have no superiority over the non Arabs, nor can the non Arabs claim superiority over the Arabs: the superiority or inferiority among men lies only in their character.

The Holy Quran says:-

O mankind! Lo! We have created you from a male and a female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! ALLAH is knower , aware.

**(Chapter 49 , Sura Hajarat, Verse 3 , part 26)**

3. Islam has made each individual responsible and accountable for his own deeds in this world and advises him to do well for his own sake.

The Holy Quran says:-

We have bound each human being's destiny to his neck. On the day of resurrection, we shall bring out a record for each of them, which they will find spread wide open, 'Read your record. Today your own soul is enough to calculate your account'

**(Chapter 17 , Sura AL-Asra, Verses 13 and 14 , part 15)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Whosoever accepts guidance does so for his own good, whoever strays does so at his own peril. No soul will bear another's burden, nor do We punish until We have sent a messenger.

**(Chapter 17 , Sura Al-Asra, Verse 15 , part 15)**

4. Islam has considerably mitigated the sufferings of the servants by urging the masters to treat them kindly like brothers. The Holy Quran argues that man has been created out of clay; therefore, all men are equal and nobody should be deprived of his legitimate birth rights. It is for the convenience of the management that the son is placed under his father, the wife under her husband, the servant under his master and the subjects under their ruler. But it is quite improper to maltreat those who are subordinates or to hate them. The servants should be forgiven for their faults. They should be neither insulted nor beaten. The Holy Quran specifically lays down rules of human behavior towards parents, relatives, children, orphans, neighbors etc in the following terms:-

The Holy Quran says:-

And serve Allah: and ascribe nothing as partner unto Him.(Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbor who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbor who is not of kin, and the fellow-traveler and the wayfarer and (the slaves)whom your right hands possess. Lo! Allah loveth not such as are proud and boastful.

**(Chapter 4 , Sura AL-Nisa, Verse 36 , part 5)**



The Holy Quran says:-

The Lord hath decreed, that ye worship none save Him, and (that ye show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain to old age with thee, say not "Fie" unto them nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word.

**(Chapter 17 , Sura Bani-Israil, Verse 23 , part 15)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Give the kinsman his due and the needy, and the wayfarer, and squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness.

**(Chapter 17 , Sura Bani-Israil, Verse 26 , part 15)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Slay not your children, fearing a fall to poverty. We shall provide for them and for you. Lo! the slaying of them is great sin.

**(Chapter 17 , Sura Bani-Israil, Verse 31 , part 15)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Come not near the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better till he come to strength, and keep the covenant. Lo! of the covenant it will be asked.

**(Chapter 17 , Sura BIN-ISRAIL, Verse 34 , part 15)**

5. It is the first and foremost obligation of all well-to-do persons to look after the well being of the poor and serve them. The more prosperous of the Muslims should realize that their less fortunate brethren have a share in their wealth and other capabilities. The Holy Quran has enjoined the believers that the orphans, the weak and the destitute should be fed and the ill-clad should be given clothes. In fact the virtuous man is he who serves the poor.

The Holy Quran says:-

(Saying): We feed you for the sake of Allah only. We wish for no reward nor thanks from you.

**(Chapter 76 , Sura AL-DAHAR, Verse 9 , part 29)**

6. Islam enjoins enforcement of complete personal responsibility for each soul (for compliance) with rights and duties ordained towards fellow men and women and towards the Creator.

The Holy Quran says:-

1. When the sun is overthrown,
2. And when the stars fall,
3. And when the hills are moved,
4. And when the camels big with young are abandoned,
5. And when the wild beasts are herded together,
6. And when the seas rise,
7. And when souls are reunited,





8. And when the girl-child that was buried alive is asked,
9. For what sin she was slain,
10. And when the pages are laid open,
11. And when the sky is turned away,
12. And when Hell is heated,
13. And when the garden is brought nigh,
14. (Then) every soul will know what it hath made ready.

