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THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

Introduction

While the United Nations was an outcome of the tragic experiences of the horrors of the World War II Non-alignment emerged as a response to the international scenario that followed the War. The pattern of international relations of the post war period could not reflect the determination of the peoples of the United Nations "to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our life-time has brought untold sorrow to mankind".¹ The then international relations characterised by bipolarity began to deteriorate rapidly with the escalation of "cold war" between the two power blocs. The cold war rivals started building up military blocs which posed a real threat to global peace, security and independence of the newly liberated countries. It is at this point that non-alignment emerged as an independent counterforce to bipolarity and bloc politics. It became the guiding principle of foreign policy of those states who refused to be dragged into the aggressive military and political alliances and preferred to follow an independent path. But this is not all. At the heart of non-alignment lies the firm determination of the newly independent countries to protect and consolidate their independence and global peace and to establish a new world order based on the principles of justice, equality

1. Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice. United Nations, New York, p. 1.

and cooperation. Here lies the fundamental convergence of the underlying philosophies of the emergence of the United Nations and Non-alignment. It is therefore, quite natural and relevant that non-alignment came into being as an independent force to reaffirm and materialize the aims and objectives of the UN at a certain stage of the history of international relations.

The aim of this paper is to examine the most important aspects of the mutual permeation of the United Nations and the Non-aligned Movement, widely expressed in the complementarity of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter with the policy of non-alignment. The paper also aims at analysing the contribution of non-alignment to the strengthening of the UN and examining the activities of the non-aligned countries in the UN system influencing the entire functioning of the world body.

UN and NAM : Convergence of Principles and Objectives

A careful examination of the basic documents reveals that the objectives and goals with which the United Nations and the Non-aligned Movement were founded are either identical or complementary. The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries in their First Summit (Belgrade, 1961), which officially launched the Non-aligned Movement, declared : "The present day world is characterized by the existence of different social systems. The participating countries do not consider that these differences constitute an insurmountable obstacle for the stabilization of peace provided attempts at domination and interference in the internal development of other peoples and nations are ruled out. Furthermore, any attempt at imposing upon peoples one social and political system or another by force and from outside is a direct threat to world peace. The participating countries consider that under such condition the principles of peaceful co-existence are the only alternative to the cold war and to a possible general nuclear catastrophe. Therefore, these principles—which include the right of peoples to self-determination, to independence and to the free determination of the forms and

methods of economic, social and cultural development—must be the only basis of international relations”²

Although the above declaration was the expression of independent will and concerns of leaders of a movement which did not emerge within the organic framework of the United Nations, it truly reflected and resembled to the genesis and the purposes of the UN, which are:

1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end : to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment and settlement of international disputes or situation which might lead to a breach of peace ;
2. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;
3. To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural and humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion ; and
4. To be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations in the attainments of these common ends.³

Therefore, non-alignment, in the specific international situation, which marked the period of its inception, became the principal stimulating factor in revitalization of the process of democratization

2. Declaration of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, September 6, 1961 ; in “Non-Aligned Conferences : Basic Documents 1961-1975”, Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, Colombo, 1976, p. 11.
3. Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice. United Nations, New York, p. 3-4.

of international relations in the international community, primarily in the UN, what meant revival of the basic values on which it was founded. Moreover, in certain aspects the principles of Non-alignment elaborate the principles of the UN Charter and enriches them with new substances and interpretations. These new substances and interpretations are the outcome of continuing struggle for a new international political, economic and social order. In the process of implementation of the principles and objectives of the UN into practice, Non-alignment has defined new principles and objectives which are not only complementary to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, but corroborate their broad universal character.

