



The Non-Aligned Movement: 6 Decades of Nothing

Mohammed B. E. Saaida, Department of International Relations & Diplomacy, Faculty of administration sciences, Al-Istiqlal University, Jericho – Palestine

July 9, 2022

Abstract:

This paper is addressing NAM described as the second biggest groups of countries after the United Nations as an international group. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was founded at the hardest time of the Cold War during the collapse of the colonial system and the independence struggles of the several peoples of Asia Africa and other regions of the world. The movement's membership has continuously grown from 25 at establishment reaching over 100 countries in 2021. It was expected to have an important role in international policy. The paper showed the reasons why the NAM movement lost its way.

Keyword: Non-Aligned Movement, Cold War, Goals.

Introduction: 6 Decades of Nothing

Whereas still there are tries to revive the movement, the non-aligned movement lost its goals because the NAM movement has no effects on ground and most of the NAM movement members are allied at least to one side.

Researchers say that the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) still owns the power to reform itself and work to achieve its goals. This paper is addressing NAM described as the

second biggest groups of countries after the United Nations as an international group. It was expected to have an important role in international policy. But after 60 years, it seems there is no life in the Non-Aligned Movement despite the revival attempt of it. Here is an attempt to identify briefly the reasons for the weakness or failure of this International group because of a number of factors that led to its deficiency.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was created and founded at the hardest time of the Cold War during the collapse of the colonial system and the independence struggles of the several peoples of Asia Africa and other regions of the world. The movement's membership has continuously grown from 25 at establishment reaching over 100 countries¹ in 2021. The primary objectives of the movement had been focused among others on the support for self-determination, national independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of states, opposition to apartheid, non-adherence to multilateral military pacts, struggles against imperialism, colonialism, neo colonialism, racism, foreign occupation and domination, disarmament, noninterference in internal affairs of States, peaceful coexistence among states, rejection of the use or threat of use of force in international relations, strengthening of the UN, democratization of international relations, socio-economic development, and international cooperation on an equal footing².

A significant milestone predating the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement was the 1955 Bandung conference. The conference hosted Asian and African states by the Indonesian president Sukarno. Sukarno gave a significant contribution to promote this movement and underlying the ten principles. The introduced the attending nations declared their desire not to become involved in the Cold War. They adopted a declaration on promotion of world peace and cooperation. Six years after Bandung conference the first conference of heads of state or government of non-aligned countries was held in September 1961 in Belgrade. In this movement was finally founded. The real founders of the Non-Aligned Movement were Sukarno of Indonesia, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and

Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. The Non-Aligned Movement consisted of many governments with vastly different ideologies, the thing that managed it to be unified by its commitment to world's peace and security³.

At the seventh summit held in New Delhi in March 1983, the movement described itself as history's biggest peace movement. The principles and objectives of non-alignment have retained their full validity and force at the present international juncture. The demise of one of the blocks has not gone away with the pressing problems of the world. This movement has continued to be a source of solidarity, moral force, and a strong political force at the United Nations and another multinational forums. The world in the first decade of the 21st century saw continuing armed conflicts in many parts of the world⁴. The rise of non-traditional security threats of terrorism and radicalism, dangers of nuclear weapons, challenges of climate change and environmental degradation, global financial and economic crises, impending food and energy crises, increasing frequencies and magnitude of natural disasters, and more recently the wave of social change and transformation.

Reasons of Failure:

The first reason is that among these problems is the failure of the Non-Aligned Movement in dealing with super international powers. In other words, there is a problem of the Non-Aligned Movement's dealings with international powers. The Non-Aligned Movement faces a fundamental problem in the framework of international relations⁵. Some trends have emerged that believe that the concept of non-alignment, which was valid for international interactions during the phase of international polarization, is no longer valid. Then the policy of non-alignment became useless except for a certain stage before the collapse of the old international order.

The second obvious reason for the failure of the Non-Aligned Movement is the divergence of trends and the intensification of conflicts between its members. The composition of the Non-Aligned Movement includes political units with varying

capabilities. There are also many factors influencing the strength and influence of a large number of countries. There is no state among these countries that can organize communication and coordination between political units to reach a common strategy within which the members of the Non-Aligned Movement work⁶. The absence of leading country is shown in the last decades. Therefore, the Non-Aligned Movement cannot be considered a stand-alone international political bloc.