(Chapter 81 , Sura Al-Takweer, Verse 1-14 , part 30)

It can be fairly concluded that the teachings of Islam as contained in the Quran and Sunnah, in so far as preservation and protection of human rights are concerned, go far beyond what has been invoked in the 1st and 2nd Principles of UNGC concerning Human Rights and these UNGC Principles only complement the teachings of Islam revealed upon mankind 1400 years ago, far too earlier than they were embraced in the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

## LABOUR RIGHTS:-

UNGC Principles 3,4,5 & 6 concerning Labour Rights, derived from the ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRWs) adopted in 1998 call upon business to (1) uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining,(2)eliminate all forms of force and compulsory labour,(3)effectively abolish child labour and (4)eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation."

Let us look in following , how Islam perceives these Labour Rights in the light of the Holy Quran and Sunnah:-

### Principle 3:

1. From an Islamic point of view, the individual is more important than the group, society or nation. The individual is not from the group rather the group emanates from the individual. Before God no group, nation or society will be held responsible in their collective capacity. Instead every individual will be accountable for their own individual deeds. This should not give the impression that unions or associations formed for collective gain are not stipulated in Islam. In fact, the Holy Quran lays down the principles of consultation in an exclusive Chapter titled "Shura" meaning 'Consultation', in which the right of freedom of association for mutual consultation, the right to defend individually and collectively in case of being oppressed and broad principles of collective bargaining have been spelt out.

The Holy Quran says:-

36. what you have been given is only the fleeting enjoyment of this world. Far better and more lasting is what God will give to those who believe and trust in their Lord.
37. who shun great sins and gross indecencies; who forgive when they are angry;
38. respond to their Lord; Keep up the prayer; CONDUCT THEIR AFFAIRS BY MUTUAL CONSULTATION; give to others out of what we have provided for them;
39. AND DEFEND THEMSELVES WHEN THEY ARE OPPRESSED.

(Chapter 42 , Sura AL-Shura, Verse 36-39 , part 25)



The Holy Quran says:-

40. Let harm be requited by an equal harm, though anyone who forgives and puts things right will have his reward from God Himself-He does not like those who do wrong.
41. And there is no cause to act against anyone who defends himself after being wronged,
42. but there is cause to act against those who oppress people and transgress in the land against all justice- They will have an agonizing torment -
43. though if a person is patient and forgives, this is one of the greatest things.

**(Chapter 42 , Sura Al-Shura, Verse 40-43 , part 25)**

2. In the Western Model of Industrial Relations, wage fixation is at the centre of collective bargaining, In Islam too, wage fixation is a matter of contract between employer and worker. The worker offers labour and the employer pays wages. Both are free to enter into a contract with each other without any fear or favour of intervention from any quarter. The following is an example from the Holy Quran of the wage and employment contract between Hazrat Shueb and Hazrat Moosa:

The Holy Quran says:-

23. When he arrived at Midian's waters, he found a group of men watering (their flocks) and beside them two women keeping their flocks back, so he said, 'what is the matter with you two?'. They said we cannot water (our flocks) father is a very old man.
24. he watered their flocks for them, which drew into the shade, and prayed, 'My Lord, I am in dire need of whatever good thing you may send me,
25. and then one of the two women approached him, walking shyly, and said, 'My father is asking for you: he wants to reward you for watering our flocks for us'. When Moses came to him and told him his story, the old man said, 'do not be afraid, you are save now from people who do wrong'.
26. One of the women said, 'father! Hire him! A strong, trustworthy man is the best to hire'.
27. 'the father said, I would like to marry you to one of these daughters of mine, on condition that you serve me for eight years: If you complete ten, it will be of your own free will, I do not intend to make things difficult for you: God willing, you will find I am a fare man.'
28. Moses said 'Let that be the agreement between us- whichever of the two terms I fulfill, let there be no injustice to me- God is witness to what we say.