The criteria for admission into the Non-aligned Movement were formulated in 1961 by the Preparatory Conference in Cairo and they determine the context and character of the principles and goals of the policy of non-alignment. These criteria are :

1. The country concerned should have adopted an independent policy based on the co-existence of states with different political and social systems and on non-alignment or should be showing a trend in favour of such policy.
2. It should be consistently supporting the movements for national independence.
3. It should not be a member of multilateral military alliance concluded in the context of great power conflicts.
4. If it has a bilateral military agreement with a great power or

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a member of a regional defence pact, the agreement or part of it should not be one deliberately concluded in the context of great powers conflicts,

5. If it has conceded military bases to a foreign power, the concession should not have been made in the context of Great Power conflicts.⁴

These criteria reflect the basic philosophy of non-alignment and indicates its "anti bloc" and "extra bloc" character. Non-alignment, on the one hand, denounced the balance-of-power model tended to culminate in the bipolarity of international system as a whole during the first two decades after the Second World War, and, on the other hand, pursued an independent approach and stand on any global or regional issue according to the merit of the case and not depending on the parties involved. But, this does not mean non-entanglement of non-alignment in confrontations. It imposed, from the very beginning, active involvement in defusing or overcoming conflict of global or local nature.

UN and NAM in the Changing World

The Contemporary world is experiencing radical changes and ferment. Growing interdependence in the comity of nations and increasing interconnection of events characterise the present international relations. In many ways the world of today or even, the world of the 60s and 70s has little similarity with the world in which the United Nations emerged. Therefore, the principles and goals of non-alignment cannot be reduced only to the principles and goals of the United Nations. These principles and goals inspite of their universal qualities and character could not encompass all elements of the changing international relations. To cope with complexities of the present day global situation, the principles of the UN Charter were strengthened, supplemented and elaborated by systemization of the principles and goals of the policy of non-alignment in the VI Summit Conference of non-aligned countries in Havana in 1979. Recalling the fundamental goals and principles of the Non-aligned

4. For more details see, K.P. Misra, K.R. Narayan *Non-Alignment in Contemporary International Relations* ; Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 1981, pp. 255-256.

Movement, which have guided it since its inception in 1961, the Heads of State or Government at the 6th Summit reaffirmed their adherence in particular to "the strengthening of the United Nations as an effective instrument for promoting international peace and security, resolving international problems and struggling against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, zionism, racial discrimination and apartheid and as an important factor in the development of international cooperation and the establishment of equitable economic relations between states ; promotion of economic cooperation among the non-aligned and other developing countries with a view to the achievement of collective self-reliance ; establishment of new international order in the field of information and mass media for the purpose of forging new international relations in general; and revival, preservation and enrichment of the cultural heritage of the peoples of non-aligned countries and promotion of cultural cooperation among them."⁵

Thus, Non-alignment, since its inception, has been sharply reacting to the multidimensional problems and developments of the contemporary world. It has defined a complete concept of international relations and established a new and independent approach towards dealing with international problems irrespective of their nature and depth. The role of non-alignment for the establishment of an improved international system has broadened the scope of activities of the United Nations.

It is indeed a difficult task to measure the contribution of the non-aligned countries in strengthening the role of the UN and its specialized agencies in preserving international peace and security of nations, safeguarding the rights of peoples for self-determination promoting political and economic cooperation among nations. The activities of the United Nations and the Non-aligned Movement are so much interrelated and complementary to each other that in this

5. See Peter Willetts, *The Non-Aligned in Havana. Document of the Sixth Summit Conference and an Analysis of their Significance for the Global Political System*, London, 1981, pp. 81-82.

complex international situation one can not think of the UN without the non-aligned countries, and the Non-aligned Movement without referring to the United Nations. Stressing the necessity of strengthening the United Nations, The Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries held in Cairo (October, 1964) declared :

“It is essential for the effective functioning of the United Nations that all nations should observe its fundamental principles of peaceful co-existence, cooperation, renunciation of the threat or use of forces, freedom and equality without discrimination on grounds of race, sex, language or religion”.⁶

The United Nations has become the first world organisation which can be identified with the world community in the broadest sense of the term. This has been possible to some extent due to the non-aligned countries who before their independence waged war for national liberation against colonial rule and later joined the Non-aligned Movement and the United Nations. In terms of membership and global spread, the Non-aligned Movement represents today the world's biggest stand in international politics. Comprising about two-third member states of the United Nations system, the non-aligned countries play a significant, and, often, a decisive role in all organs of the United Nations, specially in the General Assembly. This “role playing” has been possible not merely because of the arithmetical increase of the UN member states thanks to the non-aligned countries, but also because of commitment of these countries to respect the principles and purposes of the UN and of the Non-aligned Movement.

