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# Non-Aligned Movement: Challenges and Way Forward

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## Abstract

*Non-Aligned Movement commonly known as NAM has played a useful role in the common cause of World peace and prosperity. It has succeeded in steadily emerging as a central international forum. The newly independent nations of the world that have come into the one fold of this Movement have determined their own and resist the coercion of the World powers and their attempt to exploit them. During the cold war and in the present context, the Non-Aligned Movement examines its objectives and achievements in both periods. The main goals of NAM during block policy of more extraordinary powers, the structure of bipolar in international relations, the constant support and through its conferences and in the United Nations for World peaceful environment, détente, and disarmament, and prevention of the world into the block division (East and West). Despite these changes, several others new challenge that are arising, and its member states for the achievement of peace and security for humankind.*

**Keywords:** international forum, globalization, disarmament, cold war, third world movement

## An Overview

The founding principle of a NAM was anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, which appealed to many countries in the world that had neither recently been liberated or were still waging national Liberation Movements to liberate from colonialism and imperialism. The NAM thus became the standard platform for them to put forward their common agendas. Since World War II, there have been increased efforts to examine international relations within a global perspective. These efforts have resulted in several studies on regional and international organizations. Few studies, however, have attempted to examine transnational groupings, especially those seeking to transform the world politics and economics. The Non-Aligned Movement is the most significant international Movement emerging in contemporary history (Munro, 2020). For both the

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political and philosophical reasons, the Movement was ignored by the western tradition. It is to assume its rightful place as an essential international social Movement. It is imperative in the scholarly practice with the Non-Aligned countries. To undertake the tasks after developing not only a body of empirical studies but also a series of General theoretical proportional that explains the character of Movement. It has been observed by two big revolutions that have transformed the old international order in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Easterlin, 2019), when the Bolsheviks took power in Russia and formed a socialist system in 1917. After World War II, the decolonization process occurred in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. The revolution of 1917 resulted in the emergence of a single central power, the Afro-Asian anti-colonial revolution brought into existence, most of which were small or middle-sized, underdeveloped, and politically weak. Internally the peoples are fragmented. Creating the new political structures and its dissolving traditional feudal institution, these societies have been trying to escape from under development for the past 30 years. These are the nations whose governments have joined together and formed as the NAM. The existence of NAM came when several countries refused to join either the capitalist or the communist bloc of the post-war time. NAM tried to transcend the Cold War, but the NAM ended up as one of the Cold War's chief victims. During the Movement's first dozen years (1961–1973), four Cold War developments shaped its agenda and political orientation (Luthi, 2017).

In this circumstance, newly Independent countries chose a policy of Non-Alignment in International relations. NAM is an international organization that does not want to be officially aligned with or against any significant power bloc. The Movement has 120 members, 17 (observers) countries, and 10 Observer organizations (MoEA, 2020). With 120 member countries, the NAM represents one of the largest international organizations (NAM, 2020). Almost all the Asian, African, and Latin American states are members, and they have come together despite all the political, economic, and cultural differences between them.

Membership Criteria of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (MoEA, 2020):

1. The Country should have adopted an independent policy based on the co-existence of states with different political and social systems and Non-Alignment. It should have shown a tendency to favor such an approach.
2. The Country in question should consistently support national independence movements.
3. The Country should not be a member of a multilateral military alliance concluded in the context of significant power conflicts.
4. If the Country has a bilateral military agreement with great power or it is a member of a regional defense pact, the contract or treaty should not have concluded deliberately in the context of significant power conflicts.

5. If the Country has granted military bases to a foreign power, the concession should not have made in the context of significant power conflicts.

### **Member Countries of the NAM**

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao Peoples' Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, São Tomé and Príncipe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### **Observer Countries of the NAM**

Argentina, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Montenegro, Paraguay, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uruguay.

### **Observer Organizations of the NAM**

African Union, Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, Common-wealth Secretariat, Hostosian National Independence Movement, Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front, League of Arab States, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, South Center, United Nations, Secretariat of the Commonwealth Nations, World Peace Council (NTI, 2018).

