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Islamic Political Ethics as a Framework for National Security and Good Governance in Contemporary States

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to analyze the relationship between Islamic political ethics, national security, and good governance based on the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the thought of scholars, as a normative framework to answer the challenges of modern governance. **Theoretical framework:** The theoretical framework is based on the principles of Tawhīd, Risālah, and Khilāfah, which are realized through justice, deliberation, accountability, rule of law, benefit, and ethical leadership as the foundation of governance. **Literature review:** A literature review integrates literature on Islamic political ethics, good governance, and national security from primary Islamic sources as well as classical and contemporary scholarly works to explain the relevance of Islamic values in modern governance. **Methods:** The research uses a qualitative approach with a doctrinal research design through documentary analysis of the Qur'an, Sunnah, and scientific literature on political ethics, governance, and national security. **Results:** The results show that the principles of Islamic political ethics strengthen institutional legitimacy, transparency, accountability, national security, and sustainable development, while complementing the concept of modern governance. **Implications:** The integration of Islamic political ethics in the modern system of governance has the potential to improve the quality of governance, strengthen national security, build public trust, and promote sustainable political stability. **Novelty:** The novelty of this research lies in the conceptual integration of Islamic political ethics, national security, and good governance in one comprehensive normative framework for contemporary governance.

Keywords: islamic political ethics, good governance, national security, accountability, justice.

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary global security environment is increasingly characterized by complex and interconnected challenges, including political instability, violent extremism, terrorism, corruption, institutional fragility, socioeconomic inequality, and declining public confidence in government. These multidimensional threats extend beyond conventional military concerns to encompass governance deficits that undermine political legitimacy, social cohesion, and sustainable development. Consequently, contemporary security discourse increasingly recognizes that national security depends not only on military capability but also on ethical leadership, accountable institutions, social justice, and effective governance. Political legitimacy, institutional integrity, and public trust have therefore become

indispensable foundations for sustaining peace and building resilient societies capable of responding to evolving security challenges [1].

These challenges are particularly evident in many developing countries, where governance failures have intensified insecurity and weakened state capacity. Nigeria exemplifies this reality through the persistence of terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, farmer-herder conflicts, separatist agitations, and communal violence, all of which have adversely affected national development and public confidence in state institutions. The country's security challenges are further exacerbated by structural factors such as corruption, weak security institutions, unemployment, poverty, political marginalization, ethno-religious tensions, and inadequate investment in security infrastructure [2]. Among these threats, the Boko Haram insurgency has emerged as one of the most devastating security challenges confronting Nigeria and the wider Lake Chad Basin. Although poverty, underdevelopment, and political exclusion contributed to the group's emergence, its persistence has largely been sustained by the ideological framing of these grievances within entrenched ethno-religious narratives that facilitate radicalization and violent extremism [3]. These realities demonstrate that sustainable national security requires addressing the ethical and institutional dimensions of governance alongside conventional security measures.

The growing recognition that sustainable peace and national security depend on ethical governance has renewed scholarly interest in Islamic political ethics as a normative framework for strengthening political legitimacy and institutional effectiveness. Rather than conceiving governance as merely the exercise of political power, Islamic political thought regards political authority as a sacred trust (amānah) grounded in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). This ethical framework is built upon interconnected principles of 'adl (justice), shūrā (consultative governance), rahmah (compassion), ta'āwun (cooperation), mas'ūliyyah (responsibility and accountability), ṣidq (truthfulness), and ihsān (moral excellence), which collectively promote justice, transparency, accountability, public welfare (maṣlaḥah), institutional integrity, and the protection of human dignity [4]. These values were not merely articulated as moral ideals but were translated into practical governance during the formative period of Islam, most notably through the Constitution of Madinah (Ṣaḥīfat al-Madīnah), which established an inclusive political order founded on collective security, religious freedom, civic participation, and mutual responsibility among diverse communities [5].

The enduring relevance of the Glorious Qur'an and model of Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reflected in contemporary discussions on ethical governance, where its emphasis on justice, integrity, accountability, and public trust provides practical guidance for addressing corruption, abuse of public office, institutional fragility, selective enforcement of justice, and other governance challenges that undermine sustainable governance and national security in contemporary states. The Glorious Qur'an explicitly commands:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا
يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ٥٨

Surely Allah commands you to render over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing.

This verse establishes the dual principles of trustworthiness and justice as fundamental obligations of political leadership. Likewise, the Glorious Qur'an emphasizes participatory governance by describing believers as those:

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ٣٨

And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and their rule is to take counsel among themselves, and who spend out of what We have given them.

Together, these scriptural injunctions provide a normative framework for transparent, accountable, and consultative governance, thereby strengthening political legitimacy, social cohesion, and national security.

The contemporary significance of Islamic political ethics is further reflected in its approach to political integrity and anti-corruption governance. Effective prevention of corruption requires collaborative efforts involving governments, public institutions, civil society, and the private sector. Governments are expected to establish legal and institutional mechanisms that promote transparency, accountability, and the rule of law, while organizations should cultivate ethical cultures through robust internal controls, whistleblower protection, merit-based administration, and continuous ethical education. Technological innovations can further enhance transparency and reduce opportunities for corrupt practices. Consequently, ethical governance extends beyond regulatory compliance to encompass the cultivation of integrity and accountability as enduring institutional values [6].

Islam presents a comprehensive ethical and political system that integrates spirituality, morality, and public administration within a unified framework of governance. Unlike political paradigms that often separate ethics from governance, Islamic political thought conceives political authority as an ethical responsibility accountable to both Allah and society, thereby making justice, integrity, and public welfare indispensable requirements of legitimate leadership [7]. Despite the expanding scholarship on Islamic governance, political leadership, and Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah, limited attention has been given to Islamic political ethics as a strategic framework for advancing national security and sustainable governance in contemporary states. Much of the existing literature treats governance, security, and Islamic political thought as distinct fields of inquiry, with insufficient emphasis on their interrelationship in addressing contemporary challenges such as corruption, violent extremism, institutional fragility, political instability, and declining public trust [8]. This gap underscores the need for a more integrated analysis of how Islamic political ethics can strengthen governance institutions and contribute to sustainable peace and national security.