Even before the formal launching of the Non-aligned Movement, Afro-Asian countries pursuing non-aligned policy contributed

6. See. The Programme for Peace and International Cooperation adopted at the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-aligned Countries, Cairo, October, 5-10, 1964, in *Non-aligned Conferences: Basic Documents 1961-1975*. Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, Colombo, 1976, p. 30.

to the survival of the United Nations. Non-alignment viewed "as a foreign policy pursued by a handful of Asian-African countries in the 1950s played an important role during that critical period and helped contribute to the survival of the United Nations as also to its own evolution as an international movement with a non-partisan and universal character. As a policy objective characterized by judging of each international issue on its own merits rather than by power politics, non-alignment still has special relevance to the effective functioning of the United Nations".⁷

Thus the non-aligned countries have become the basic component incentive to the democratization of the United Nations.

The new majority which has been established in the UN due to the joining of all non-aligned countries and cohesion in action has changed the arrangement of forces in the UN. This change has confined the scope of the power-blocs to dictate the decisions of the world body because the new majority does not act under the bloc

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influence. It is pertinent to mention here that after 1960, almost all colonial nations, immediately on achieving national independence declared 'non-alignment' as the guiding principle of their foreign policy and aligned themselves with the Non-aligned Movement. Even some of the National Liberation Movements like African National Congress (ANC), PLO, Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe (ZAPU, ZANU), SWAPO of Namibia etc. while fighting against colonial domination participated in the NAM forums either

7. See K.P. Saksena, "Non-alignment and the United Nations," *International Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1-2, January-June, 1981, pp. 81-82.

as full members or as observers. Thus, overwhelming majority of the decolonized peoples started pursuing non-aligned policy and became associated with the NAM before joining the UN. Some members of the UN like Pakistan could also join NAM after their withdrawal from military alliances. Voice of the non-aligned and other developing countries reflects the popular will of majority of the peoples of the world in the form of international consensus. Only such consensus can help to settle global issues and materialize the common aspirations of international community and thereby strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation among peoples.

The struggle of the non-aligned countries within the organisational framework of the United Nations is not confined only to the realisation of the purposes and objectives of the UN Charter. They have been making continuous efforts to establish a more equitable participation in the UN organs by larger number of countries, first of all the non-aligned ones, for the establishment of new organs and expansion of the existing ones. Efforts of the non-aligned countries led to the expansion of the Security Council from 11 to 15 members. ECOSOC was also enlarged, first from 18 to 27, and then to 54 members. The non-aligned and other developing countries also contributed to the formation of new organs in the political sphere. These are "Committee of 24" on Decolonization, the Council for Namibia, the Special Committee for the struggle against Apartheid, the Special Committee for Realising the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian peoples etc. In the economic and development sphere, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNDP, The Committee for the implementation of decisions adopted at the VI and VII Special Sessions, Committee for the Review and Implementation of the International Development Strategy, the World Food Council, The International Fund for Agricultural Development etc. were established at the initiative of the non-aligned countries. The formation of the UN Disarmament Commission and Special Committee on the Charter of the UN and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organisation also goes to the credit of the non-aligned countries.

