

IIRF Reports

International Institute for Religious Freedom
Internationales Institut für Religionsfreiheit
Institut International pour la Liberté Religieuse



Thomas Schirrmacher

**The member States of the
Organisation of the Islamic
Cooperation (OIC) have 300
million Christian citizens**

Bonn – Cape Town – Colombo

**Occasional journal with special reports,
research projects, reprints and documentation**

IIRF Reports 2016/3

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International Institute for Religious Freedom
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Institut International pour la Liberté Religieuse
of the World Evangelical Alliance

Occasional journal with special reports, research projects, reprints and documentation published by



Bonn – Cape Town – Colombo

VKW Culture and Science Publ.

V.i.S.d.P. Prof. Dr. Dr. Thomas Schirmacher
Friedrichstr. 38, 53111 Bonn, Germany

Bank account:

EKK (Ev. Kreditgenossenschaft Kassel eG)
account number: 3 690 334, BLZ 520 604 10

Reference: IRF 1000

International Codes (IBAN):

DE02520604100003690334

International Bank Code (BIC):

GENODEFIEKI

International Donations by Credit Card:

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Thomas Schirrmacher

**The member States of the
Organisation of the Islamic
Cooperation (OIC) have
300 million Christian citizens**

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The member States of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have 300 million Christian citizens

A Commentary based on a table of member countries of the OIC and the religion of their citizens – a statistical research project of the International Institute of Religious Freedom (2013, translated 2016)

[This was published in German as “In den Mitgliedsstaaten der Organisation Islamischer Kooperation (OIC) leben 320 Millionen Christen”. S. 170-178 in: Thomas Schirrmacher, Max Klingberg, Ron Kubsch (Hg.). Das Jahrbuch zur Verfolgung und Diskriminierung von Christen heute – 2013. Bonn: VKW, 2013. ISBN 978-3-86269-080-0. The original German article can be found here: [PDF]

This contribution is based on two tables, which list all states of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in alphabetical order and give numbers of Muslims and non-Muslim and as part of the latter group, of all Christians. Both tables can be found here: [yyy\[PDF\]](#) [PDF]

The numbers of the first table are taken from „The World’s Religions in Figure“, 2013, based on „World Religion Database“ as of Januar 2012. „OW“ each time gives an alternative number in brackets from the second table, based on „Operation World“, 2010.)

The 52 member and 5 observer states of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have 1.77 billion (OW: 1.8 billion) inhabitants. 70.8 % (OW: 71 %), that is 1.254 billion (OW: 1.274 billion), are Muslims, **29.2 % (OW: 28.7 %) are non-Muslims (= 0.52 billion, OW: 0.51 billion)**. *Roughly two thirds of the non-Muslims are Christians, that is 333 millions (OW 324 millions), or 18.8 % (OW: 18.6 %) of the inhabitants of the OIC-states.*

If one does not count the observer state (which the OIC itself never leaves out), there are 1,56 billion inhabitants (OW: 1,58). 79,4 % (OW: 79,1 %) are Muslims (= 1,24 billions, OW: 1,25 millions), 20,6 % (OW: 20,5 %) are non-Muslims (=

429 millions, OW: 323 millions), including 13,5 % (OW: 14,2 %) Christians (= 211 millions, OW: 224 millions).

As the OIC by definition only speaks on behalf of Islam and Muslims alone, **more than half a billion on people are represented by an organisation, that ignores or even denies their rights.**

OIC’s website says: „The Organization is the collective voice of the Muslim world and ensuring to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world.“ „The Organization has the singular honor to galvanize the Ummah into a unified body and have actively represented the Muslims by espousing all causes close to the hearts of over 1.5 billion Muslims of the world.“ (<http://www.oicun.org/2/23/>, retrieved 12/06/2013). So it seems, that the OIC just counts the non-Muslim citizens as Muslims. And it is very clear, that they do not work for the interests of their non-Muslim citizens, but have them pay for the expansion of Islam via their taxes. The intensive actions within the United Nations – the OIC is the largest body of states in the world beside the UN – always was and still is only in favour of Islam.

