

# Nonalignment as a Foreign Policy Strategy: Dead or Alive

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At the peak of the Cold War, it was conventional among academicians and policy makers to refer to nonalignment as an international political phenomenon among the less-developed countries (LDCs) that actively participated in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). In a bipolar world, nonalignment was considered to be a foreign policy strategy and an option for those Third World states that claimed to be in neither the Eastern nor Western camp. At that time, the Cold War among the developed countries (DCs) of the First and Second Worlds created an uneasy international environment, especially for lesser powers that were predominately in the Third World. Despite the criticism and skepticism of some policy makers and experts, such as John Foster Dulles and Henry Kissinger,<sup>1</sup> nonalignment functioned throughout the Cold War as both a movement and a strategy. The demise of the Second World, however, has led to questions about the function and future of nonalignment in the post-Cold War period—an era in which the United States is considered the only superpower.

Is nonalignment as a strategy or a movement still appropriate to the current world order from theoretical and policy perspectives? This crucial ques-

1. U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles stated that the movement was “immoral” and that the nonaligned countries should work with the West to defeat communism. See *Review Indonesia*, no. 21 (20 August 1992): 4.

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tion has been raised and debated by both academicians and policy makers of nonaligned states since the end of the Cold War.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this essay is to show that nonalignment in both forms is still applicable to the current world order and entails intrinsic and instrumental values in the post-Cold War period. In addition, this essay casts doubt on the generally accepted notion that we live in a world with just one superpower.<sup>3</sup> Thus, I begin with a discussion of the issue of polarity in the current international system. Then, in order to explain the application of nonalignment to current world politics, it is necessary to provide an analytical definition of the concept of nonalignment and to discuss its main components and principles. The final section of the essay includes an estimate of the future prospects for both the phenomenon and strategy of nonalignment in the twenty-first century.

### **Polarity in the Current International System**

The current international system is not unipolar in all aspects of international relations, but rather much more complex than the bipolar world of the Cold War period. The current system polarity varies depending upon which aspect of international relations (i.e., political, social, economic, or military) one focuses. During the Cold War, academicians and policy makers were unanimous in recognizing that the organization of the post-World War II era was based on the nature, role, and power of two relatively new international political players—the United States and the Soviet Union. The latter followed Marxist ideology as a result of its 1917 revolution. All aspects of Soviet life followed this ideology, including the economic, social, military, and political. The United States, on the other hand, had been a major power since the turn of the twentieth century, and in the post-World War II period it became the epitome of democracy and capi-

2. For recent examples, see Nana S. Sutresna, "The Non-Aligned Movement in the 1990s: Reorientation and Resurgence," *Strategic Review* (Jakarta), no. 32 (January–February 1995): 41–9; Yuri Vasilyev, "The Non-Aligned Movement Thirty Years On," *International Affairs*, no. 1 (1 January 1992): 35–40; and Mohamed Ibn Chambas, "The Non-Aligned Movement in the Post-Cold War Era," *Review of International Affairs*, no. 42 (5 April 1991): 6–8.

3. For discussion on a world with one superpower, see M. K. Tikku and Adam Schwarz, "Accelerated Promotion: Indonesia Now Leads the Non-Aligned Movement," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (20 February 1992): 12.

talism. Its ideology was pervasive in all of its social, military, economic, and political value systems. Thus, the bipolarity represented a struggle between two completely different socioeconomic and political-military models.

In contrast to the bipolar world described above, the nature and function of the current international system is more intricate. There exist three separate but interrelated polar systems—political/diplomatic, military/security, and economic. The global political/diplomatic system is unipolar, which means that it entails only one superpower. The United States plays a significant leadership role in current world politics and projects its political power on the international scene, not only in bilateral but also multilateral levels. A recent example is the crisis in Iraq. Although the international community as a whole is concerned about the Iraqi government's refusal to abide by the United Nations' resolutions regarding inspections of its biological, chemical, and nuclear facilities, the United States has taken the leading role in making Baghdad responsible for its defiance of the will of the international community.<sup>4</sup> Another example of U.S. international predominance as the only political superpower is the extent to which foreign powers lobby the U.S. Congress in order to influence the government to pursue policies that are favorable to the lobbyists' home governments. The nature, role, and scope of foreign lobbies on Capitol Hill is unprecedented in comparison to that of legislatures of other major global powers.

In terms of military capability, the international system is still bipolar, with two major power centers—Washington and Moscow. Even after the limitation, control, and destruction of many weapons systems, the U.S. and Russian military machines are predominant in the possession of conventional as well as nuclear technology and sophisticated delivery systems.