As it has been mentioned earlier, non-alignment is not passive neutrality nor does it mean "equidistance" from the power blocs. The non-aligned always direct their attention towards positively defined goals, of course, determined not to be aligned with either the one or the other power bloc. They always aim at a world in which all nations would live together in peace and have an equal chance to enhance their well-being. With this aim in view, the non-aligned countries involve themselves in different conflict situations and help the management of crisis. In the early fifties, when the non-aligned were yet to become an organised movement, twelve extra bloc countries in a collective demarche in the UN prevented the Korean War from escalating into a broader conflict. During the "Cuban Crisis" in 1962 Ghana and UAR, as members of the Security Council, tabled a joint draft for normalising the situation in the Caribbean region and enabled UN to act as a mediator. A group of non-aligned countries tabled a proposal in the Security Council during the October War, 1973 in the Middle East. According to this proposal a UN force was established and sent to the theatre of war which checked further escalation of the crisis in which the leading powers were involved. Such initiatives are regular practice of the non-aligned countries in the UN where they help to adopt decisions based on broad consensus.

Institutional Linkage

Majority of the non-aligned countries are poor and small nation-states. Their constraints in terms of resource and qualified manpower do not permit them to participate in the international system with enough embassies and other representations. Therefore, the United Nations as the world parliament is of immense importance for the non-aligned forces whose voice can be best heard from the UN forum. Peter Willettes rightly points out that "as the United Nations has new universality in its membership, it compensates for the inability of many small states to staff more than a dozen or so embassies. As there are ample opportunities for any state to raise

any issue for discussion in the General Assembly, the UN helps to compensate for the tendency of the Great Powers to discuss issues without regard to the interests of small states".⁸

Most of the regular activities of the Non-aligned Movement centres around the United Nations. For implementation of the resolutions adopted at the non-aligned conferences, for drafting of resolutions on different issues and also for influencing the UN activities in general by analysing current events and adopting common stand on them, the Non-aligned Movement from the very beginning felt the necessity of coordination of activities among the member states at the UN.

The Second Summit Conference of the Non-aligned countries recommended for consultation of the non-aligned countries at the level of Heads of delegation during every General Assembly session. It has become a regular practice of the non-aligned countries to organise informal meetings of their delegations in New York on the eve of each General Assembly session in order to work out a common strategy, as far as possible. Similar practice has also been developed at the various UNCTAD conferences and other UN specialized bodies. All issues which are covered in the political declaration of the Non-aligned Summit Meetings are taken after each Summit to the UN General Assembly. The documents adopted at the Non-aligned conferences are now always circulated as documents of the General Assembly and UN Delegation of the host country brings them to the attention of the General Assembly. Recently this has been done at the highest level. In 1979, President Castro of Cuba addressed the General Assembly on behalf of the Non-aligned Group, the same practice was followed by the Late Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi in 1983.

The decision of the Non-aligned Movement that the Head of the State of the host country has to coordinate the activities of the

8. Peter Willetts. *The Non-aligned Movement : The Origin of the Third World Alliance*, "Frances Pinter, London, 1978. p. 58

non-aligned countries between two Summits was a step forward for strengthening the unity of the non-aligned countries on global issues. For this purpose a Secretariat at the UN at Chairperson's UN Mission has been set up. Organised activities of the Non-aligned Group at the United Nations acquired further impulse by a decision of the 4th Non-aligned Summit Conference (Algiers, 1973) to organise a coordinating Bureau of the NAM for coordinating non-aligned activities in between the Summit Meetings. The following chart

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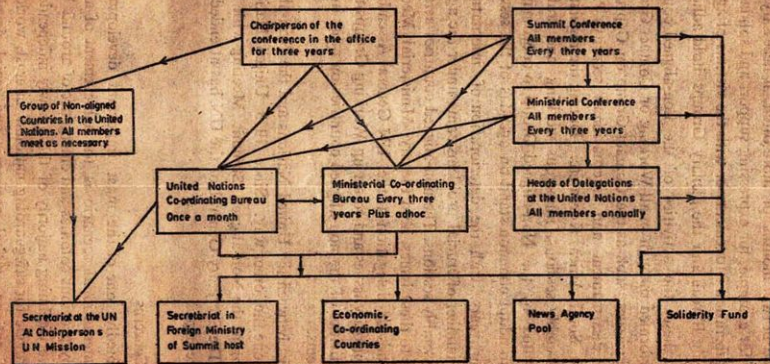
shows that the UN serves as an important venue for coordinating much of the activities of the non-aligned countries.⁹