**(Chapter 28 , Sura AL-Qasas, Verse 23-28 , part 20)**

The following Islamic principles may be derived from the above illustration:-

- i The terms and conditions of employment are subject to consultation.
- ii The terms and conditions of employment may be modified by consultation with view to improving upon them.
- iii The 'input' for consultation between social partners should be a high level of trust and mutual confidence supported by the individual will of the employer and the worker and reinforced by the state which should play an impartial oversight role and.
- iv The 'output' from consultative mechanism should be the material and spiritual will being of both the employer and the employee so as to earn the pleasure of God and avoid His wrath for violation of- and disobedience to---the divine principles of balancing relations between the two.





## Principles 4&5:

Islam stands for elimination of all forms of forced, child and compulsory labour. The Holy Quran declares in unequivocal terms:-

The Holy Quran says:-

12. what will explain to you what the steep path is?
13. It is to free a slave
14. to feed at a time of hunger
15. An orphaned relative
16. Or a poor person in distress,

**(Chapter 90 , Sura Al-Balad, Verse 12-16 , part 30)**

Hazrat A'isha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Holy Prophet (PHUH) stood among people for (addressing them). So he praised Allah and glorified Him and then, said: What about the people who impose such conditions which are not in the Book of Allah? Every condition which is not in the Book of Allah is invalid, even if such conditions are one hundred in number. The decision of Allah is the most meritorious and the condition of Allah is the strongest. Indeed, the amity belongs to one who frees a slave. (agreed upon)

**The bonded labour ,compulsory labour and child labour are conditions imposed by men which have no place in the Book of Allah and are therefore invalid and people imposing them are subject to serious questioning for imposing conditions violative of the Book of Allah.**

## Principle 6:

According to Islam, the true Muslims are those who earn their livelihood by honest labour and do not spread their hands before any one; those who do not become indifferent to their duties during the course of their business.

The Holy Quran says:-

And when the prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah's bounty, and remember Allah much, that ye may be successful.

**(Chapter 62 , Sura Al-Jummah, Verse 10 , part 28)**

Islam does not allow any discrimination in respect of employment and occupation and enjoins probity and honesty as essential element for a prosperous business. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Blessings of Allah be on him who is mild and gentle in his business transactions and in the realization of his dues.(Muslim)

Islam emphasizes on gender harmony .Sura 66 (al-Tahreem)deals with how far a want of harmony between the sexes may injure the higher interest of society .The failings of the weaker sex should not turn away men from normal social life; harmony and mutual confidence should be taught and enforced, and Allah's virtues will descend on the virtuous .Islam is against gender biases.

The Holy Quran says:-

And their Lord hath heard them (and he faith): Lo! I suffer not the work of any worker, male or female, to be lost. You proceed one from another. So those who fled and were driven forth from their homes and suffered damage for my cause, and fought and were slain, verily I shall remit their evil deeds from them and verily I shall bring them into Gardens underneath which rivers flow---A reward from Allah. And with Allah is the fairest of rewards,



**(Chapter 3 , Sura Al-Imran, Verse 195 , part 4)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Women who are divorced shall wait, keeping themselves apart, three (monthly) courses. And it is not lawful for them they should conceal that which Allah hath created in their wombs in they are believers in Allah and the last day. And their husbands would do better to take them back in that case if they desire a reconciliation. And they (Women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in kindness, and men are a degree above them. Allah is Mighty, Wise.