The strangest members of OIC are those, where Muslims are not the majority of the population. Look at the percentage of Muslims in the following member states of the OIC:

Benin 24.5 % (OW: 23.5 %) *Muslims*
Cameroon 20 % (OW: 26 %)
Cote d’Ivoire 40,6 % (OW: 41.8 %)
Gabon 10,2 % (OW: 10 %)
Gyana 7,5 % (OW: 9.4 %)
Mozambique 17,5, % (OW: 18.6 %)
Nigeria 45,5 % (OW: 45.1 %)
Surinam 15,9 % (OW: 16.9 %)
Uganda 11,7 % (OW: 11.5 %)

[One has to add the following observer states with non-Muslim majority:

Russia 10,4 % (OW: 12.5 %) *Muslims*
Thailand 5,9 % (OW: 7.9 %)
Central African Republic 13,7 % (OW: 13.8 %)]

Why are those states members of OIC? Why do they pay and work for the sole expansion and protection of Islam and against the interests of the majority of their citizens?

Think for a moment, there would be a similar organisation like the OIC made up of Christian states. Nigeria would be a member and would work towards the expansion of Christendom and bypass its Millions of Muslim citizens!

I would like to add one further thought. The OIC does not even work on behalf of Muslim minorities within their own countries. The OIC only speaks up on behalf of Muslim minorities in *non-Muslim* countries. And even there, it speaks up for mainstream Islam, never for minorities from minor wings of Islam, and surely not for those minorities seen as 'sect' outside Islam. Wikipedia writes rightly so: „The OIC has been criticised for diverting its activities solely on Muslim minorities within majority non-Muslim countries but putting a taboo on the plight, the treatment of ethnic minorities within Muslim-majority countries, such as the oppression of the Kurds in Syria, the Ahwaz in Iran, the Hazaras in Afghanistan, the Baluchis in Pakistan, the 'Al-Akhdam' in Yemen, or the Berbers in Algeria.“ (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation, retrieved 17/08/2012). Wikipedia should have added the wording from the OIC-Charter, which clearly states as one of the goals of IC: „to assist Muslim minorities and communities outside the Member States to preserve their dignity, cultural and religious identity“. (http://www.oic-oci.org/page_detail.asp?p_id=53). This is further proved by a report of the General Secretary of OIC, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, in his major work (The Islamic World in the New Century: The Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Columbia University Press: New York, 2010. 127–142).

International human rights indexes

A search through major international indexes related to specific human rights shows, that the OIC states first of all should urge each other to protect the dignity and human rights of its citizens. Following are some examples (these indices are all available in the web under their name, so we do not provide detailed links here):

The **Democracy Index** (2011) does not list one OIC member state as a 'Full Democracy', and only 3 of the 57 members are rated as 'Flawed Democracy.' The rest are rated either as 'Authoritarian Regime' or as 'Hybrid Regime.' The situation is even worse when looking at the countries only, which have a Muslim majority.

The **Freedom in the World Report** (2010) ranking the political rights and civil liberties only list 3 OIC member states as 'Free'.

The **Press Freedom Index** (2011) by „Reporters Without Borders“ rated only Mali and Suriname among the 57 member states of the OIC having a 'Satisfactory Situation'. All other members were rated between 'Noticeable Problems' down to 'Very Serious Situation.'