In the day to day work of the General Assembly, Security Council and other Committees, the non-aligned countries have operated at three levels. Co-ordinating Bureau is the most important organ. It works on a continuous basis at the level of Permanent Representatives to the UN, convening at least once a month. In the sessions of the Co-ordinating Bureau, any non-aligned country is entitled to participate. The Co-ordinating Bureau coordinates the activities of the non-aligned countries within the entire UN system and also in the "Group of 77". It implements the decisions of the Non-aligned Group in UN and reports to the Non-aligned Group about the regular activities of UN. In the process of maintaining liaison with the Non-aligned Group, the Co-ordinating Bureau, after studying certain issues, suggests the Group as regards the common stand to be taken by the non-aligned countries in the UN on these issues. These suggestions are then studied at higher level.

At the United Nations "Plenary Meetings" of the Non-aligned Group are held at the level of permanent representatives. They meet

9. Source : Taken from *ibid* p. 40

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at least once in two months, or more often, if necessary. In case of emergency, for example, for expressing support and solidarity with the National Liberation Movements or with the victims of aggression the Co-ordinating Bureau and the plenary Groups hold adhoc meetings.

Besides these, the activities of the non-aligned countries in the UN are performed through small Working or Contact Groups dealing with specific issues, such as the Contact Group on Cyprus, Working Group on disarmament and international security, Palestine and Middle East, South Africa, Korea etc. During the regular and special General Assembly sessions, numerous working and drafting groups are constituted by the Non-aligned Group to coordinate their activities and to adopt common stand on agendas of the sessions.

In recent years, with the deterioration of international climate increasing number of crucial problems come under the agenda of UN General Assembly sessions. The non-aligned countries attaching prime importance to these issues, hold Plenary Ministerial Meetings at the level of Heads of delegation at the UN General Assembly session to determine priority issues and to set up Working Groups for coordinating the activities of the non-aligned countries on most important and vital problems.

The links between the United Nations and the Non-aligned Movement has gone the other way. Since 1973 United Nations has been participating at the Non-aligned Summit Meeting with the status of observer. The Secretary General of the UN has attended and spoken at these meetings.

Common Concerns

Undoubtedly, one of the most important developments of the post-war international scenario is the achievement of national independence by previous colonies and emergence of around 100 sovereign states. Overwhelming majority of these newly independent countries in their struggle for safeguarding national interest, world peace and security of nations, global economic and social development has

chosen "non-alignment" as the cornerstone of their foreign policy. Forming the mainstream of the United Nations, the non-aligned countries have created favourable atmosphere for the United Nations, in solving global problems such as : decolonization, disarmament, international economic relations etc.

Non-alignment is basically anticolonial. Since the formation of the Non-aligned Movement one of its principal tasks has been anticolonial struggle in which it has achieved the greatest success. Attacking immense importance to the abolition of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, the First Non-aligned Summit (Belgrade, 1961) declared :

"The non-aligned countries provide encouragement and support to all peoples fighting for their independence and equality. The participants in the Conference demand that an immediate stop be put to armed action and repressive measures of any kind directed against dependent peoples to enable them to exercise peacefully and freely their right to complete independence and that the integrity of their national territory be respected. Any aid given by any country to colonial power in such supression is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations".¹⁰

Due to concerted efforts of the non-aligned countries, who were once subjected to coloidal domination, the anticolonial struggle within the framework of the UN has acquired the highest legitimacy, and national independence movements have become important subjects in international life. This has also enhanced the reputation of the Non-aligned Movement both within and outside the UN system. In this context it has been rightly pointed out that : "with decolonization high on the agenda of the newly founded United Nations what were mostly erstwhile colonies in some form or other, began to emerge