In spite of prevalent doubts about the Russian military's effectiveness as a significant force, there is no doubt that, in terms of quantity of arms and quality of certain weapons systems, Moscow is a major international player. The Russian military industrial complex is still significant enough that arms

4. For example, in President Clinton's 1998 State of the Union address, he spoke on behalf of the international community when he stated that he will not allow Iraq to defy the will of the international community. See CNN Interactive at <[www.CNN.com](http://www.CNN.com)>, "Investigating the President: America Tunes in to Clinton's Address," aired 27 January 1998, 8 PM. ET.

sales continue to constitute one of the main sources of Russian government revenue. Moreover, the Russian military force is threatening enough to encourage the Czech, Hungarian, and Polish governments to pursue membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in order to deter possible threats from Russian military advancements.

The U.S. military enjoys qualitative and quantitative superiority to its foreign counterparts. Although the U.S. defense budget has been decreased significantly since the end of the Cold War, U.S. forces have the highest level of readiness, mobility, and effectiveness among the major military powers in the world. In practice, these forces have been the backbone of the NATO alliance structure and most UN operations.

Although bipolarity still applies to the global military balance in the post-Cold War era, it does not represent an accurate picture of the world economic order. This is mainly due to the demise of the socialist bloc, even though there still exist some socialist states, including Cuba and North Korea. Moreover, there is a growing interdependence and globalization of the economic and political systems, and there are more major international players in either an individual or bloc capacity.

The international economic sphere can be best described as a rivalry among three major economic power centers, constituting a triangle of power: the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the European Union, and Japan, with its sphere of influence in the Pacific Rim. Within this international tripolar structure, the major players compete with one another for control of natural resources, technology, skilled labor, capital, and market share. In the absence of a global security threat, the natural rivalry among world economic power centers has intensified. It is no exaggeration to state that economic competition in the post-Cold War period has replaced the ideological rivalry of the Cold War era.<sup>5</sup> In fact, there has been a great deal of global concern about the possibility of a trade war among major powers whenever a significant economic conflict arises.<sup>6</sup> The rivalry among these

5. For example, see Tikku and Schwarz, 12; Rajesh Kumar, "Tasks Facing the Non-Aligned Movement," *Strategic Review* (Jakarta), no. 36 (September 1995): 51; Soedibyo, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy and Non-Aligned Movement in the Post-Cold War Era," *Strategic Review* (Jakarta), no. 18 (May 1992): 45-9.

6. On a possible U.S.-EU trade war, see Richard Lawrence, "EU Will Push for Harsher Measures against Iran to prevent 'Trade War,'" *Journal of Commerce*, 16 January 1998, 3A; and "US Warns

major economic centers, however, does not preclude cooperation on trade and investment, and the establishment of international standards that benefit the main players.

In this tripolar structure, economic power is as important as, if not more important than, military might. Japan and Germany, which are known more for their global economic influence than for their military muscle, are the best examples of this reality. The daily economic decisions of such states can affect inflation, stock markets, currency values, and unemployment. These economic factors impact the lives of average citizens more often than the occasional projections of military might during crisis situations.

In the wake of the growing strength of the tripolar international economic structure, developing countries often struggle to survive and thrive economically. Today, the world is divided into North and South economic spheres that have replaced the East-West ideological conflict.<sup>7</sup> The challenge for most developing countries is to find a way to improve their economic condition. Many are doing so by organizing, reviving, or strengthening regional arrangements, since they cannot do it alone. Examples include the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization. In this international environment, the Non-Aligned Movement is one way that Third World states hope to achieve unity in confronting powerful blocs in order to gain political benefits for their economic goals.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the number of nongovernmental organizations has recently increased, and their

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Europe over 'Food Safety' Trade War," *Daily Telegraph*, 8 January 1998, 9. Regarding trade disputes between Japan and the United States, see CNN Interactive at <www.CNN.com>, "Order Bars Japanese Ships from U.S. Ports: Trade Dispute Escalates between Economic Superpowers," 16 October 1997; and idem, "Japan Will Pay Fine in U.S. Trade Dispute," 17 October 1997. For an example of Europe and Japan against the United States, see "Rapid Prototyping: Europe, Japan Challenge U.S. Lead," *New Technology Week*, 28 July 1997. Regarding Japan and Germany, see Japan Economic Newswire, "German NGOs Slam Japan over Gas Emission Proposal," 6 October 1997.