The Non-Aligned Movement established in 1961 in Belgrade, SR Serbia, Yugoslavia through an initiative of the Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito, Ghana's first President Kwame Nkrumah, Indonesia's first president Sukarno, Egypt's second President Gamal Abdel Nasser, and India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru (the University of Virginia, 2019). These leaders believe that developing countries should

not help either the eastern or Western blocs during the cold war. After this commitment, it took the first conference of heads of state or governments of Non-Aligned countries. The unilateral state's declaring itself as independent from the sphere of international influence. The roots of Non-Alignment are many and variable factors agreed to play a significant and interactive role in the development of the Non-Aligned Movement, the economic underdevelopment of newly formed states, polarized international relations, and the UN global security system.

### **Origin and Ideologies of Non-Alignment Movement**

Non-Alignment Movement is an independent Movement that follows their plan and policies based on their national interest where states without joining any of the power blocs falling under their influence. Their approach should be individual for their national interest. In other words, Non-Alignment holds each state's freedom and choice of action in the international arena. As well as one of the essential aspects of Non-Alignment is its antipathy to military alliances. Asia and Africa are the newly independent countries with almost identical economy problems, government, development, etc. (US Department of State, 2009). To fulfill the aims of debating and advancing a strategy designed to achieve such objectives, the Bandung Asian-African Conference was held in Indonesia in April 1955 (Timossi, 2015). The first post-colonial generation of leaders attended a conference where 29 heads of state and governments participated and expressed the goals to identify their issues at the time and coordinate policies to tackle them. It was held in April 1955. The ideological view may be different between Asian and African leaders. There was a common goal that united them and gave sense to closer co-ordination of positions. Non-Alignment based on Panchasheel (MoEA, 2004), five international co-operation principles, which accepted as an active part of Non-Alignment. The Panchasheel refers to respect for each other's sovereignty, mutual non-interference, mutual non-aggression, peaceful co-existence, and equality and mutual benefit. They shared programs that include the political decolonization of Asia and Africa. To some, Non-Alignment means a negative attitude to world affairs. Many countries suggested the abandonment of the terms in favor of a new name, which would express the ten positive attitudes and objectives. There have been some differences in the emphasis meaning and its implications of Non-Alignment.

The Founding Principles of the Non-Aligned Movement (Timossi, 2015):

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and the equality of all nations, large and small.

4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect for the right of each nation's rights to defend itself singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
6. Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defense arrangements to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers, and abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, or judicial settlement, and other peaceful means of the party owns choice, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
9. Promotion of mutual interests and co-operation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

They also addressed the active leading role of the Movement in the coordination of efforts among member states for tackling global threats. The principle brought to the Non-Aligned Movement by the Bandung principles and during the First NAM summit in Belgrade in 1961.

### **Role and Activities of the Non-Alignment Movement**

Non-Aligned Movement has a precious perspective in foreign policy in the context of the emergence of new states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and as well as in the international Movement. The observers and protagonists traditionally depicted the Cold War as a bipolar conflict predominantly fought out in Europe. According to this interpretation, the two superpowers – the Soviet Union and the United States – approached the war as a zero-sum game that did not allow for any space between their respective blocs. The two major colonial powers, Great Britain and France were obliged to discuss political realities. In realist, standpoint favors the maximization of capacity by force or being allied with the passion and the pursuit of an interest-serving strategy flexible in changing enemies instead of varying interests. Two basic realist premises can be used to assess NAM's viability:

1. International politics is a zero-sum game among the power-seeking states to recognize one another as an independent state but never accept the principle of non-intervention unconditionally, and
2. The balance of order and security can be maintained by shifting alliances among states, preventing one from being overwhelmingly powerful.

