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## From NAM To NAM-2.0: Revisiting India's Foreign Policy In A Shifting Landscape

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### Abstract

Nonalignment is frequently linked to the Cold War backdrop and the resulting superpower tensions. This is undoubtedly accurate in the sense that the Cold War reflected a self-contradictory scenario created by the application of power orthodoxy to a radically changed world landscape. The post-1945 period was defined by its proclivity for the expansion of sovereignties in an era of global interdependence. The Non-Aligned Movement's (NAM) relevance has been questioned many times. The Cold War ended, but the economic gap between first and third world nations remains. As long as there is economic inequity, NAM is still important today. Indians used the phrase "non-alignment" to convey non-violent coexistence with other powers during the period of independence. NAM has also aided in maintaining global peace by transcending political and ideological gaps. Under this backdrop, the paper is trying to examine the relevance, failure, and success of the movement as a whole and also how India's revival of India's national interests will be served by the NAM 2.0 policy in a changing security environment.

**Keywords:** Post World War, Cold War, Non Alignment Movement, Power blocks ,

### Introduction

With the end of the Cold War, the notion of nonalignment has become obsolete and this is unquestionably true if viewed as a foreign policy posture of equal distance between the two blocks of a bipolar world. The nations of the South contended that international tensions harmed their socioeconomic rehabilitation efforts and hampered their efforts to establish a genuine voice in international decision-making. Non-alignment, both as a foreign policy stance of most newly independent governments of Asia, Africa and Latin America and as well as a worldwide movement was a significant aspect of contemporary international affairs. According to Z. M. Quraishi, "Nonalignment is a policy perspective that challenged power orthodoxy and was skeptical of depending solely on "national interests" as a source of foreign policy. In reality, the idea of national interest is a simple dictum based on a psychological tautology claiming that every individual has a national interest<sup>1</sup>".

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<sup>1</sup> Quraishi, Z. M. (1994). Relevance of Nonalignment. *India Quarterly*, 50(1-2), 1-22.

The genesis of nonalignment is typically traced to the Cold War backdrop and the Superpower conflicts flowing from it. This is absolutely accurate in the sense that the Cold War was a manifestation of a self-contradictory predicament generated by the application of the theory of power orthodoxy to fundamentally different world scenario. The post-World War II period was defined by its inclination to the rise of sovereignties in an age of global dependency. From this vantage point, nonalignment looks to be a correction to "power" applied to international events as a major concept.

The non-aligned movement sprang out of nations such as India's battle for freedom and independence from colonialism, imperialism, and fascism. Indeed, one might argue that adoption of non-alignment followed naturally from the battles and storms of the Indian nationalist movement, which resisted not just Colonialism and Imperialism, but also Fascism and Nazism, and indeed all forms of dominance. On 7 September 1946, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru introduced the policy of non-alignment for the first time. He stated:

According to Dr. K.P. Mishra, the primary components of the concept of nonalignment are the following:

- i) The acquisition and maintenance of national independence, which entails opposition to domination, bloc politics, imperialism, hegemonism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, and the democratisation of international relations; and
- ii) rapid socioeconomic progress, including the building of a new worldwide economic order, a new technical order, and a new international information system, as well as disarmament.' (Mishra, 1983).

The notion of nonalignment was expanded upon at a July 1986 conference between President Josip Broz Tito, Gamal Abdel Hasser, and Nehru on the Island of Brioni (Yugoslavia). Tito Nasser and Nehru completely embraced the ideals of coexistence adopted during the African-Asian summit in Bandung in 1955. Tito, Nasser, and Nehru met, subsequently joined by Sukarno, Nkrumah, and others, to lay the groundwork for the First Conference of Non-Aligned Countries. Their meeting was not a regional event, but an appeal for the union of independent countries outside of military political blocs to resist and oppose the division of the world into military political blocs and the Cold War, and to build new international relations based on the principles of the UN Charter and active peaceful existence. Historians think the Bandung Asian-African Conference was the most direct forerunner of the Non-Aligned Movement. A group of 29 post-colonial leaders from both continents met in Bandung from April 18 to 24, 1955, to identify global challenges and create cooperative methods in international relations. The Conference announced the "Ten Bandung Principles." These ideas become the non-alignment policy's main goals. Until the early 1990s, those views were the Movement's "quintessence." A substantial boost came in

1960 at the 15th Ordinary Session of the UN General Assembly, when 17 additional African and Asian countries joined the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. In this process, former Egyptian and Yugoslavian leaders Gamal Abdel Nasser, Kwame Nkrumah, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Ahmed Sukarno and Josip Broz Tito all played significant roles<sup>2</sup>.

### **Relevance of NAM**

This is not the first time that a debate on the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has become necessary. Such a discussion started consequent on the signing by leaders of the 35 European and North American nations in 1975 of the historic Helsinki Agreement of Peace and Friendship. The treaty covering the question of European security brought about a change of complexion in the international scenario marking an alteration in the delicate world balance of power and influence (Gopal, 1991).