Third, the Non-Aligned Movement continued to deal in an unorganized manner as a group of ideologically, economically and politically incomplete states as before when it had once had different orientations between communist and capitalist ideologies⁷. The movement has moved on to the fact that it is united only by the concept of not aligning with either of the two superpowers and not affiliated with either camp. The Non-Aligned Movement continued as a political group that could not impose its presence in the international system as a political power, although the Non-Aligned Countries were able to impose their diplomatic presence, but not the strategic participation.

The increase in conflicts between non-aligned countries is one of the main features of the Non-Aligned Movement, and this is normal. This reality reflects the weak political structure in addition to the fragile and heterogeneous regulatory framework. The political differences between the member states have several characteristics that led to the miserable failure because these policies are based on the principle of national interest only. It is not possible to create consensus among non-aligned members due to the presence of multiple conflicts between neighboring countries, such as raging political disputes or border problems dating back to the colonial stage.

It is seen that the composition of the Non-Aligned Movement is heterogeneous and unequal in its political structure. It is also not clearly linked to a clear ideological concept, except for the non-aligned conciliatory policy. Hence, the Non-Aligned Movement has no single interest for multiple nationalities. Rather, they are still attracted by multiple interests within the framework of different conflicting orientations. These

entities are governed by many different conflicts, whether they are conflicts related to one country or conflicts supported by external influences⁸.

Fourth, the Non-Aligned Movement is still governed by the theory of conflicts between the member states of the movement. This was the factor that enabled the global international system to impose its control and hegemony over it. This is clearly evident in the Middle East and Africa, where many conflicts are taking place between its political entities⁹. Therefore, many external powers can exercise their influence by interfering in these conflicts. Local and regional tensions developed to become of global dimensions. Also, the balance between the non-aligned countries in general and the conflicting countries in particular was not only local or regional, but was affected according to international relations.

Fifth, the lack of a mechanism for settling and containing conflicts between member states of the Non-Aligned Movement is one of the factors that exacerbate the problems. This lack within the Non-Aligned Movement of conflict resolution demonstrated the need to take an informal role to contain these conflicts. This role depends on appropriate arrangements for each case. Therefore, the role of the Non-Aligned Movement in resolving conflicts is determined by helping the conflicting parties through the peaceful political path.

Although this opinion and mentioned factors may not find supporters, it is not detracting from the importance of the Non-Aligned Movement. Other scholars believe that the role of the Non-Aligned Movement remains important and vital in the context of the current international changes. The actual efficiency is after performing solidarity¹⁰.

The following is a set of reasons that support the claim that the Non-Aligned Movement has failed to achieve its goals for which it was established:

- The weakness and fragility of the organizational framework of the Non-Aligned Movement resulted in the decline in its levels.

- The absence of leading country and the absence of new leaders of the movement.
- The continuous change in the political authority in most of the member states and its impact on the effectiveness of the movement.
- The reflection of the economic reality and the sources of armament on the decline of the movement's political role.
- Multiple blocks and new contents of the third world and its reflection on the course of the movement.

References:

-
- ¹ Ozturk , T. (2021, October 10). Serbia to host Non-Aligned Movement Summit on Monday. Anadolu Ajansi. Retrieved April 6, 2022, from <https://2u.pw/pG6y5>
 - ² Yadav, R. (2019). Non-Alignment Movement (NAM).
 - ³ Arnold, G. (2010). The A to Z of the Non-aligned Movement and Third World (Vol. 172). Scarecrow Press.
 - ⁴ Movement, N. A. (1983, April 8). 7th Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement. <http://cns.miis.edu/>. Retrieved March 10, 2022, from <https://2u.pw/Zi13w>
 - ⁵ Kharel, A. B. (2020). Non-Aligned Movement: Challenges and Way Forward. Molung Educational Frontier, 10, 1-12.
 - ⁶ Morphet, S. (2004). REVIEW ESSAY: Multilateralism and the Non-Aligned Movement: What Is the Global South Doing and Where Is It Going?.
 - ⁷ Kharel, A. B. (2020). Non-Aligned Movement: Challenges and Way Forward. Molung Educational Frontier, 10, 1-12.
 - ⁸ Banerji, M. (1981). Institutionalization of the Non-Aligned Movement. International Studies, 20(3-4), 549-563.

⁹ Keethaponcalan, S. I. (2016). Reshaping the Non-Aligned Movement: challenges and vision. Bandung, 3(1), 1-14.

¹⁰ Subotic, J., & Vucetic, S. (2019). Performing solidarity: whiteness and status-seeking in the non-aligned world. Journal of international Relations and Development, 22(3), 722-743.

© GSJ