Against this backdrop, this paper examines the strategic relevance of Islamic political ethics for promoting national security and sustainable governance. Specifically, it explores the ethical foundations of Islamic political thought in the Glorious Qur'an, the Sunnah, and classical Islamic scholarship; analyses their relationship with national security and sustainable governance; compares selected dimensions of Islamic political ethics with contemporary democratic governance; and evaluates their applicability to current governance and security challenges. The study argues that Islamic political ethics provides a comprehensive moral and institutional framework grounded in justice, accountability, consultation, integrity, and public trust, thereby offering valuable principles for enhancing institutional resilience, political legitimacy, and long-term societal stability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic political ethics refers to the body of moral principles and values derived from the Glorious Qur'an, *Sunnah*, and the rich tradition of Islamic scholarship that guide political leadership, governance, and public administration. Contrasting secular political systems that often separate ethics from governance, Islam integrates morality with political authority by emphasizing justice (*'adl*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), consultation (*shura*), accountability (*mas'uliyah*), and public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) as essential principles of governance. Classical Muslim scholars such as Al-Mawardi, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, and Ibn Khaldun maintained that the legitimacy of political authority depends on its ability to protect religion, preserve justice, maintain public order, and safeguard the rights and welfare of citizens [9]–[12].

These ethical foundations continue to influence contemporary Islamic political thought by promoting transparent leadership, institutional integrity, and responsible governance. Contemporary academic works have expanded the discussion, thereby examining the relevance of Islamic political ethics to modern governance and national security. Kamali contends that Islamic governance is fundamentally based on justice, accountability, and the protection of human dignity, making it compatible with contemporary democratic values and the rule of law [13]. Esposito and Voll further uphold that ethical governance inspired by Islamic principles strengthens public confidence in government, promotes peaceful coexistence, and contributes to sustainable national development [14].

Similarly, Chapra argues that corruption, abuse of power, and institutional weakness are major threats to national security, and that the application of Islamic ethical values can strengthen state institutions, reduce social injustice, and foster political stability [15]. Existing studies therefore demonstrate that Islamic political ethics provides a comprehensive framework capable of addressing governance failures and enhancing national security through ethical leadership, institutional accountability, and inclusive public participation.

Shuni examined the prospects of adopting an Islamic political system in Nigeria as an alternative to Western democracy, arguing that Islamic principles such as justice (*'adl*), consultation (*shura*), accountability, and moral leadership could help address challenges including corruption, inequality, and weak governance [16]. The study concludes that while an Islamic political system offers ethical solutions to Nigeria's governance problems, its implementation requires careful consideration of the country's religious diversity, constitutional framework, and sociopolitical realities.

Table 1. Previous Research on Islamic Political Ethics, Governance, and National Security Frameworks

Author(s)	Main Contribution	Relevance to This Study
Classical scholars (Al-Mawardi, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Khaldun)	Established Islamic principles of governance based on justice, consultation, accountability, and public welfare.	Normative foundation of Islamic political ethics.
Kamali	Islamic governance supports justice, accountability, human dignity, and the rule of law.	Ethical governance framework.
Esposito & Voll	Ethical leadership strengthens public trust and sustainable development.	Good governance and national security.
Chapra	Islamic ethics reduce corruption and institutional weakness.	Institutional integrity and political stability.
Shuni (2024)	Islamic political system offers ethical solutions to governance challenges in Nigeria.	Contemporary application of Islamic political ethics.

The literature reviewed demonstrates that Islamic political ethics provides a comprehensive foundation for governance rooted in justice, accountability, consultation, public welfare, and institutional integrity. Classical Muslim scholars established the normative principles of ethical leadership, while contemporary researchers expanded their application to modern governance, national security, and sustainable development. Collectively, these studies indicate that integrating Islamic ethical values into public administration can strengthen institutional legitimacy, reduce corruption, enhance public trust, and promote political stability within contemporary states.

METHODOLOGY

Given that the study aims to analyse Islamic ethical principles of governance and connect them to current national security and good governance concerns, it used a qualitative doctrinal research design. The qualitative technique was appropriate for evaluating political

ethics within Islamic intellectual traditions since it allowed for a thorough investigation and interpretation of concepts rather than numerical measurement.

All of the study's data came from primary and secondary sources. The Glorious Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad's (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) *Sunnah*, classical Islamic literature, books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other relevant intellectual materials on Islamic political philosophy, governance, ethics, and national security were among them. These documents were thoroughly examined and synthesised using documentary analysis.

Through identifying recurring themes such as justice, consultation, accountability, trustworthiness, public welfare, rule of law, ethical leadership, and institutional integrity, the data collected were subjected to a thematic analysis. In order to show how Islamic political ethics might support good governance and national security in contemporary states, these ideas were interpreted in light of current governance issues.

Table 2. Summary of the Qualitative Doctrinal Research Design, Data Sources, Collection Techniques, and Analytical Framework

Research Component	Description
Research Design	Qualitative doctrinal research.
Research Approach	Qualitative approach focusing on conceptual and normative analysis of Islamic political ethics.
Data Sources	Primary sources: The Qur'an and Sunnah. Secondary sources: Classical Islamic literature, books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and scholarly publications on governance, political ethics, and national security.
Data Collection Technique	Documentary analysis through systematic review of relevant literature and Islamic sources.
Data Analysis	Thematic analysis by identifying and interpreting key themes, including justice, consultation (<i>shūrā</i>), accountability, trustworthiness (<i>amānah</i>), public welfare (<i>maṣlahah</i>), rule of law, ethical leadership, and institutional integrity.
Research Objective	To examine how Islamic political ethics contribute to good governance and national security in contemporary states.