10. Declaration of the Heads of State or Government of Non-aligned Countries : Belgrade, September 6, 1961, in *Non-aligned Countries : Basic Documents, 1961-1975*, Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, Colombo, 1976. p.13

as independent sovereign states. The nation-states acquired a growingly significant role as an actor within the United Nations and outside out of all proportion to their economic and military power".¹¹

In the United Nations, the Non-aligned Group, Secretariat of the Chairperson, Coordinating Bureau of NAM have been making strenuous efforts through the General Assembly, Security Council, UN Committee on Decolonization and other concerned bodies to eliminate colonialism, racism and apartheid. Efforts of the non-aligned countries in the UN resulted in the adoption of series of resolutions condemning colonial rule, racial discrimination and the policy of apartheid, and urging the UN member states to take economic and political sanctions against the colonial and racial regimes. In 1960, even before the official formation of the NAM, a Draft of 43 Afro-Asian countries, most of which pursued non-aligned foreign policy, on decolonization was finally accepted to become Resolution 1514 (XV) entitled "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to the Colonial Countries and Peoples",¹²

On 20th November 1961, the non-aligned countries tabled a Resolution at the UN General Assembly on decolonization. 97 countries including the non-aligned ones voted for the Resolution, while UK, France, Spain, Republic of South Africa and Portugal abstained from voting. The Resolution noted with regret that, with few exceptions, the provisions of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had not been carried out and, in particular, that armed action and repressive measures continued to be taken against dependent peoples. In the Resolution, the General Assembly decided to establish a Special Committee of 17 members. Membership of the Committee was enlarged to 24 at the end of the year to examine the application of the

11. Muhammad Shamsul Huq, The First Osmany Memorial Lecture at the presentation ceremony of the BCS (Foreign Affairs) Officers (1984 Batch), Dhaka, 19 August 1985, p.2.

12. United Nations Document A 14501 and UN General Assembly Official Records of XV Session, Sup. No.161 A 146841

Declaration and to make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of its application.¹³

Solidarity of the non-aligned countries with the oppressed peoples under colonial and racial domination was expressed from all forums of the United Nations. In 1965, for example, at the 20th Session of the UN General Assembly, the non-aligned countries tabled a Resolution which was finally adopted by the Assembly. According to the Resolution the General Assembly called upon the UN member states to adopt political and economic sanction against Portugal for her repressive measures in the territories which were under colonial domination of Portugal.¹⁴

The central role played by the Non-aligned Movement in the UN in speeding up decolonization was clearly demonstrated during the national liberation struggle of the former Portuguese colonies (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape verde, Sao-tome and Principe) and Zimbabwe. Emancipation of Namibia from colonial rule and elimination of racial discrimination are the central issues of the decolonization agenda on which the non-aligned are presently working within the UN system. The Non-aligned Movement had covert or overt support and assistance to the liberation struggle of 50 colonies which achieved independence since the inception of NAM in 1961.¹⁵ Currently the non-aligned countries are supporting the struggle for independence and self-determination of about 20 small territories all over the globe.¹⁶

A shift from 'decolonization' to 'development' has been the focal point of evolution of the Non-aligned Movement in the recent

13. See *Everyone's United Nations : A Handbook of the United Nations. Its structure and Activities*, United Nations, New York, 1979, p. 285

14. See. United Nations. General Assembly, Doc. A/RES 2107(XX), 21 Dec., 1965; RES 2184, Dec., 12, 1966; A/RES 2270, Nov. 17, 1967.

15. M. Rezaul Haque "Role of the Non-aligned Movement in the Struggle of the Colonial Peoples for National Independence" (Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis in Russian), Kiev State University, Kiev, 1984, p. 186.