The global rankings of global **restrictions of religious freedom** worldwide by the PEW Forum on Religion & Public Life and by the Hudson Institute report **Religious Freedom in the World** show that the OIC member countries, which have a large Muslim majority, mostly belong to the countries with the highest restrictions on religions and that these restrictions have been growing between 2009 and 2011 (see „Global Restrictions on Religion“, Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, December 2009. pp. 49-52, here: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1443/global-restrictions-on-religion>; „Rising Restrictions on Religion“, Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, August 2011. pp. Yyy, here: [http://www.pewforum.org/Government/Rising-Restrictions-on-Religion\(2\).aspx](http://www.pewforum.org/Government/Rising-Restrictions-on-Religion(2).aspx); *Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom*: Paul A. Marshall. Religious Freedom in the World. Plymouth UK, 2008. pp. 5–7).

The newest published research by the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (here: <http://www.uscirf.gov/reports-and-briefs/special-reports/3787.html>), which only studied the written constitutions and laws of the OIC member states with a Muslim majority, not the actual situation, shows, that Islam is the state religion *and* sharia the highest law of the country in 18 states, while another 4 states only declare Islam to be the state religion and one state mentions sharia as the highest law alone.

Comment on the approximate numbers for South-Sudan, which had to be subtracted from Sudan (united), as all available figures come from the time before the division of the country (10 Mio.

inhabitants, 220.000 Muslims, 9,8 Mio. Non-Muslims including 7,7 Mio. Christians). [The statistics of the „The World’s Religions in Figures“ already list North- and Southsudan seperately.]

Percentage of Religions in the OIC-States – according to 'Operation World', 2010							
Member country	Population	Muslims	Muslims %	Non-Muslims	Non-Muslims %	Christians	Christians %
Afghanistan	29.117.489	29.074.395	99,85%	43.094	0,15%	14.559	0,05%
Albania	3.169.087	1.977.510	62,40%	1.191.577	37,60%	965.621	30,47%
Algeria	35.422.589	34.462.637	97,29%	959.952	2,71%	99.183	0,28%
Azerbaijan	8.933.928	7.824.334	87,58%	1.109.594	12,42%	244.790	2,74%
Bahrain	807.131	671.775	83,23%	135.356	16,77%	79.180	9,81%
Bangladesh	164.425.491	146.355.130	89,01%	18.070.362	10,99%	1.085.208	0,66%
Benin	9.211.741	2.164.759	23,50%	7.046.982	76,50%	3.674.563	39,89%
Bosnia	3.759.633	2.036.217	54,16%	1.723.416	45,84%	1.540.698	40,98%
Brunei	407.045	265.841	65,31%	141.204	34,69%	46.362	11,39%
Burkina Faso	16.286.706	8.501.661	52,20%	7.785.045	47,80%	3.369.719	20,69%
Cameroon	19.958.351	5.189.171	26,00%	14.769.180	74,00%	10.737.593	53,80%
Central African Republic	4.505.945	621.820	13,80%	3.884.125	86,20%	3.441.190	76,37%
Chad	11.506.130	6.079.839	52,84%	5.426.291	47,16%	4.425.258	38,46%
Comoros	691.351	683.331	98,84%	8.020	1,16%	6.430	0,93%
Cote d'Ivoire	21.570.746	9.016.572	41,80%	12.554.174	58,20%	7.256.399	33,64%
Cyprus, Northern	205.800	203.742	99,00%	2.058	1,00%	8.232	0,40%
Djibouti	879.053	852.945	97,03%	26.108	2,97%	15.383	1,75%
Egypt	84.474.427	73.213.986	86,67%	11.260.441	13,33%	10.838.069	12,83%
Gabon	1.501.266	156.132	10,40%	1.345.134	89,60%	1.191.255	79,35%
Gambia, The	1.750.732	1.571.457	89,76%	179.275	10,24%	78.433	4,48%
Guinea	10.323.755	9.118.973	88,33%	1.204.782	11,67%	461.472	4,47%
Guinea-Bissau	1.647.380	857.461	52,05%	789.919	47,95%	179.564	10,90%
Guyana	761.442	71.576	9,40%	689.866	90,60%	401.128	52,68%
Indonesia	232.516.771	186.734.219	80,31%	45.782.552	19,69%	36.853.908	15,85%
Iran	75.077.547	74.048.985	98,63%	1.028.562	1,37%	384.897	0,51%
Iraq	31.466.698	30.179.710	95,91%	1.286.988	4,09%	500.320	1,59%
Jordan	6.472.392	6.243.917	96,47%	228.475	3,53%	144.982	2,24%
Kazakhstan	15.753.460	8.456.457	53,68%	7.297.003	46,32%	1.914.045	12,15%
Kuwait	3.050.744	2.490.627	81,64%	560.117	18,36%	420.698	13,79%
Kyrgyzstan	5.550.239	4.924.727	88,73%	625.512	11,27%	292.498	5,27%
Lebanon	4.254.583	2.508.502	58,96%	1.746.081	41,04%	1.360.190	31,97%
Libya	6.545.619	6.350.560	97,02%	195.059	2,98%	172.804	2,64%
Malaysia	27.913.990	17.476.949	62,61%	10.437.041	37,39%	2.632.289	9,43%
Maldives	313.920	310.906	99,04%	3.014	0,96%	534	0,17%
Mali	13.323.104	11.641.728	87,38%	1.681.376	12,62%	351.730	2,64%
Mauritania	3.365.675	3.357.261	99,75%	8.414	0,25%	8.414	0,25%
Morocco	32.777.808	32.738.475	99,88%	39.333	0,12%	29.000	0,09%