In the history of the Non-Alignment Movement, there have been thirteen summits, which are recognized as the most important summits. In the first summit, 25

participants, three observers, and fifteen liberation movements, whereas in the second summit, was in Cairo 1964 with 47 participations, ten observers, and ten liberation movements, and In the third summit in Lusaka 1970 with 54 participants, nine observers, and nine guests. The fourth summit was held in Algiers in 1973 with 75 participants, nine observers, and twenty-five guests. The sixth summit was in Havana 1979 with 93 participants, 12 observers, and eight guests (the previous was in Colombo 1976, with 86 participants, ten observers, and seven guests). The seventh summit was in Delhi in 1983, with 100 participants, ten observers, and ten guests. The eighth summit was in Harare in 1986 (101 members, ten observers, 12 guests). The ninth conference was again in Belgrade in 1989, with 100 participants, sixteen observers, and 42 guests. The tenth summit was in Jakarta 1992, with 102 participants, seventeen observers, and 41 guests. The Tenth Summit represented a kind of continuity. The following three are held in different circumstances and contexts.

The neutrality and neutralism or Non-Alignment did not share the same origins and history during the Cold War. Neutrality was not only a much older and more established policy. During 1648 war-torn emerged in Europe following the peace of Westphalia (Tischer, 2019). It was recognized for the first time in 1815 when the great powers guaranteed Switzerland's neutrality at the Congress of Vienna. But it was with the Hague Conventions of 1907 that neutrality per se codified in a body of rights and duties. According to the Fifth Convention, the territory of a neutral power is inviolable; a neutral power must not allow a belligerent country to violate its part; a neutral state is not called upon to prevent the export of weapons and other means for war to one of the belligerents and, if it does choose to restrict arms exports, every measure of restriction or prohibition must be applied impartially to both belligerents. In contrast to neutrality, neutralism and Non-Alignment could not look back on such a distinguished yet also controversial history. The concepts of neutralism and Non-Alignment were only clearly formulated in reaction to the Cold War and as a consequence of decolonization. The Non-Aligned Movement has played a vital role in accelerating the process of decolonization by politically and morally strengthening the freedom struggles of the colonized countries and pressurizing the colonial powers through the United Nations, other international forums and world public opinion. In the United Nations, Non-Aligned had primarily developed its activity. Their ambition, the Non-Aligned, has remained throughout the previous decades a moral-political force, with modest concrete effects in international relations. They have raised their voice to the solution of various crises and participation in a peacekeeping operation. The Tehran summit as the beginning of a new era in the politics of Non-Alignment, 120 member states at the conference itself proof that NAM relevance is still inviolable. The issues that thought the Cold War context under which NAM came into existence were no longer present.

Small and developing countries were encountering similar concerns, including interferences in the USA. The unilateral decision making in the USA and its allies, makes the UN Security Council dysfunctional, and third world countries need a platform to voice their demands. The summit has failed to uphold the collective concerns of developing countries such as environmental, security concerns, energy crisis, and civil conflicts in the financial sectors of the third world people.

The first-ever virtual summit was organized by the chairman of the NAM, Azerbaijani president of Ilham Aliyev. In this summit, 40 heads of state joined and called "United against COVID-19". The president also addresses among the Movement members. He ratifies unity among the members in these challenging times, and countries cannot win over these battles against the invisible enemy without agreement. He assured all the members that mutual support among the group's members is an essential factor in the present situation. On the other hand, the establishment of operative headquarters, the enforcement of a special quarantine regime since 24th March. The establishment of a special Coronavirus support fund and government-sponsored 3.5 billion rescue package extended to the economy and social benefit.

### Challenges

As time passes, the political scenario also changes while it comes up with new challenges for the Non-Aligned Movement. Where the challenges come, it comes up with a solution also just we need to have a vision for future welfare.