16. *Ibid*, p. 188.

years. The non-aligned countries believe that the process of democratization of international relations will remain incomplete without transforming the international economic relations, inherited from the colonial era, on the basis of New International Economic Order. The demand of non-aligned for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) does not consist in "income redistribution from the rich to the poor"¹⁷. It was, according to the UN resolution on the subject (1 May 1974) a call for restructuring of international economic relations on the basis of....equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interests and cooperation among all states irrespective of their economic and social system.¹⁸

For the achievement of these goals, the non-aligned countries launched campaign for united action of the developing countries in the UN. At the initiative of the II Summit conference of the non-aligned countries in Cairo, the "Group of 77" (now comprising over 125 countries) was established.

At the initiative of the non-aligned countries a number of resolutions and documents were adopted at the UN concerning economic development of the Third World countries and the New International Economic Order. The most important among these documents is the Action Programme on the establishment of the New International Economic Order at the 6th Special Session in 1974. The Economic Declaration of the Colombo Summit Conference of the non-aligned countries held in 1976 upholding the Action Programme declared :

"The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries view the adoption of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the establishment of the New International Economic Order at the 6th Special Session of the General Assembly of

17. W.W.Rostow, "The North-South Debate: A New Agenda is Needed", Current (Washington, D.C.), December, 1979, p. 51.

18. K.B. Lal and S.D. Muni, "Non-alignment and the New International Economic Order," in *Non-alignment in the Contemporary International Relations*, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 136-37.

the United Nations as signifying the growing determination of the international community to bring about a fundamental change in the system of international economic relations".¹⁹

The New International Economic Order has since become an Action Programme of the UN itself. It cannot be denied that this is a contribution of Non-aligned Movement to the UN activities.

Besides this, non-aligned countries sponsored a number of draft resolutions in the UN which resulted in the adoption of the Charter of economic rights and duties (1974); the resolution of the VII Special Session which elaborates and concretizes efforts for the establishment of the New International Economic Order; the Programme of urgent measures and action for a more rapid development of LDCs; numerous documents of UNCTAD.

It is necessary to underline that these efforts of the non-aligned countries within the UN are yet to produce much impressive result. Therefore, the non-aligned in close cooperation with the UN has been making continuous efforts to break the stalemate of the "North-South Dialogue", and for the successful launching of the global negotiation leading to fundamental restructuring of international economic relations. Economic and political cooperation within the framework of "South-South" cooperation for collective self-reliance of the non-aligned countries has received due recognition by the UN system.

The non-aligned countries truly realise that there is a close and dialectical connection between development and disarmament. Since its inception in 1961, disarmament has been a cardinal principle of the NAM and successive non-aligned conferences have called repeatedly for general and complete disarmament. The First Non-aligned Summit recognising the urgency of general and

19. *Non-aligned Conferences : Basic Documents 1976* (addendum to basic documents 1961-1975), Bandaranike Centre for International Studies, Colombo, 1976, p. 15.

complete disarmament and the role UN can play in this process called for the convocation of a World Disarmament Conference under the

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auspices of the UN. In the Programme for Peace and International Cooperation adopted at the Cairo Summit, it is stated that :

“The Conference is convinced that the convening of a world disarmament conference under the auspices of the United Nations to which all countries would be invited, would provide powerful support to the efforts which are being made to set in motion the process of disarmament and for securing the further and steady development of the process”.²⁰

It is a legitimate right of all countries to participate in the process of disarmament. Therefore, the non-aligned working document called for a strengthening of the link between the General Assembly and the Conference of the Working Committee on disarmament²¹. It is at the initiative of the non-aligned and due to the pressure created by them on the UN, that two special sessions of the UN General Assembly on disarmament took place. The first was in 1978 and the second in 1982. These conferences adopted documents which gave important guidelines and identified priority areas in disarmament, underlined the importance of the UN in promoting disarmament. In this context Dr. Radovan Vukadinovic rightly points out that “The non-align-

20. Programme for Peace and International Cooperation adopted at the II Summit of the Non-aligned countries, in *Non-aligned Conferences : Basic Documents 1961-1975*, Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, Colombo, 1975, p.19.