7. For nonaligned countries' recognition of the growing North-South gap, see J. J. C. Syatauw, "The Non-Aligned Movement at the Crossroads—The Jakarta Summit Adapting to the Post-Cold War Era," *Asian Yearbook of International Law*, vol. 3 (Dorbrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 1994), 129–62, esp. 157–60; and Vassilyev, 36–7.

8. On NAM and its philosophy of solidarity, see E. Agaev and S. Krylov, "The Non-Aligned Movement," *International Affairs* 42, no. 2 (1996): 90–6, esp. 91–2. Also see "Non-Aligned Movement Sets the September Summit Agenda," *Economic and Business Review Indonesia*, 21 May 1992, 10–1.

connection with regional and universal economic organizations involving LDCs is of special academic and policy interest.<sup>9</sup>

### The Concept of Nonalignment

The term *nonalignment* is a contribution of the Non-Aligned Movement to the literature of international politics. In its forty-three-year history, however, NAM has not clearly and comprehensively defined this concept. Some active and well-respected NAM officials have discounted the need for an authoritative and precise definition of nonalignment. Leo Mates, for example, claims that there is virtue in not insisting on a single definition of the term. He argues that the traditional method of a common stand based upon a clearly written platform of a political community does not apply to nonalignment.<sup>10</sup>

The lack of a clear definition for nonalignment by NAM is not due to a lack of interest but to unbridgeable differences among member states on this issue. In 1973, at the fourth Summit of the Heads of States of Non-Aligned Countries, the Libyans specifically asked for a "new definition or stricter interpretation" of the term. The conference, however, did not include the issue on its agenda because of a lack of consensus on its inclusion. In the 1979 summit conference, ignoring the same issue resulted in Burma's formal withdrawal from the movement.<sup>11</sup> Today, NAM has resisted the calls for a single definition, not because the concept of nonalignment is meaningless or cannot be defined, but because of the lack of agreement on a single definition by all NAM members. The causes of this are rooted in the history of the movement.

### The Origin of Nonalignment

The Second World War brought two major changes to international politics and consequently led to the emergence of nonalignment. The first change

9. For current and comprehensive perspectives about the theory and practice of NGOs, see Shahid Qadir, ed., *Nongovernmental Organizations, the United Nations and Global Governance*, special edition of *Third World Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (September 1995).

10. Leo Mates, *Non-Alignment: Theory and Current Policy* (Belgrade: Oceana, 1972), 80-1.

11. For a careful analysis of Burma's nonalignment strategy, see William C. Johnstone, *Burma's Foreign Policy: A Study in Neutralism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

was the appearance of the United States and the Soviet Union as the two predominant contending powers, creating a bipolar structure that represented two opposing sociopolitical value systems, each believing in the superiority of its ideology, as highlighted earlier.<sup>12</sup> The other change was the collapse of the colonial power bases both in Japan and in Europe. The collapse facilitated the process of independence for the former territories in Asia and Africa. These newly independent states were emerging in an international environment dominated by the Cold War, a direct result of the activities of the superpowers.

In their foreign policies, the majority of Third World states shared the goal of avoiding the superpower rivalry. To achieve this goal, these lesser powers employed a strategy of nonalignment in foreign relations. In theory, this strategy meant avoiding a military alliance with either superpower against the other. Today, in the absence of a major great-power military rivalry, NAM focuses on global economic competition, especially among the major economic blocs.<sup>13</sup>

### An Analytical Definition of Nonalignment

Grammatically, the term *nonalignment* is a noun from the adjective *non-aligned*, which means "not allied with other nations and especially with one of the great powers."<sup>14</sup> This definition could be misinterpreted as using alliance and alignment synonymously. An alliance, however, has a legal basis binding the parties to the agreement, whereas an alignment is a general and informal association. *Alignment* and *alliance* are not interchangeable.

These technical definitions suggest that *nonalignment* denotes a situation in which one state refrains from joining any pact with other states and practices a policy of avoiding a formal commitment toward other states. In theory, the strict construction of this definition of nonalignment cannot even be

12. Alastair Buchan, "Bipolarity and Coalition," *Pacific Community* 5, no. 3 (April 1974): 348-62.

13. Kumar, 51; and Liu Jiang, "Non-Aligned Movement Aims at Modernization," *Beijing Review* 32, no. 36 (September 1989): 15-7.

14. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam, 1973), 780.

applied to NAM states, because they have a commitment to each other.<sup>15</sup> Nonalignment does not mean noncommitment to anyone, but rather noncommitment to the great powers.<sup>16</sup> In sum, nonalignment is briefly defined as noncommitment of a developing country to one great power against another.<sup>17</sup>

### Nonalignment Criteria

NAM is the largest gathering of developing countries outside the UN system. Nonaligned countries, however, are not a homogeneous group. Based on their approaches to foreign policy, there are radical, moderate, and conservative states. Some students of international politics, however, question whether radical states (such as Cuba) and conservative states (e.g., Saudi Arabia) are genuinely nonaligned. This raises the questions: Who is really nonaligned, and what are the essential criteria for nonalignment?<sup>18</sup> In order to answer such questions, standards are needed in order to evaluate the various nonalignment strategies.

The original set of criteria for nonalignment includes the eligibility standards for membership in NAM. Among the most basic questions are: Who can join? What should be the criteria for membership? What must be the basic characteristics of the nonaligned countries? The original membership criteria were provided at the 1961 Preparatory Conference in Cairo and are still in force:

15. Bozica Blagovic, "The Ideological and Political Foundations of Non-Alignment," *Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 752/53 (5–20 August 1981): 5–8; and P. V. Rao Narasimha, "Adherence to the Principles and Aims of Non-Alignment," *Review of International Affairs* 31, no. 724 (5 June 1980): 1–6.

16. Attributable to Professor Inis L. Claude, University of Virginia, 1992. Claude is one of the pioneers of the literature of modern international organization and the author of the classical work, *Swords into Plowshares*, 4th ed. (New York: Random House, 1984).

17. O. Jankowitsch and K. P. Sauvont, eds., *The Third World without Superpowers: The Collected Documents of the Non-Aligned Countries* (New York: Oceana, 1978); and L. Mates, "Non-Alignment and the Great Powers," *Foreign Affairs* 48, no. 3 (1970): 526–36.

18. M. S. Rajan, "The Concept of Non-Alignment and the Basis of Membership" (paper presented at the Indo-Yugoslav Symposium on Non-Alignment, New Delhi, May 1980), 14–7; and "Who Are Non-Aligned?" *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 April 1968, 627–8.



1. The country concerned should have adopted an independent policy based on the coexistence of states with different political and social systems and on nonalignment or should be showing a trend in favor of such a policy.
2. It should consistently support the movements for national independence.
3. It should not be a member of a multilateral military alliance concluded in the context of great-power conflicts.
4. If it has a bilateral military agreement with a great power or is a member of a regional defense pact, the agreement or pact should not be one deliberately concluded in the context of great power 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.<sup>19</sup>

### **The Principles of Nonalignment**

The above criteria seek to support five major principles of nonalignment on which the nonaligned countries base their policies and activities. Any state that claims to follow NAM must be committed to world peace and disarmament, independence, economic equality, cultural identity, and universalism and internationalization.<sup>20</sup> A brief explanation of these principles is in order.

#### World Peace and Disarmament

During the Cold War era, nonaligned countries were concerned with the increasing tension between the great powers, whose rivalry tended to involve weaker nations in a military confrontation. According to NAM, a reduction in international tension required a nuclear arms control treaty between the great powers. In fact, nonalignment literature calls for disarmament, not arms control, and focuses on the nuclear arsenal of the major powers.<sup>21</sup> In

19. N. Krishnan, "Non-alignment—Movement or Organization?" in *Non-alignment in Contemporary International Relations*, ed. K. P. Misra and K. R. Narayanan (New Delhi: Vikas, 1981), 255–6.

20. A. W. Singham and Shirley Hune, *Non-alignment in an Age of Alignments* (London: Zed, 1986), 15–32.

21. A. S. Lall, "The Non-Aligned in the Disarmament Negotiations," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 20, no. 5 (May 1964), 17–21.

this respect, NAM conferences during the Cold War expressed great concern over the possibility of a nuclear war.<sup>22</sup> In the post-Cold War era, the movement is interested not only in world peace<sup>23</sup> but also in the settlement of regional conflicts, such as the Gulf War.<sup>24</sup>

### Independence

Associated with concepts like *sovereignty*, nonalignment is about independence. After all, NAM was the result of the efforts of the new states of Africa and Asia to conduct a foreign policy independent of, but not isolated from, those of the major powers.<sup>25</sup> Nonaligned states succeeded in increasing the level of international awareness that foreign policy options were not limited to choosing between East and West. Today, the issue for NAM is that no developing country should be forced into an economic sphere of influence by one of the major economic power centers. A major issue for nonaligned states is constructive North-South negotiations in order to restructure international economic ties. Of particular importance are the debt crisis and the trade imbalance.<sup>26</sup>