The research employed a qualitative doctrinal design to examine the relationship between Islamic political ethics, national security, and good governance through a normative perspective. Primary data were derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah, while secondary data included classical Islamic literature, scholarly books, and peer-reviewed journal articles related to governance, ethics, and security. Data were collected using documentary analysis to identify relevant concepts and arguments. The collected materials were analyzed through thematic analysis by categorizing recurring themes, including justice, consultation (*shūrā*), accountability, trustworthiness (*amānah*), public welfare (*maṣlahah*), rule of law, ethical leadership, and institutional integrity within contemporary governance contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Political Ethics

Islamic political ethics refers to the normative moral framework that governs political leadership, public administration, and the exercise of state authority in accordance with the principles of the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Muhammad SAW (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It conceives political authority as a divine trust (*amānah*) that must be exercised with justice (*‘adl*), consultation (*shūrā*), accountability (*mas’ūliyyah*), truthfulness (*ṣidq*), compassion (*rahmah*), integrity, and the promotion of public welfare (*maṣlahah*). Unlike political systems that separate ethics from governance,

Islamic political thought integrates moral responsibility with leadership by requiring rulers and public officials to uphold fairness, protect human dignity and rights, ensure equality before the law, promote peaceful coexistence, and safeguard the collective interests of society [17]. These ethical principles provide a comprehensive framework for combating corruption, abuse of power, intolerance, institutional weakness, and social injustice while fostering political legitimacy, national security, and sustainable governance in contemporary states.

The ethical foundations of Islamic political governance are firmly rooted in the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah. The Glorious Qur'an commands believers to discharge trusts faithfully and administer justice in all matters. Allah Said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ٥٨

Surely Allah commands you to render over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing.

Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) emphasized accountability in leadership, as it was narrated on the authority of Ibn Umar:

Beware! Every one of you is a shepherd, and everyone is answerable about his flock. The Caliph is a shepherd over the people and shall be questioned about his subjects (as to how he conducted their affairs). A man is a guardian over the members of his family and shall be questioned about them (as to how he looked after their physical and moral well-being). A woman is a guardian over the household of her husband and his children and shall be questioned about them (as to how she managed the household and brought up the children). A slave is a guardian over the property of his master and shall be questioned about it (as to how he safeguarded his trust). Beware, every one of you is a guardian, and every one of you shall be questioned about his trust [18].

These foundational texts establish justice, trustworthiness, accountability, and social responsibility as indispensable principles of governance, underscoring that ethical leadership is central to political legitimacy, national security, and societal stability.

National Security in Islam

National security generally refers to the protection of a state's sovereignty, citizens, institutions, and economy from internal and external threats. While traditionally associated with military defense against external aggression, contemporary understandings extend the concept to encompass protection against terrorism, organized crime, political instability, cyber threats, economic insecurity, environmental degradation, food insecurity, and other non-military risks that threaten societal stability. Achieving national security therefore requires the effective use of political, economic, diplomatic, legal, and military instruments to safeguard the well-being of the state and its citizens [19].

From an Islamic perspective, national security is a holistic concept that complements this broader understanding by emphasizing the preservation of religion, life, intellect, property, and human dignity, the fundamental objectives of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah. It integrates state security with human security through justice, social welfare, the rule of law, and the protection of individual rights and freedoms, recognizing that genuine security is measured not only by military capability but also by the well-being, dignity, and peaceful coexistence of society [20]. This comprehensive conception is reinforced by the Glorious Qur'an, where Allah prohibits the act of corruption and social disorder:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

٥٦

And do not make corruption upon the earth after its reformation, and call on Him fearing and hoping; surely the mercy of Allah is nigh to those who do good (to others) [21].

Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings be upon him) emphasized the societal dimension of security by stating:

The Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand people are safe, and the believer is one from whom the people's lives and wealth are safe [22].

These foundational teachings underscore that national security is a collective responsibility founded on ethical governance, justice, social cohesion, and the protection of public welfare, thereby providing a strategic framework for addressing contemporary challenges such as corruption, insecurity, oppression, and political instability.

Good Governance

Good governance refers to the effective, transparent, accountable, and participatory management of public affairs and resources in a manner that upholds the rule of law, protects citizens' rights, minimizes corruption, and promotes sustainable development. Although no universally accepted definition exists, it is widely recognised as a fundamental prerequisite for political stability, institutional effectiveness, and socioeconomic progress. As Kofi Annan observed, good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and advancing sustainable development [23].

From an Islamic perspective, good governance is an ethical system of leadership entrenched in the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah, where political authority is exercised as a trust (amānah) to uphold justice, consultation, accountability, transparency, equality, and public welfare. These values are reinforced by the principles of tawḥīd (the oneness of Allah), khilāfah (stewardship), cooperation, moderation, and wisdom, which guide leaders in promoting the common good and ensuring responsible administration [24]. The Glorious Qur'an highlights these ethical obligations by declaring:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٩٠

Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful [25].

Accordingly, Islamic governance seeks to foster institutional integrity, social justice, and public trust while preventing corruption, oppression, and abuse of power.

In essence, it transcends administrative efficiency by integrating ethical values with public leadership, thereby providing a sustainable governance framework capable of strengthening institutional legitimacy, promoting national security, and fostering peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable societal development.

Ethical Principles of the Islamic Political System

The ethical principles of the Islamic political system are rooted in the interconnected principles of Tawḥīd (the Oneness and sovereignty of Allah), Risālah (Prophethood), and

Khilāfah (vicegerency), which collectively define the nature, source, and exercise of political authority in Islam. According to Ali, Mafindi and Aliyu, Islamic political thought begins with Tawḥīd, which affirms Allah as the sole Creator, Sustainer, Legislator, and Sovereign whose commands constitute the ultimate source of political and legal authority in all aspects of human life [26]. Consequently, sovereignty (ḥākimiyyah) belongs exclusively to Allah, while human beings exercise political authority only as trustees responsible for implementing divine guidance through the institution of Risālah, which conveys Allah's laws and moral directives to humanity. In this framework, the establishment of the Islamic state is not merely an instrument of political administration but a moral institution established to preserve virtue, prevent corruption, and promote justice in accordance with divine guidance.

The Glorious Qur'an repeatedly reinforces this principle of divine sovereignty where Allah Said:

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءَ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مِمَّا أُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ
إِلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٤٠

You do not serve besides Him but names which you have named, you and your fathers; Allah has not sent down any authority for them; judgment is only Allah's; He has commanded that you shall not serve aught but Him; this is the right religion, but most people do not know [27].