Member country	Population	Muslims	Muslims %	Non-Muslims	Non-Muslims %	Christians	Christians %
Mozambique	23.405.670	4.353.455	18,60%	19.052.215	81,40%	10.878.955	46,48%
Niger	15.891.482	15.436.986	97,14%	454.496	2,86%	52.442	0,33%
Nigeria	158.258.917	71.406.423	45,12%	86.852.494	54,88%	81.123.521	51,26%
Oman	2.905.114	2.577.417	88,72%	327.697	11,28%	80.181	2,76%
Pakistan	184.753.300	176.993.661	95,80%	7.759.639	4,20%	4.526.456	2,45%
Palestine	4.409.392	3.866.596	87,69%	542.796	12,31%	70.991	1,61%
Qatar	1.508.322	1.333.206	88,39%	175.116	11,61%	89.142	5,91%
Russia	140.366.561	17.545.820	12,50%	122.820.741	87,50%	93.905.229	66,90%
Saudi Arabia	26.245.969	24.253.900	92,41%	1.992.069	7,59%	1.425.156	5,43%
Senegal	12.860.717	11.709.683	91,05%	1.151.034	8,95%	825.658	6,42%
Sierra Leone	5.835.664	3.676.468	63,00%	2.159.196	37,00%	767.390	13,15%
Somalia	9.358.602	9.327.719	99,67%	30.883	0,33%	30.883	0,01%
Sudan (withouth South-Sudan)	33.192.438	26.311.518	97,00%	0	0,00%	99.373	3,00%
Suriname	524.345	88.614	16,90%	435.731	83,10%	259.918	49,57%
Syria	22.505.091	20.254.582	90,00%	2.250.509	10,00%	1.426.823	6,34%
Tajikistan	7.074.845	6.645.402	93,93%	429.443	6,07%	73.578	1,04%
Thailand	68.139.238	5.383.000	7,90%	62.756.238	92,10%	749.532	1,10%
Togo	6.780.030	1.186.505	17,50%	5.593.525	82,50%	3.076.778	45,38%
Tunisia	10.373.957	10.318.975	99,47%	54.982	0,53%	22.785	0,22%
Turkey	75.705.147	73.159.940	96,64%	2.545.207	3,36%	163.140	0,21%
Turkmenistan	5.176.502	4.977.724	96,16%	198.778	3,84%	94.730	1,83%
Uganda	33.796.461	3.883.213	11,49%	29.913.248	88,51%	28.639.121	84,74%
United Arab Emirates	4.707.307	3.184.493	67,65%	1.522.814	32,35%	402.475	8,55%
Uzbekistan	27.794.296	23.605.696	84,93%	4.188.600	15,07%	208.457	0,75%
Yemen	24.255.928	24.236.523	99,92%	19.405	0,08%	19.405	0,08%
All Countries incl. observer st.	1.795.525.063	1.274.151.807	70,96%	514.492.336	28,65%	324.238.717	18,06%
All Countries without observer	1.578.753.686	1.248.564.949	79,09%	323.307.817	20,48%	224.602.068	14,23%
Italics: Observer states							