**(Chapter 2 , Sura AL-Baqra, Verse 228 , part 2)**

## ENVIRONMENT:

**Principles 7,8 & 9** of UNGC, derived from the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development adopted on 14th June 1992 call upon business to (1) support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges. (2) Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility and (3) encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

1. The Holy Quran conveys to mankind 1400 years ago to adopt a precautionary approach towards the mother earth.

The Holy Quran says:-

29. It was He who created all that is on the earth for you, then turned to the sky and made the seven heavens: it is He who has knowledge of all things.
30. When your Lord told the angels, 'I am putting a successor on earth,' they said, 'How can you put someone there who will cause damage and bloodshed, when we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your holiness?' but He said, 'I know things you do not.'
36. But Satan made them slip, and removed them from the state they were in. We said, 'Get out, all of you! You are each other's enemy. On earth you will have a place to stay and livelihood for a time.'
60. Remember when Moses prayed for water for his people and We said to him, 'Strike the rock with your staff' Twelve springs gushed out, and each group knew its drinking place 'Eat and drink the sustenance God has provided and do not cause corruption in the land.'
168. People eat what is good and lawful from the earth, and do not follow Satan footsteps, for he is your sworn enemy.

**(Chapter 2, Sura Al-Baqra, Verse 29,30,36,60,168 part 2)**

2. Islam encourages mankind to undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.
85. And do not mischief on earth after it has been set in order, that will be best for you, if you have faith.

**(Chapter 7, Sura Al-Araf, Verse 85 , part 9)**

The Holy Quran says:-

He brought you forth from the earth and made you inhabit it. So ask forgiveness of Him and turn back to Him. My Lord is near and ready to answer.

**(Chapter 11 , Sura Al-Hudh, Verse 61 , part 21)**





The Holy Quran says:-

And He it is Who spread out the earth and placed therein firm hills and flowing streams, and of all fruits he placed therein two spouses (male and female). He covereth the night with the day. Lo! herein verily are portents for people who take thought.

**(Chapetr 13 , Sura Al-Ra'ad, Verse 3 , part 13)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Have they not seen, how we come to clip the land off at its borders? (When) Allah deicides there is none that can postponed His decision and He is swift at reckoning

**(Chapetr 13 , Sura Al-Ra'ad, Verse 41 , part 13)**

The Holy Quran says:-

And the earth we have spread out (like a carpet); sat their own mountains firm and immoveable and produced therein all kinds of things in due balance.

**(Chapter 15 , Sura Al-Hajar, Verse 19 , part 14)**

The Holy Quran says:-

We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them save with truth, and lo! the Hour is surely coming, so forgive, O Muhammad, with a gracious forgiveness.

**(Chapter 15 , Sura AL-Hajar, Verse 85 , part 14)**

The Holy Quran says:-

He hath created the heavens and the earth with truth. High be He exalted above all that they associate (with him!)

**(Chapter 16 , Sura Al-Nahl, Verse 3 , part 14)**

The Holy Quran says:-

And He hath cast into the earth firm hills that it quake not with you, and streams and roads that ye may find away.

**(Chapter 15 , Sura Al-Nahl, Verse 15 , part 14)**

The Holy Quran says:-

And walk not in the earth exultant .Lo! thou canst not rend the earth, nor canst thou stretch to the height of the hills.

**(Chapter 17 , Sura Al-Asra, Verse 37 , part 15)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Lo! We have placed all that is in the earth as an ornament thereof that We may try them: which of them is best in conduct.

**(Chapter 18 , Sura Al-Kahf, Verse 7 , part 15)**



The Holy Quran says:-

Lo! We made him strong in the land and give him unto everything a road.

**(Chapter 18 , Sura AL-Kahf, Verse 84 , part 16)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Lo! We inherit the earth and all who are thereon, and unto Us they are returned.

**(Chapter 19 , Sura AL-Mariam , Verse 40 , part 16)**

The Holy Quran says:-

No, but we gave provision to these and their fathers until life was prolonged to them. See they not how We visit the land, reducing it of its outlying parts (curtailing it of its sides)? Can they then be the victors.

**(Chapter 21 , Sura Al- Ambia , Verse 44 , part 17 )**

The Holy Quran says:-

The (faithful) slaves of the Beneficent are they who walk upon the earth modestly, and when the foolish once address them answer peace!