This verse therefore establishes that there is no individual or institution that possesses the absolute legislative authority independent of divine revelation. Building upon this foundation, the principle of Khilāfah defines human beings as Allah's vicegerents (khulafā') on earth, entrusted with administering public affairs in accordance with the Sharī'ah and the objectives of justice, accountability, and public welfare. Political authority is therefore conceived as an amānah (trust) rather than a privilege, requiring leaders to exercise power responsibly, protect the rights of citizens, and promote the common good [28]. This understanding is reinforced by the Glorious Qur'an, where Allah states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمْنَتَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٢٧

O you who believe! Do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor betray your trusts knowingly [29].

This verse emphasises that the abuse of political authority constitutes a violation of both Divine and public trust.

Building on these theological foundations, Mawdudi conceptualizes the Islamic political system as a theo-democracy, in which ultimate sovereignty belongs to Allah while the Muslim community collectively exercises delegated authority within the limits prescribed by the Sharī'ah. Political leaders derive legitimacy not from unrestricted popular sovereignty but from their commitment to implementing divine law through consultation (shūrā), justice ('adl), and accountability (mas'ūliyyah). Accordingly, neither rulers nor legislatures possess the authority to alter explicit divine injunctions; rather, they govern as custodians of a trust whose legitimacy depends upon obedience to Allah and service to society [30], [31]. Likewise, Noor, Hasan, and Khasyi'in argue that the Islamic conception of the caliphate rejects dictatorship and hereditary privilege by emphasizing equality before the law, public participation, responsible leadership, and collective consultation [32]. Within this framework, every qualified member of the Muslim community has both the right and responsibility to contribute to governance, while political authority remains accountable to divine law and the public interest.

Therefore, the ethical principles of the Islamic political system establish that political authority is a divine trust grounded in Tawḥīd, guided by Risālah, and exercised through

Khilāfah. These principles provide the normative basis for justice, accountability, consultation, equality, and responsible leadership, thereby offering a comprehensive ethical framework for good governance, institutional integrity, national security, and sustainable political development.

Foundations of Islamic Political Ethics

Islamic political ethics is founded on a comprehensive moral and legal framework derived from the Qur'an, the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and the intellectual legacy of classical Islamic scholarship. Unlike political systems that view governance primarily as the exercise of state power, Islam conceives political authority as a divine trust (amānah) exercised in accordance with Allah's sovereignty (hākimiyyah) and guided by the objectives of the Sharī'ah. Consequently, rulers are regarded as stewards (khulafā') entrusted with safeguarding justice, protecting public interests, and administering society in accordance with divine guidance rather than personal or partisan interests. The Glorious Qur'an affirms this principle by declaring:

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءَ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مِمَّا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ
أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٤٠

You do not serve besides Him but names which you have named, you and your fathers; Allah has not sent down any authority for them; judgment is only Allah's; He has commanded that you shall not serve aught but Him; this is the right religion, but most people do not know.

This verse therefore highlights that political authority derives its legitimacy from adherence to Divine Law and ethical responsibility rather than unrestricted human sovereignty.

Historically, the leadership of the Rightly Guided Caliphs demonstrates the practical application of these principles through consultation (shūrā), public accountability, justice, and collective responsibility in political decision-making. Although Islamic sources do not prescribe a single institutional model for selecting political leaders, they consistently emphasize competence, integrity, justice, and consultation as essential criteria for legitimate leadership. These ethical foundations continue to inform contemporary Islamic governance, where justice, consultation, accountability, the rule of law, and the promotion of public welfare (maṣlahah) are regarded as indispensable principles for achieving political legitimacy, social cohesion, and sustainable development. Contemporary scholarship further recognizes that these principles closely align with modern governance objectives by encouraging inclusive decision-making, institutional effectiveness, equitable resource distribution, and long-term societal well-being [33].

Against this background, the subsequent sections examine the principal foundations of Islamic political ethics, justice, consultation, and accountability, the rule of law, public welfare, ethical leadership, and truthfulness and analyse their contributions to strengthening national security and promoting sustainable governance in contemporary states.

1. Justice ('Adl)

Justice ('adl) is the cornerstone of Islamic political ethics and one of the foremost foundations of legitimate governance. Islam requires political leaders and public institutions to administer justice impartially, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, social status, or political affiliation. Consequently, justice in Islam extends beyond judicial fairness to encompass political accountability, economic equity, the protection of human rights, equitable distribution of resources, and the prevention of oppression and corruption. The centrality of justice to governance is reflected in the observation of Ibn Taymiyyah that a just state may

endure despite disbelief, whereas an oppressive state ultimately declines even if it professes religious commitment [34].

The imperative of justice is firmly established in the Qur'an, where Allah commands:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٩٠

Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful.

In another verse Allah instructed believers, where He said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ
غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أُولَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلََّا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَىَٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا وَإِنْ تَلَوُّوا أَوْ نَعَرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرًا ١٣٥

O you who believe! Stand firmly for justice as witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves, your parents, or your relatives...

These injunctions establish justice as both a moral obligation and a governing principle through which ethical responsibility is translated into public policy and institutional practice. Accordingly, justice requires competent and trustworthy leadership, transparent administration, equal application of the law, and responsible stewardship of public resources, while encouraging public participation and effective oversight to curb corruption and abuse of power [35].

Contemporary scholarship further recognizes 'adl as the operational foundation of political integrity, linking justice with accountability, transparency, and institutional resilience. By ensuring legal impartiality, safeguarding fundamental rights, and promoting equitable governance, the principle of justice strengthens public confidence in state institutions and enhances political legitimacy. Consequently, the institutionalization of justice provides a strategic framework for combating corruption, preventing social injustice, and fostering national security, sustainable governance, and long-term political stability in contemporary states.