Percentage of Religions in the OIC-States – according to 'The World's Religions in Figures', 2012/2013

Member country	Population	Muslims	Muslims %	Non-Muslims	Non-Muslims %	Christians	Christians %
Afghanistan	31.412.000	31.326.000	99,73%	86.000	0,27%	32.400	0,10%
Albania	3.204.000	2,08,00	62,67%	1.196.000	37,33%	1,11,00	31,55%
Algeria	35.468.000	34.937.000	98,50%	531.000	1,50%	61.800	0,17%
Azerbaijan	9.188.000	8.523.000	92,76%	665.000	7,24%	304.000	3,31%
Bahrain	1.262.000	1.074.000	85,10%	188.000	14,90%	94.300	7,47%
Bangladesh	148.692.000	132.112.000	88,85%	16.580.000	11,15%	739.000	0,50%
Benin	8.850.000	2.253.000	25,46%	6.597.000	74,54%	3.874.000	43,77%
Bosnia	3.760.000	1.786.000	47,50%	1.974.000	52,50%	1.817.000	48,32%
Brunei	399.000	228.000	57,14%	171.000	42,86%	54.800	13,73%
Burkina Faso	16.469.000	8.842.000	53,69%	7.627.000	46,31%	3.691.000	22,41%
Cameroon	19.599.000	3.927.000	20,04%	15.672.000	79,96%	11.381.000	58,07%
Central African Republic	4.401.000	602.000	13,68%	3.799.000	86,32%	3.139.000	71,32%
Chad	11.227.000	6.278.000	55,92%	4.949.000	44,08%	3.905.000	34,78%
Comoros	735.000	723.000	98,37%	12.000	1,63%	3.500	0,48%
Cote d'Ivoire	19.738.000	8,09,00	40,58%	11.729.000	59,42%	6.772.000	34,31%
Cyprus	1.104.000	242.000	21,92%	862.000	78,08%	793.000	71,83%
Djibouti	889.000	861.000	96,85%	28.000	3,15%	15.500	1,74%
Egypt	81.121.000	72.436.000	89,29%	8.685.000	10,71%	8.183.000	10,09%
Gabon	1.505.000	154.000	10,23%	1.351.000	89,77%	1.272.000	84,52%
Gambia, The	1.728.000	1.533.000	88,72%	195.000	11,28%	75.200	4,35%
Guinea	9.982.000	8.465.000	84,80%	1.517.000	15,20%	365.000	3,66%
Guinea-Bissau	1.647.380	674.000	40,91%	973.380	59,09%	185.000	11,23%
Guyana	754.000	56.800	7,53%	697.200	92,47%	413.000	54,77%
Indonesia	239.871.000	190.521.000	79,43%	49.350.000	20,57%	28.409.000	11,84%
Iran	73.974.000	73.079.000	98,79%	895.000	1,21%	270.000	0,36%
Iraq	31.672.000	30.886.000	97,52%	786.000	2,48%	489.000	1,54%
Jordan	6.187.000	5.812.000	93,94%	375.000	6,06%	171.000	2,76%
Kazakhstan	16.026.000	10.705.000	66,80%	5.321.000	33,20%	4.212.000	26,28%
Kuwait	2.737.000	2.365.000	86,41%	372.000	13,59%	241.000	8,81%
Kyrgyzstan	5.334.000	4.345.000	81,46%	989.000	18,54%	412.000	7,72%
Lebanon	4.228.000	2.454.000	58,04%	1.774.000	41,96%	1.507.000	35,64%
Libya	6.355.000	6.141.000	96,63%	214.000	3,37%	172.000	2,71%
Malaysia	28.401.000	16.076.000	56,60%	12.325.000	43,40%	2.527.000	8,90%
Maldives	316.000	311.000	98,42%	5.000	1,58%	1.400	0,44%
Mali	15.370.000	13.393.000	87,14%	1.977.000	12,86%	498.000	3,24%
Mauritania	3.460.000	3.429.000	99,10%	31.000	0,90%	9.100	0,26%
Morocco	31.951.000	31.840.000	99,65%	111.000	0,35%	31.600	0,10%
Mozambique	23.391.000	4.086.000	17,47%	19.305.000	82,53%	12.269.000	52,45%
Niger	15.512.000	14.800.000	95,41%	712.000	4,59%	54.700	0,35%
Nigeria	158.423.000	72.149.000	45,54%	86.274.000	54,46%	73.606.000	46,46%
Oman	2.782.000	2.452.000	88,14%	330.000	11,86%	120.000	4,31%
Pakistan	173.593.000	166.927.000	96,16%	6.666.000	3,84%	3.784.000	2,18%
Palestine	4.039.000	3.256.000	80,61%	783.000	19,39%	75.100	1,86%
Qatar	1.759.000	1.469.000	83,51%	290.000	16,49%	168.000	9,55%