The plan and policy for the Non-Aligned Movement seek consensus and coalition with the member states. The NAM is emerging as the new millennium's power striving to be open, democratic, and forward-looking. The political scenarios as changing times have thrown up new challenges for NAM. The ongoing sceneries have thrown up new challenges for NAM. These challenges have come up to the solution. NAM is aware of threats facing humankind – transnational crime, terrorism, violation of human rights, and environmental degradation (IIFNAS, 2020). They have found an ordinary desk where they can discuss and work out strategies to tackle global problems of peace, security, development, and terrorism, human rights, and environmental safety. These are problems that extend beyond national borders and require a global approach for solutions.

A Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned country held in Belgrade in 1978. It focused on the Non-Aligned philosophy on human rights. The conferences committed to the furtherance of human rights. The Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Efforts in furtherance must be consistent. The perspectives of NAM are that human rights cannot isolate from national, economic, and social contexts. The Non-Aligned are opposed to the exploitation of human rights



as a political instrument of the great powers. The nation and international level need to promote and protect human rights with proper conditions. The human rights problem is the primary concern of all nations. The developing countries have to work in concert to face a threat to human rights. In the 1992 Jakarta Conference, NAM members coordinate their position and actively participate in the world conference's preparatory work on Human Rights in June 1993. The Jakarta Declaration knew as respect for human rights based on universality, impartiality, and non-selectivity.

In the upcoming days, the Non-Aligned Movement is approaching the new field where they are facing common problems regarding peace and prosperity, the creation of a new international economic order. These new approaches regarding the human environment are one of the most essential agendas in recent years. The environment is a common factor, which is most essential to living and non-living beings as the earth, air, water, and energy from the sun. So, to measure the impact of environmental degradation on future development, all of us need to be attentive. Ecological degradation has been posing a real threat to every form of life on our planet.

### **Way Forward**

The future relies on the present, where we have come up with plans and policies. The NAM is one of the international platforms for developing and under-developing countries. Finally, the Non-Aligned Movement redefines its purpose and ideology to the world after the end of the cold war and colonialism. The important question to NAM is whether it can apply to contemporary issues like ideologies and principles. The NAM has a space for 'dialogue talks between the developing world where it has given more importance to its principles of multilateralism, equality, and mutual understanding in attempting to become a stronger voice of developing nations. Currently, many states are eager to be a part of this Movement where they can share their mutual problems as they found a gateway to resolve and find a way to tackle problems.

At the end of the Cold War, a western diplomat who was observing the Jakarta summit opined that "a lot of these tiny nations are praying that the (Non-Aligned) movement can survive and advocate on their behalf" (Keethaponcalan, 2016) because most of the nation's aren't capable of doing it for themselves. Most of the countries that played a pivotal role in forming the NAM were former colonies, which gained independence through sustained campaigns against colonial control by the European states. For example, India, Indonesia, and Egypt managed to break out of colonialism after World War II (Keethaponcalan, 2016).

The main reason behind that unified most of these states was colonialism as the anti-colonial had an interest in freeing the rest of the third world from the colonial era. It pointed out that the colonial office in London still believed that self-government for



west Africans was decades away and that the opportunities for East and central African colonies were even more remote. It was focus on colonialism and declares decolonization as one of its primary objectives. With the changing of world politics, it is hard to justify the national interest where the dynamics of politics keep ongoing changing. Meanwhile, the formation of Non-Alignment was not wholly to the bipolar world cold war between two blocs. It was that the member-states aimed at the protection and promotion of their respective national interest. The new atmosphere pointed out between bloc rivalries have made the policy of Non-Alignment redundant and obsolete. They have not realized that many dangers that could derail these positive processes still exist. Indeed, the growing understanding and rapprochement between the superpowers have contributed significantly to security and peace at the global and regional levels. This positive development, one must not rule out the danger or threat to global and regional security.