In essence, justice ('adl) is the normative foundation upon which Islamic political ethics and legitimate governance are built. By ensuring fairness, accountability, equality before the law, and the protection of fundamental rights, it strengthens institutional credibility, fosters public trust, and safeguards social order. As such, the effective institutionalization of justice provides a strategic framework for combating corruption, preventing oppression, promoting peaceful coexistence, and enhancing national security and sustainable governance in contemporary states.

2. Consultation (Shūrā)

Shūrā (consultation) is a fundamental principle of Islamic political ethics that promotes participatory governance, collective decision-making, and shared responsibility in public affairs. All these are entrenched in the Glorious Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); it requires leaders to seek the views of knowledgeable and competent members of society before making decisions affecting the public interest. Rather than prescribing a rigid institutional structure, Islam presents shūrā as a flexible governance principle whose implementation may vary according to the needs and circumstances of different societies, provided that it upholds justice,

inclusiveness, accountability, and the common good. Allah commends believers when He states in the Glorious Qur'an:

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ٣٨

And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and their rule is to take counsel among themselves, and who spend out of what We have given them.

And in another verse, He further instructs the Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ١٥٩

Thus, it is due to mercy from Allah that you deal with them gently, and had you been rough, hard-hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around you; pardon them therefore and ask pardon for them, and take counsel with them in the affair; so when you have decided, then place your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves those who trust.

This verse therefore stresses the importance of consultation as an indispensable component of ethical leadership and responsible governance.

Historically, the practice of *shūrā* by the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Rightly Guided Caliphs established consultation as a practical mechanism for fostering consensus, resolving disputes, and enhancing political legitimacy. Contemporary scholarship similarly recognizes *shūrā* as a governance instrument that encourages transparency, public participation, institutional accountability, and inclusive decision-making while strengthening organizational integrity and ethical responsibility. By cultivating mutual trust, shared ownership of public policies, and collective commitment to moral values, *shūrā* also contributes to preventing corruption, improving policy effectiveness, promoting equitable socioeconomic development, and reinforcing social cohesion [36].

In essence, *shūrā* transcends consultation as a procedural exercise by institutionalizing participation, accountability, and collective responsibility within governance. As a foundational principle of Islamic political ethics, it enhances political legitimacy, strengthens public confidence in state institutions, facilitates peaceful conflict resolution, and provides a strategic framework for promoting national security, good governance, and sustainable development in contemporary states.

3. Accountability (Mas'ūliyyah)

Accountability (*mas'ūliyyah*) is a fundamental pillar of Islamic political ethics that ensures the ethical exercise of political authority through continuous answerability for leadership decisions and public actions. While *amānah* defines political office as a sacred trust and 'adl governs its exercise through justice, *mas'ūliyyah* serves as the regulatory mechanism that holds leaders responsible for fulfilling that trust with integrity, transparency, and fairness. In Islamic governance, accountability extends beyond legal or institutional compliance to encompass moral and spiritual responsibility, requiring leaders to exercise authority in accordance with the ethical principles of the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah. This conception operates through a dual framework of accountability: vertical accountability to Allah, the ultimate source of authority, and horizontal accountability to society, where leaders remain answerable for the consequences of their decisions and stewardship of public resources.

The ethical obligation of accountability is firmly established in the Prophetic tradition, where the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared:

"Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock". This Prophetic guidance affirms that leadership is not a privilege but a trust that requires justice, humility, service, and responsibility at every level of society. Accordingly, political authority in Islam exists to promote public welfare (maṣlaḥah), safeguard education, health, security, and economic well-being, and ensure that governance serves the common good rather than personal or political interests [37]. Contemporary scholarship further emphasizes that accountability is strengthened through integrity, transparency, fairness, and responsible stewardship of public resources, while the ethical principle of iḥsān encourages leaders and public officials to perform their duties with excellence and sincerity, conscious of their ultimate accountability before Allah. Such an ethical orientation reinforces public trust, discourages corruption and abuse of power, and enhances institutional effectiveness.

Accountability in Islamic political ethics is both a moral obligation and an institutional safeguard that ensures authority is exercised responsibly, transparently, and in the public interest. By integrating spiritual consciousness with public answerability, mas'ūliyyah strengthens ethical leadership, institutional integrity, and democratic accountability, thereby contributing to political legitimacy, national security, and sustainable governance in contemporary states.

4. Rule of Law

The rule of law is a fundamental pillar of Islamic political ethics, providing the legal and institutional framework through which justice, accountability, and ethical governance are realized. In Islam, governance is exercised under the supremacy of the Sharī'ah rather than the discretion of political leaders, making both rulers and citizens equally subject to the law. Consequently, the legitimacy of political authority depends on adherence to divine law, impartial administration of justice, judicial independence, and equality before the law, accountability, transparency, and the protection of fundamental rights. These principles closely correspond with contemporary conceptions of the rule of law, which emphasize legal certainty, institutional accountability, constraints on arbitrary power, and equal access to justice as indispensable foundations of good governance and sustainable development [38].

The Islamic conception of the rule of law derives its legitimacy from the sovereignty of Allah (ḥākimiyyah), while political leaders serve as trustees (khulafā') entrusted with implementing divine guidance in pursuit of justice and the common good. The Qur'an establishes this obligation by declaring:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ٥٨

Surely Allah commands you to render trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing.

Equally, believers are commanded to maintain justice even when it conflicts with personal or familial interests, as Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا وَإِنْ تَلَوُّا أَوْ تُعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

O you who believe! be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness of Allah's sake, though it may be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives; if he be rich or poor, Allah is nearer to them both in compassion; therefore do not follow (your) low desires, lest you deviate; and if you swerve or turn aside, then surely Allah is aware of what you do.

These principles were exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), whose administration in Madinah institutionalized equality before the law, due process, consultation (shūrā), judicial impartiality, and the protection of life, property, and human dignity. His declaration that even his daughter Faṭimah would be subject to legal punishment if she committed theft demonstrates Islam's uncompromising commitment to equality before the law.