21. See, A.C. Shahul Hameed, *In pursuit of Peace : On Non-alignment and Regional Cooperation*, New Delhi, 1983, p.5.

ned countries have upheld every initiative aimed at disarmament. In this important sphere, the non-aligned countries, reluctant to be mere bystanders, have in numerous initiatives shown how important they consider those issues".²²

Despite these initiatives by the non-aligned, very little has been achieved by the UN in disarmament due to disagreement on major issues between the two power blocs and due to the unholy aspirations of each power bloc to gain superiority in arms race over the other. However, the non-aligned countries have achieved some success in pursuing the power blocs to withdraw direct military presence from vast areas. Denuclearization of Latin America and Africa, the concept of transforming Indian Ocean region and the Mediterranean as zones of peace are direct credits of the non-aligned countries.

In spite of many shortcomings, the joint efforts of the UN and the Non-aligned Movement have left positive contribution in the process of the three Ds (Decolonization, Disarmament and Development). Much of the credit for the fact that these are subjects of regular deliberations at the UN goes to the NAM.

Conclusion

The complexities of today's world demand from the United Nations an up-to-date and more realistic approach towards the entire gamut of international relations. Today, United Nations as a coalition of states must reflect the common aspirations of this coalition safeguarding individual interests of its each and every integral part. The non-aligned countries comprising two-thirds of the UN member states have become a real force to help the UN to cope with the new realities.

The legitimate rights of the peoples to live in peace, security, free from political, economic, social and cultural domination must be

22. Dr. Radovan Vukadinovic, *Non-aligned Countries and Detente*, Belgrade, 1979, p.35.

secured by more democratic integration of nations, development of cooperation and coordination of interest and modern norms of conduct. In its efforts to realise these goals the UN had undergone through an evolution under the influence of the non-aligned countries.

Born with the aims and objectives which are identical with those of the United Nations, the Non-aligned Movement found in the United Nations a forum from where the voice of the newly independent countries could be best heard. The non-aligned countries were blessed with an wonderful opportunity to conduct their search for peace and lasting solution of problems through the World Body. This paved the way for closer connection between nations and development of understanding between them which is a prerequisite for resolving issues of common concern. By virtue of its composition the UN have become the forum and framework for achieving the global aims and objectives of the Non-aligned Movement. Liberation of colonies which was a common objective of both the UN and NAM has been achieved by their joint and coordinated efforts. But the process remains incomplete without economic and social emancipation of more than one hundred nation-states. Such emancipation is possible only through the establishment of a new international order based on social justice, in realisation of which both UN and NAM are engaged. Non-aligned countries demand for democratic system of international relations which would guarantee peace and security to all nations once being realised, first of all, through the UN. Thus the non-aligned countries have contributed to making the UN more universal and more democratic. And this has been possible due to rearrangement of forces in the UN by the non-aligned countries.

It would not be unjustified to observe in the conclusion that the policy of non-alignment, its principles and goals have supplemented the objectives and principles of the UN Charter. By launching new programmes and initiatives non-alignment has widened the scope of activities of the UN. Similarly the UN has provided the NAM with the best forum and framework for implementation of its

policy. Concerted efforts of the non-aligned countries resulted in the adoption of numerous resolutions and documents which have far-reaching consequences and which would help the promotion of peace, security, development and cooperation all over the world.

It is not secret that both the UN and NAM have been facing serious challenges and threats to their existences in recent years. Today, the forces of war and domination are more active than ever before. Acceleration of arms race between the power blocs and unequal economic relations pose a real threat to human civilization. The whole world has become a nuclear hostage. Attempts are being made from certain quarters to undermine the role of UN and NAM, to justify the irrelevance of the parliaments of nations. It is at this point, that the unity of the UN and NAM and further coordination of their activities are most imperative. A strong United Nations can strengthen the position of the Non-aligned Movement. A united Non-aligned Movement is a source of inspiration for the world body.