The global security mechanism has established to cover equally all over the world. The achievement toward disarmament has not achieved to date. The superpower nations have a strong point that there has still been no radical turning point that would deliverable more stable world peace and security to all the countries, based on principles of independence, equality, and other principles of active and peaceful co-existence. In international relations, neither any country joined in the process of detente and extending such issues. Non-Alignment is not just against the bloc division or as bloc politics but also for the aspects of a single World, world unity, and interdependence of all legitimate interests vested towards their sovereignty. Likewise, Non-Alignment is not just against the Cold War or any other war but is also for universal peace and equal security for the entire international community. At the Belgrade summit, the Non-Aligned countries came up with special prominence to economic problems, which were increasingly intimately affecting their fate and the future of the world. It has been noted that world stability cannot be achieved without resolving the economic and social questions of the developing countries. The NAM in the years to come will be the struggle for combating the inequalities and injustice characterizing the present world economic system. This is the central issue that indicates the future relevance of the NAM.

The Bandung Principles have adopted at the Havana Summit in the Declaration on the Purposes and Principles and the NAM Role in the Present International Juncture, the Bali Commemorative Declaration on the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the NAM. The best way to get a sense of the NAM in the 21st century is to summarize its media communication at the end of its 17th summit was hosted in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. In this summit, they laid out its objectives as (IRNA, 2016):

1. strengthening and revitalization of the NAM

2. Strengthening international peace and security
3. The right to self-determination. The only case specified is a demand to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine's West Bank and East Jerusalem and an end to the Israeli occupation of Syria's Golan Heights.
4. Disarmament and a nuclear-free Middle East (here, Israel and its A-bomb stockpile were not mentioned by name).
5. The protection and promotion of Human Rights and the principles of the UN Charter.

### **Conclusion**

Non-Alignment today has become one of the dominant trends in international relations and politics. The growing membership of the NAM testifies to its popularity and increasing relevance. The achievement of the NAM is that it has become an alternative policy, promoting co-existence, peace, disarmament, predominantly nuclear, the equal relationship among states, and opposition to bloc division and policy. Its negative characteristics were, in substance, the attitude of confrontation, instead of dialogue with extraordinary powers and the developed world. The system of Non-Alignment is the product of the Cold War between the USA and the USSR. It represents the hopes, desires, and aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the world population who have suffered from colonialism, imperialism, racialism, and neo-colonialism and who denied the right of self-determination. Its main objective is to judge an issue by its merits. The Afro-Asian and Latin American countries have shaped and practiced the policy of Non-Alignment through their foreign policies for more than three decades.

The Non-Aligned policy is not neutral but a dynamic one and the Non-Aligned countries are not following isolationist policies. Non-Alignment has been changing qualitatively at different stages from its inception. At the beginning of the 1960s, the Non-Aligned system was mainly concerned with peace and security. In the middle of the 1960s, its emphasis was on anti-colonialism, and at the end of the decade, it focused its attention on the economic development of Non-Aligned countries. Non-Alignment transformed itself into a collective Movement of the Third World countries in the 1970s. At the beginning of the 1980s, it concentrated on disarmament and world peace, restructuring of international economic relations, complete eradication of colonialism, and democratization of international relations. At the 1980s to 1990s, thanks to the rapid changes in international relations, it focused its attention on economic and environmental issues. The Non-Alignment has grown from a policy to a Movement and shifted its focus from world peace and security to economic and environmental issues between the first Belgrade Summit Conference and the ninth Belgrade Summit

Conference. The members of the Non-Aligned Movement, by eliminating regional conflicts, colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, racialism, and apartheid, have helped from time to time to establish world peace. The NAM has contributed towards the promotion of the genuine independence of states and peoples and the democratization of global relations and in creating conditions conducive to international peace, security, justice, equality, and co-operation in the world.

The NAM was big role in bringing the two Super Powers together for negotiations to reduce tensions between them in the interests of world peace. The NAM's role in establishing world peace by solving various political conflicts such as the Korean War and the problems of Kampuchea, Vietnam, Congo, Iran, Iraq, Namibia, the Middle-East, etc. have been significant. The NAM always has adapted itself to the changing circumstances and conditions in international relations between the first Belgrade Summit Conference and the ninth one and worked towards tackling new issues from time to time.

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