The practical implementation of this principle was further demonstrated during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Mawdudi observes that the caliphs consistently upheld equality before the law and rejected preferential treatment based on political authority. He cites the case in which Caliph 'Umar appeared before Judge Zayd ibn Thābit as an ordinary litigant and rebuked the judge for extending him special privilege, insisting that a ruler and an ordinary citizen must be treated equally before the law. Similarly, Caliph 'Ali objected when Judge Shurayḥ rose to honour him during legal proceedings involving a non-Muslim litigant, regarding such preferential treatment as inconsistent with the impartial administration of justice [39]. These historical precedents demonstrate that the rule of law in Islam is founded upon equality, judicial independence, and accountability, regardless of social status or political office.

Beyond legal compliance, the rule of law in Islam encompasses ethical leadership, public accountability, protection of human rights, and the promotion of public welfare in accordance with the higher objectives of the Sharī'ah (Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah). These principles align closely with internationally recognized indicators of effective governance, including transparent administration, accessible justice, absence of corruption, and effective constraints on governmental power. By integrating legal authority with moral responsibility, the Islamic rule of law strengthens institutional integrity, reinforces public trust, and promotes justice, peace, and sustainable development [40].

The rule of law operationalizes the ethical principles of Islamic political ethics by translating justice ('adl), trustworthiness (amānah), consultation (shūrā), accountability (mas'ūliyyah), and public welfare (maṣlaḥah) into effective governance. Through impartial justice, judicial independence, responsible leadership, and equal application of the law, it strengthens institutional legitimacy, protects citizens' rights, curbs corruption, and fosters public confidence in government. Consequently, the rule of law provides a strategic legal and ethical foundation for advancing good governance, strengthening national security, and promoting sustainable peace and political stability in contemporary states.

5. Public Welfare (Maṣlaḥah)

Public welfare (maṣlaḥah) is one of the cardinal principles of Islamic political ethics and a fundamental objective of the Sharī'ah. It refers to the promotion of societal benefit and the prevention of harm through policies and institutions that protect the common good. Closely associated with the higher objectives of the Sharī'ah (Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah), maṣlaḥah seeks to preserve religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property, thereby providing a comprehensive ethical framework for governance. Consequently, Islamic governance is expected to formulate laws and public policies that promote justice, social stability, economic prosperity, and human well-being while safeguarding society from corruption, oppression, and insecurity. This objective is affirmed in the Qur'an:

شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ ۖ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

The month of Ramazan is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks.

Correspondingly, the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated:

There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm.

This Hadith establishes harm prevention as a fundamental principle of Islamic governance.

The principle of *maṣlaḥah* extends beyond legal theory to provide practical guidance for public administration and sustainable development. By integrating material progress with spiritual and moral values, it promotes balanced development that prioritizes human dignity, equitable resource distribution, environmental stewardship, and social justice. Islamic instruments such as *zakāh*, charitable giving, and social welfare policies further reinforce this objective by reducing poverty, addressing inequality, expanding access to education and healthcare, and strengthening social solidarity. Such policies contribute to peaceful coexistence, inclusive development, and institutional resilience while mitigating many of the socioeconomic conditions that fuel conflict, insecurity, and political instability [41].

Furthermore, *maṣlaḥah* provides a normative foundation for ethical leadership by requiring political authority to pursue the public interest rather than personal or sectional interests. It therefore guides decision-making towards justice, accountability, compassion, and responsible stewardship of public resources. In this regard, governance is viewed as a divine trust directed toward securing the welfare of present and future generations through policies that advance economic development, social cohesion, public safety, and institutional integrity [42].

Maṣlaḥah operationalizes the public purpose of Islamic political ethics by ensuring that governance is directed towards promoting collective welfare and preventing harm. Through policies that uphold justice, equitable development, social protection, and responsible leadership, it strengthens institutional legitimacy, enhances public trust, and addresses the underlying socioeconomic drivers of insecurity. Consequently, *maṣlaḥah* provides a strategic ethical foundation for achieving good governance, strengthening national security, and promoting sustainable peace and development in contemporary states.

6. Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership constitutes one of the defining pillars of Islamic political ethics, emphasizing that political authority is a moral responsibility (*amānah*) entrusted by Allah rather than a privilege to be exercised for personal or political gain. Consequently, leadership in Islam is founded upon integrity, justice, accountability, sincerity, compassion, wisdom, and service to society. The Qur'an establishes this ethical obligation by commanding:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا
يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ٥٨

Surely Allah commands you to render trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing.

Not only that, in another verse, Allah reminds believers that political authority is merely a means of realizing higher moral objectives:

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ٤١

Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah's is the end of affairs.

These verses demonstrate that the legitimacy of leadership is measured not by the acquisition of power but by the promotion of justice, moral integrity, and public welfare.

Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) provided the practical model of ethical leadership through justice, humility, consultation (shūrā), transparency, and unwavering commitment to the common good. His statement,

Beware! Every one of you is a shepherd, and everyone is answerable about his flock. The Caliph is a shepherd over the people and shall be questioned about his subjects (as to how he conducted their affairs) ...

This emphasises that leadership is a universal moral responsibility requiring accountability for every decision and its impact on society. Accordingly, leadership in Islam is understood as stewardship that demands justice, humility, and service rather than domination or privilege. This ethical orientation was exemplified in the Prophet's governance of Madinah, where political authority was exercised through consultation, justice, and the pursuit of the public interest (maṣlaḥah), thereby integrating spiritual values with effective public administration.

Furthermore, Islamic political thought emphasizes participatory and accountable governance through the principle of shūrā. Although the Qur'an does not prescribe a rigid institutional model, it commands believers to conduct their collective affairs through mutual consultation (Qur'an 3:159; 42:38), thereby encouraging inclusive decision-making and public participation in governance. As Hussain observes, this consultative principle applies to both legislative and executive affairs, allowing Muslim societies to adopt governance structures appropriate to their contexts while remaining faithful to Islamic ethical values. Similarly, Islamic political theory maintains that sovereignty (hākimiyyah) belongs exclusively to Allah, while political leaders serve as vicegerents (khulafā') entrusted with implementing divine guidance in the pursuit of justice and the common good rather than exercising absolute authority.