In 1979, the non-aligned movement's significance was once again questioned. They were presented with this difficulty this time. This issue was hotly debated at the sixth non-aligned summit in Havana. In this debate, the non-aligned side was split into two groups. As a result of the detente and improvement in ties between the big powers, one set of nations stated that the movement had lost importance. While agreeing with the first group that the movement has lost significance, the second group stated that in order to serve national interests, the non-aligned should be renamed. The cold war ended in 1991 with the fall of the Soviet Union. Thus, the NAM's significance has become a hot topic in international affairs. Critics say NAM is irrelevant as the international environment shifts from bi-polar to unipolar. The Third World's non-alignment policy will remain valid regardless of whether the world is bipolar, multipolar, or unipolar. Thus, NAM is still considered relevant in today's globe. Some of the points are:

Initially a political movement, the NAM is now becoming an economic movement. The Cold War ended global bipolarity, but the world still has an economic divide between first and third world nations. Clearly, the NAM is still relevant in today's world order as long as economic disparity exists. NAM is still relevant to world peace. As a result, it has taken active steps to promote its founding principles, idea, and purpose of a peaceful and prosperous world<sup>3</sup>.

The principles of NAM make it an international organisation. The idea of preserving national sovereignty and territorial integrity is still valid. As a core institution of the Third World, NAM is vital. These countries have been struggling with socio-economic issues and have been exploited by other developed countries for a long time. So the NAM is still important as a third world nation's protector platform. The UN has over two-thirds of the world's population, hence NAM has a key responsibility to strengthen and support the UN. As one of

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<sup>2</sup> <https://mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?20349/History+and+Evolution+of+NonAligned+Movement#>:

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2020/09/relevance-of-non-alignment-movement-in-present-world/>

the largest international organizations, it retains its platform value. NAM has also helped sustain a stable world order by bridging political and ideological divides. It is also recognised to give a platform for each member nation to express concerns and address them through its ideals. NAM anticipates today's difficulties and concerns. It's keen to encourage sustainable development and can lead the globe towards it. And is concerned about environmental concerns.

### **India's role in NAM**

The term "non-alignment" owes its origin to India, which at the time of independence was trying to communicate non-violent and peaceful co-existence with other power. India often used NAM values to deal other countries in the world politics. The Indian concept of NAM is value-based and dynamic in contemporary global scenario. It has a renewed role to play in the new world order after the demise of Cold War when the world is no longer divided into power blocs. On the eve of the 15<sup>th</sup> NAM Summit held in Egypt, India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh underscored the relevance of NAM in the Post-cold War era. India would play its part in strengthening NAM to address international problems which are the direct concern and relevance to developing countries such as global warming, terrorism and more democratizing in international institutions.

### **NAM : A success or a Failure?**

The case for non-alignment has suffered, paradoxically, from the absence of a full debate about its implications and at the exaggerated importance given to it in a discussion of India's foreign policy. To some extent the emphasis on non- alignment was a reflection of the impact of the cold war on world politics. But the virtual identification of non-alliance with the whole of India's foreign policy destroyed the proper perspective with regard to the former and did more than injustice to the latter. For India adoption of the objective of peace is intimately linked up with its national interest. During the period of the Cold War, the Non Aligned Movement was created, as an independent, non-bloc factor of mostly newly liberated countries, mainly from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Being always a primarily political and moral force, its practical effects remained rather limited. Its negative characteristics were, in substance, an attitude of confrontation, instead of dialogue with great powers and developed world. The NAM dominated the UN General Assembly, it became softer and more flexible, but it was too late to have some effect. The NAM grew from 25, in the beginning to 113 members, but this growth also created new problems. The consensus has become more difficult to be achieved, and the NAM is forced to satisfy regional and individual aims. The practice to put together major decisions and individual desires almost on the same level or in the same line is negative. Another negative habit has been that the documents are too long and detailed. Another failing has been tolerance with a number of authoritarian and blatantly tyrannical governments, maybe owing to a rigorous attitude of non-interference in member nations' internal affairs. The NAM has been increasingly ignoring crises and even wars

among the Non-Aligned countries. The conflict between Iran and Iraq lasted eight years. This has tarnished the NAM's reputation as an advocate for peaceful resolution of all problems (Jazić, 2005). Since its inception, NAM has made disarmament a top priority. Jawaharlal Nehru put in a lot of work during the First Summit in Belgrade, which took place over three decades ago. Unlike any other international leader, he had pushed the notion of universal disarmament to the forefront. Nothing much has been accomplished despite the best efforts<sup>4</sup>. But it is also true that there was also broad agreement on subjects like environment, peace, and the UN's role. The NAM achieved absolute success on North-South problems. It could not only establish the development plans known as the International Economic Order, but also put them on the agenda of the UN General Assembly as a priority issue. The South's voice was heard in the North-South conversation (Quraishi, 1994). NAM acted against the arms race of the superpowers during the time of the Cold War. It has opposed all forms of injustice, including the Suez Crisis of 1956 and the unilateral American attack on Iraq. In fact, the first UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was largely a result of the efforts of the Non-Aligned countries.