Member country	Population	Muslims	Muslims %	Non-Muslims	Non-Muslims %	Christians	Christians %
Russia	142.958.000	14.854.000	10,39%	128.104.000	89,61%	116.147.000	81,25%
Saudi Arabia	27.448.000	25.519.000	92,97%	1.929.000	7,03%	1.196.000	4,36%
Senegal	12.434.000	11.285.000	90,76%	1.149.000	9,24%	669.000	5,38%
Sierra Leone	5.868.000	3.793.000	64,64%	2.075.000	35,36%	778.000	13,26%
Somalia	9.331.000	9.308.000	99,75%	23.000	0,25%	4.300	0,05%
Sudan (withouth South-Sudan)	32.754.000	29.718.000	90,73%	3.036.000	9,27%	1.761.000	5,38%
Suriname	525.000	83.300	15,87%	441.700	84,13%	268.000	51,05%
Syria	20.411.000	18.934.000	92,76%	1.477.000	7,24%	1.061.000	5,20%
Tajikistan	6.879.000	6.576.000	95,60%	303.000	4,40%	98.300	1,43%
Thailand	69.122.000	4.061.000	5,88%	65.061.000	94,12%	845.000	1,22%
Togo	6,28,00	1.106.000	18,35%	4.922.000	81,65%	2.831.000	46,96%
Tunisia	10.481.000	10.430.000	99,51%	51.000	0,49%	23.200	0,22%
Turkey	72.752.000	71.513.000	98,30%	1.239.000	1,70%	198.000	0,27%
Turkmenistan	5.042.000	4.774.000	94,68%	268.000	5,32%	77.400	1,54%
Uganda	33.425.000	3.916.000	11,72%	29.509.000	88,28%	28.223.000	84,44%
United Arab Emirates	7.512.000	5.780.000	76,94%	1.732.000	23,06%	944.000	12,57%
Uzbekistan	27.445.000	25.759.000	93,86%	1.686.000	6,14%	344.000	1,25%
Yemen	24.053.000	23.832.000	99,08%	221.000	0,92%	41.400	0,17%
All Countries incl. observer st.	1.772.983.380	1.254.787.100	70,77%	518.196.280	29,23%	332.718.000	18,77%
All Countries without observer	1.556.502.320	1.235.270.100	79,36%	429.258.280	20,64%	210.770.000	13,54%
Italics: Observer states							

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