Classical Islamic governance further reinforced ethical leadership through institutional checks on political authority. While rulers exercised executive functions, their authority remained subject to the Sharī'ah and scholarly consensus (ijmā'), with the 'ulamā' serving as guardians and interpreters of Islamic law. This arrangement ensured that governance was constrained by legal and ethical principles rather than personal discretion, thereby strengthening accountability, protecting justice, and preventing arbitrary rule.

Certainly, ethical leadership in Islam integrates moral integrity, justice, consultation, accountability, and responsible stewardship into the exercise of political authority. By conceiving leadership as a divine trust exercised within the limits of the Sharī'ah and in service to the public interest, Islamic political ethics provides a sustainable framework for strengthening institutional legitimacy, promoting good governance, enhancing national security, and fostering peaceful, just, and resilient societies.

7. Ṣidq (Truthfulness)

Ṣidq (truthfulness) constitutes one of the fundamental ethical principles of Islamic political ethics and serves as the moral foundation of transparency, integrity, and credibility in governance. While amānah establishes leadership as a trust, 'adl ensures justice, and mas'ūliyyah guarantees accountability, ṣidq preserves the integrity of governance by

anchoring political authority in honesty, sincerity, and moral consistency. It functions as a safeguard against deception, manipulation, misinformation, and corruption, thereby strengthening public confidence in institutions and leadership. In Islamic thought, truthfulness extends beyond truthful speech to encompass sincerity of intention, fidelity to commitments, transparency in decision-making, and consistency between words and actions [43]. Consequently, *ṣidq* serves as an indispensable ethical requirement for effective governance and responsible leadership.

The Qur'an places significant emphasis on truthfulness as a defining characteristic of righteousness and Allah-consciousness. Allah commands:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّٰدِقِينَ ١١٩

O you who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are truthful.

This injunction demonstrates that truthfulness is not merely a social virtue but a spiritual obligation rooted in *taqwā* (Allah-consciousness). Accordingly, the Qur'anic conception of *ṣidq* transcends procedural transparency by embedding honesty within the broader framework of moral and spiritual accountability. Leaders are therefore expected to uphold truth and integrity not only in public conduct but also in their private intentions, recognizing that they remain accountable before Allah for every action and decision. Through this ethical orientation, *ṣidq* functions as an internal regulatory mechanism that restrains misconduct even in situations where external oversight may be absent.

From a governance perspective, truthfulness promotes epistemic integrity by ensuring that information communicated by leaders and institutions is accurate, reliable, and free from distortion. It also enhances institutional transparency by facilitating openness in governance processes, thereby enabling public scrutiny and informed participation in public affairs. Furthermore, *ṣidq* reinforces moral consistency, requiring leaders to align their policies, actions, and commitments with the values they publicly profess. Such consistency strengthens institutional legitimacy and prevents hypocrisy (*nifāq*), which Islamic teachings regard as a major threat to social trust and political stability.

The life of Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) provides the highest practical model of truthfulness in leadership. Even before prophethood, he was widely known as *al-Ṣādiq al-Amīn* (the Truthful and Trustworthy), reflecting his reputation for honesty, reliability, and integrity. Throughout his public and private life, he demonstrated unwavering commitment to truth, fairness, and transparency in his dealings with companions, adversaries, and members of diverse communities. His exemplary conduct established truthfulness as a cornerstone of ethical leadership and social harmony. As Wani and Azhar observe, honesty (*ṣidq*) and trustworthiness (*amānah*) are essential virtues that foster mutual trust, accountability, and social cohesion, thereby strengthening the moral foundations of governance and public administration [44].

The importance of truthfulness is further reinforced in the Prophetic tradition, where the Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: "Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise" (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*). This tradition highlights the intrinsic relationship between honesty, ethical conduct, and societal well-being. In governance, truthfulness nurtures public trust, facilitates accountability, strengthens institutional effectiveness, and promotes peaceful relations between leaders and citizens. Conversely, falsehood and deception undermine legitimacy, weaken institutions, and generate public distrust, which may ultimately threaten political stability and national security.

In sum, *ṣidq* serves as the ethical safeguard of Islamic governance by ensuring that political authority is exercised with honesty, transparency, and moral integrity. Through its emphasis on truthfulness in leadership, communication, and public administration, it

strengthens institutional credibility, promotes accountability, enhances public trust, and prevents corruption and abuse of power. As a foundational component of Islamic political ethics, *ṣidq* contributes significantly to good governance, national security, social cohesion, and sustainable development by fostering a political culture grounded in truth, responsibility, and ethical excellence.

Table 3. Summary of the Key Findings on Islamic Political Ethics, National Security, and Good Governance in Contemporary States

Principle	Governance Function	Expected Outcome
Justice, <i>Shūrā</i> , Accountability, Rule of Law, <i>Maṣlaḥah</i> , Ethical Leadership, <i>Ṣidq</i>	Strengthen ethical governance, transparency, institutional integrity, and public participation	Good governance, national security, public trust, political stability, and sustainable development.

Table 3 summarizes the principal findings of this study by integrating the core principles of Islamic political ethics with their governance functions and expected outcomes. The findings indicate that justice, consultation (*Shūrā*), accountability, the rule of law, *maṣlaḥah*, ethical leadership, and *ṣidq* collectively strengthen transparent governance, institutional integrity, and public participation, thereby promoting national security, public trust, political stability, and sustainable development in contemporary states.

Islamic Political Ethics and National Security through Good Governance

Islamic political ethics provides a comprehensive governance framework that integrates moral responsibility with public administration to achieve national security, political stability, and sustainable development. Rooted in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the objectives of the Sharī'ah (Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah), Islamic governance conceives political authority as a sacred trust (amānah) exercised through justice (ʿadl), consultation (shūrā), accountability (mas'ūliyyah), the rule of law, and the promotion of public welfare (maṣlaḥah). Unlike governance models that prioritize institutional efficiency alone, Islamic governance combines ethical values with legal and administrative structures to safeguard human dignity, uphold justice, prevent corruption, and promote social harmony. As the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated, "Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock", underscoring that leadership is fundamentally a responsibility for protecting society and advancing the common good [45].