**(Chapter 25 , Sura Al-Furqaan, Verse 63 , part 19)**

The Holy Quran says:-

Turn not thy cheek in scorn toward folk, nor walk with pertness in the land. Lo! Allah loveth not any braggart boaster.

**(Chapter 31, Sura Luqman, Verse 18, part 21)**

The Holy Quran says:-

See ye not how Allah hath made serviceable unto you what so ever is in heavens and whatsoever is in the earth and hath loaded you with his favors both without and within? Yet of mankind is their who disputeh concerning Allah without knowledge or guidance of a scripture giving light.

**(Chapter 31 , Sura Luqman, Verse 20 , part 21)**

3. **Islam warned 1400 years ago against issue like climate change which has captured the world attention today as threat to human survival.**

The Holy Quran says:-

Lo! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of night and day, and the ships which run upon the sea with that which is of use to men, and the water which Allah sendeth down from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, and dispersing all kinds of beasts therein, and (in) CHANGING OF THE WINDS, and the clouds obedient between heaven and earth : are signs in all these (of Allah's sovereignty) for people who use their minds .

**(Chapter 2 , Sura AL-Baqra, Verse 164 , part 2)**

The Holy Quran says:-

On the day when the earth will be changed to other than this earth and the heavens (also will be changed) and they will come forth unto Allah, the One, the Almighty.





**(Chapter 14 , Sura Abraham, Verse 48 , part 3)**

The Holy Quran says:-

He it is who hath made the earth subservient unto you, so walk in the paths thereof and eat of his providence. And unto him will be the resurrection (of the dead).

**(Chapter 67 , Sura AL-Mulk Verse 15 , part 29)**

## **ANTI CORRUPTION:-**

The 10th UNGC Principle relating to Anti Corruption was not originally included in the Nine UNGC Principles launched in the year 2000. It was however only after the United Nation's Convention Against Corruption was adopted on 31st October 2003 that after going through a serious debate on the issue, the 10th Principle was added in June 2004 related to Anti Corruption which called upon business to work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Islam forbids corruption in all its forms. A true Muslim should be honest and upright in his business. He should shun fraud and avoid deceit and perfidy. He must keep his words and fulfill his promises. He should abstain from adopting dishonest and corrupt means to earn unreasonable profits. The businessman should be honest with regard to weights and should give full and exact measures.

The Holy Quran says:-

181. Give full measure, and be not of those who give less (than the due).

182. And weight with the true balance.

183. Wrong not mankind in their goods, and do not evil, making mischief, commit no corruption on the earth.

**(Chapter 26 , Sura AL-Shawrah, Verse 181-183 , part 19)**

The Holy Quran says:-

And eat not up your property among yourselves in vanity, nor seek by it to gain the hearing of the judges that ye may knowingly devour a portion to the property of others wrongfully.

**(Chapter 2 , Sura AL-Baqra, Verse 188 , part 2)**

The Holy Quran says:-

O my people ! Give full measure and full weight in justice, and wrong not people in respect of their goods. And do not evil in the earth, causing corruption.

**(Chapter 11 , Sura AL-Hud, Verse 85 , part 12)**



## **CONCLUSION:-**

The above research show how the ten principles of UNGC are closely related to the core of the Quranic teachings. Islam is a worldly religion bestowed upon mankind by Allah, the Creator who unfolds in His Holy Book, the Quran a complete Code of Conduct asking Muslims to practice them in totality to seek personal sustainability for salvation in this world and in the world Hereafter .No wonder therefore that when business globally was facing issues of sustainability for want of driving values, the values embedded in the UNGC principles invoking business to embrace them are no different for business than what Islam proposed for mankind 1400 years ago. Why should then the business in Muslim countries not take the lead in coming forward to embrace the UNGC Principles in big numbers to support the contention that Islam is the universal religion of the world which offers to business the moral values included in the UNGC principles which may help business to be part of the solutions to the sustainability challenge being faced by them.

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