### **Non Alignment Movement 2.0 : Foreign and Strategic policy for India**

NAM as a concept can never be irrelevant, principally it provides a strong base to foreign policy of its members. It should be seen as 'strategic Autonomy' which is the need of the hour of today's world. The principles of NAM still can be guide the nations towards it. NAM 2.0 policy would be used by India to fulfill its national interests in changing security scenario. The twenty first century is unlikely to be characterized by a world bifurcated between two dominant powers. Non Alignment will instead require skill management of complicated coalitions and opportunities. This provides India with rich opportunities, especially if it can leverage its domestically acquired skills in coalition management and complex negotiation. India will refine its foreign policy with the mixture of 'soft power' and 'hard power' to combat challenges of 21st century. India is the paramount power in the region; this poses a strategic security challenge. On the one hand it is the economic powerhouse that will lift its neighbours to better economic performance and social development on the other hand its neighbours fear it or scrape at its perceived superciliousness. The main goal of a strategic approach should be to maximise India's alternatives in its dealings with the rest of the world—that is, to increase India's strategic space and capacity for autonomous agency—which will provide it the most options for its non-alignment goals in a changing international order. As a result, this policy is known as 'NONALIGNMENT 2.0<sup>5</sup>.' However, India retained

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<sup>4</sup> Misra, K. P., & MISHRA, K. (1993). NAM comes through. *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, 2(1), 9-16.

<sup>5</sup> NonAlignment 2.0 is an attempt to identify the basic principles that should guide India's foreign and strategic policy over the next decade. The views it sets out are rooted in the conviction that the success of India's own internal development will depend decisively on how effectively we manage our global opportunities in order to maximize our choices—thereby enlarging our domestic options to the benefit of all Indians. NONALIGNMENT 2.0

maximum strategic autonomy to pursue its own developmental goals, which is crucial for building national power as the foundation stone for creating a more curative and equitable global order. The Centre for Policy Research seems to have replicated fairly well Nehru's strategy of retaining strategic autonomy. Yet it seems to be a half hearted guide for India's foreign policy in 21st century. India's enhanced economic and security capabilities enable it to influence external events and outcomes in a widening orbit compared to the Cold War years. India enjoys greater leverage but bears greater responsibility in dealing with regional issues such as South Asian and East Asian economic integration and global issues such as climate change and energy security. Furthermore, in a globalized world, external issues impact our economic and social development prospects while domestic choices we make as a country, in turn, have an impact on the external environment. Promotion of India's interests demands far greater engagement with the world than ever before. Depending on the issue at hand, India will find itself working with shifting and variable coalitions rather than through settled alliances or groupings. The country has inherent assets, such as a favorable demography, a strategic location and a culture of creativity and innovation, which create a window of opportunity to drive India's emergence as a front-ranking power, a master of its own destiny but generating a range of public goods that make the world a better and safer place to live in.

### **Recent Developments and Way Forward**

S. Jaishankar, India's External Affairs Minister, has stated that non-alignment is a term that is relevant in a certain moment and environment, but the freedom of action embedded in it remains a component of continuity in India's foreign policy. This is about as open as our political leaders are likely to be about an apparent post-Cold War fact: non-alignment as a foreign policy idea is gone<sup>6</sup>. Even though the majority of nations are now NAM members, all of these countries are also aligned with other political blocs. Development nations, such as China, Russia, and the United States, will be able to take use of this opportunity to strengthen their bilateral ties with any other major international power<sup>7</sup>. With the rise of China as an economic force, the NAM nations now have a viable alternative for dealing with the Dragon. It's been a busy few months for the NAM nations, which have been involved in a number of

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/what-is-in-a-nam-and-indias-alignment/article32555378.ece>

<sup>7</sup> Singh B. (2017 ).Non Alignment Movement : It's Relevance in Present Context, *International Journal of Research Granthalayah, A knowledge Repository* / 5(6), 272-279.  
<https://doi.org/10.29121/granthaalayah.v5.i6.2017.2026>.

recent developments: Interruption in UN, IMF and WTO reform, Anti-Zionism. Diversity of Culture and Human Rights, International Terrorism Climate Change . India is usually regarded as a developing-world leader. As a result, India's participation with NAM will contribute to India's growing prominence as the voice of the developing world or global south. It has a high hope that NAM can serve as a forum for South-South collaboration in times of rising protectionism.

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