Within this ethical framework, national security extends far beyond military defence to encompass the protection of religion, life, intellect, property, lineage, and human dignity, the higher objectives of the Sharī'ah. Consequently, security is understood in both state and human dimensions, requiring political stability, economic justice, social welfare, effective institutions, and freedom from fear, oppression, and corruption. The Glorious Qur'an condemns corruption and social disorder, declaring:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ ۝٥٦

And do not make mischief in the earth after its reformation, and call on Him fearing and hoping; surely the mercy of Allah is nigh to those who do good (to others).

In another verse, it affirms the sanctity of human life, Allah said:

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ ٣٢

Because of that, We decreed upon the children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land, it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves a life, it is as if he had saved the entire mankind. And Our messengers had certainly come to them with clear proofs. Then indeed many of them, [even] after that, throughout the land, were transgressors.

These teachings demonstrate that genuine national security is inseparable from ethical governance, justice, and the protection of fundamental human rights.

The practical relevance of Islamic political ethics becomes particularly evident in addressing contemporary governance challenges. Many modern security threats, including corruption, terrorism, violent extremism, poverty, institutional fragility, political instability, abuse of power, and declining public trust, are rooted primarily in governance failures rather than military deficiencies. Islamic political ethics addresses these underlying causes by promoting accountable leadership, judicial independence, transparency, inclusive decision-making, equitable distribution of resources, and responsible public administration. Through the principles of justice, consultation, rule of law, and public welfare, Islamic governance strengthens institutional legitimacy, reinforces social cohesion, reduces public grievances, and enhances citizens' confidence in government, thereby creating conditions necessary for sustainable peace and national resilience.

Furthermore, Islamic political ethics promotes human security by recognizing that societal well-being depends upon access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, food security, and protection from injustice and fear. This holistic conception closely aligns with contemporary human security paradigms while grounding them within a moral and spiritual framework. The Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) emphasized this comprehensive understanding of security by stating: "Whoever among you wakes up secure in his home, healthy in his body, and possessing his day's provision, it is as though he has acquired the whole world" [\[46\]](#). Accordingly, Islamic governance prioritizes policies that foster social inclusion, economic equity, compassion, and mutual responsibility, thereby strengthening both individual welfare and national stability.

Similarly, Islamic political ethics provides effective normative mechanisms for preventing radicalization, violent extremism, and social conflict by cultivating justice, moderation, tolerance, education, and respect for human dignity. In Islamic political thought, the primary purpose of the state is to preserve the foundational principles of Tawhīd, Risālah, and Khilāfah, which establish the moral, spiritual, and legal basis of governance. Accordingly, the state is entrusted with promoting justice, virtue, and public welfare while preventing corruption, oppression, and moral decay. Its role therefore transcends political administration or the satisfaction of particular interests, serving instead as an ethical institution committed to realizing the objectives of the Sharī'ah and fostering a just, peaceful, and prosperous society. Rather than relying solely on coercive security measures, it addresses the structural conditions that often fuel insecurity, including inequality, marginalization, corruption, and political exclusion. In this respect, the Qur'anic injunction, "Cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression", establishes collective responsibility as an essential principle for peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and national unity.

Although Islamic political thought differs from Western democratic theory regarding the ultimate source of sovereignty, locating supreme authority in Allah rather than in the people, both traditions share important governance values, including justice, accountability, consultation, rule of law, public participation, and protection of fundamental rights. While Western democratic systems derive legitimacy principally from popular sovereignty and constitutional arrangements, Islamic governance integrates these institutional principles within a broader ethical and spiritual framework that views political authority as a trust accountable to both Allah and society. At its core, the Islamic political system seeks to establish a just social order by institutionalizing ethical values and mechanisms of accountability that regulate leadership and public affairs. Its ultimate aim is to foster justice,

peace, and social harmony while protecting the rights and dignity of all citizens. Accordingly, the attainment of social justice is a fundamental objective of Islamic governance, which prioritizes the provision of basic human needs and the preservation of human honour as essential prerequisites for societal stability and sustainable development [47]. Consequently, Islamic political ethics complements contemporary governance discourse by reinforcing the moral foundations necessary for responsible leadership, institutional integrity, and sustainable development.

In general, Islamic political ethics demonstrates that national security cannot be achieved solely through military capability or coercive state power but must be founded upon ethical governance, justice, accountability, rule of law, consultation, and the promotion of public welfare. By addressing the institutional and moral causes of insecurity, Islamic governance strengthens political legitimacy, enhances public trust, promotes social cohesion, and safeguards human dignity. Consequently, Islamic political ethics offers a comprehensive and sustainable framework through which contemporary states can achieve good governance, strengthen national security, foster peaceful coexistence, and realize long-term political stability and sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that Islamic political ethics provides a comprehensive ethical and institutional framework for achieving national security through good governance. Grounded in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the higher objectives of the Shari'ah, Islamic governance conceives political authority as a sacred trust that must be exercised with justice, accountability, consultation, transparency, truthfulness, ethical leadership, adherence to the rule of law, and unwavering commitment to public welfare. These interconnected principles strengthen institutional legitimacy, promote social justice, protect fundamental rights, and foster public confidence in government. The study further establishes that many contemporary security challenges, including corruption, political instability, violent extremism, poverty, institutional fragility, and declining public trust, are fundamentally governance problems rather than purely military concerns. Islamic political ethics addresses these challenges by promoting responsible leadership, judicial independence, inclusive decision-making, equitable resource distribution, and ethical public administration. Consequently, national security is understood not merely as the protection of territorial boundaries but as the preservation of religion, life, intellect, property, human dignity, and societal well-being in accordance with the objectives of the Shari'ah. Ultimately, the study concludes that Islamic political ethics remains highly relevant to contemporary governance discourse. Its integration of moral responsibility with institutional governance offers a sustainable model capable of strengthening good governance, enhancing national security, promoting peaceful coexistence, fostering social cohesion, and advancing sustainable political and socio-economic development in contemporary states.

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Authors Contributions

Muhammad Muhammad, PhD: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. Bello Ali, PhD: Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation. Aminu Sa'ad Abdullahi, PhD: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

Conflict of Interest

All authors state that there is no conflict of interest.

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