By *independence*, nonaligned countries originally referred to political independence and to the right of all colonial territories to form their own governments.<sup>27</sup> Although the concept of national self-determination did not

22. For example, see B. Brankovic, "The Sixth Conference and Disarmament," *Review of International Affairs* 30, no. 710 (November 1979): 7-10; and H. Jack, "A Disarmament and the Algiers Summit," *Review of International Affairs* 24, no. 551 (March 1973): 6-10.

23. "Non-Aligned Movement: Heads of State or Government, Final Document," *Environmental Policy and Law* 26, no. 2/3 (May 1996): 125-9. See also "Non-Aligned Movement: The Call from Colombia," in *ibid.*, 129-30.

24. Regarding the Persian Gulf conflict and the Non-Aligned Movement, see Rajan, 19-21.

25. C. P. Bhambhri, "Assertion of Independence," *Secular Democracy* 9, no. 14/15 (13 July and 15 August 1976): 103-7; M. Komatina, "Non-Aligned: The Independence Revolution," *Review of International Affairs* (5 January 1977): 14-6, 19-30; S. Mukherjee, "Independence and Non-Alignment," *New Age*, 15 August 1976, 11-2; and Narayanan.

26. On the debt crisis, see "Focus on LDC Debt: NAM Chairman Acts Rather than Reacts," *Indonesia Business Weekly*, 5 August 1994, 10. On debt and development, see J. Soedjati Djiwandono, "The Tenth Summit Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement," *Indonesian Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1992): 364-8.

27. "Non-Aligned Extend Support to African Struggle for Liberation," *Times of India*, 12 April 1977, 1-3; and Z. Rosales, "Role of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in the Struggle of the Peoples for National Independence and World Peace" (paper presented at the International Conference on Principles of Non-Alignment, Baghdad, 4-6 May 1982).

originate with the nonaligned countries, independence has a special value for NAM states, which have often achieved it by bloody struggles. Recognizing its significance, the Soviets sought to bring NAM closer to their ideological camp by advocating that they both struggled against Western imperialism.<sup>28</sup> Although NAM's rhetoric seemed more anti-Western than anti-Eastern during the Cold War era, many nonaligned states avoided close ties with Moscow, particularly after the 1979 Havana Conference.<sup>29</sup>

Since the concept of *independence* has different dimensions, it cannot be limited to only its political form. After obtaining political independence, the new states have often focused on economic and cultural independence in order to alter ties to the former colonial powers. This discussion suggests that the principles of political independence, economic equality, and cultural identity are interrelated.

### Economic Equality

Considering the existence of the North-South division, most leaders of NAM states view the international economic structure as an obstacle to their economic development. They claim that the global economic system is highly skewed to the advantage of developed countries and that the nonaligned states want it to be more equitable.<sup>30</sup> In the past, this led to North-South negotiations, during which Western countries resisted the pressures of the South to make economic concessions, while the Soviets rejected negotiation formats for ideological reasons.<sup>31</sup> In the negotiations, the nonaligned states asked for an alteration of the international economic system in the spirit of the New International Economic Order (NIEO).<sup>32</sup> In the post-Cold War era,

28. R. Ulyanovsky, "Non-Alignment Movement and Anti-Imperialist Struggle," *Soviet Review* 16, no. 39 (August 1979): 9-11.

29. R. Allison, *The Soviet Union and the Strategy of Non-Alignment in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 242-52.

30. Soedibyo, 47. Also see Marko Vrhunec, "Non-Alignment: Options for the Future," *Review of International Affairs* 41, no. 970 (September 1990): 1-18.

31. Allison, 34.

32. "To Make the Non-Aligned Movement More Effective," *Indonesia Magazine* 23, no. 4 (1992): 10-2; and K. P. Sauvants and O. Jankowitsch, "The Initiating Role of the Non-Aligned Countries," in *Changing Priorities on the International Agenda: The New International Economic Order*, ed. K. P. Sauvants (New York: Pergamon, 1981).

there is a revival of NIEO-type negotiations.<sup>33</sup> In NAM's first major conference after the demise of the Soviet Union, international economic and development issues overshadowed the national security concerns of the developing world.<sup>34</sup> In a recent analysis of the current international economic structure from a Third World point of view, one observer summarizes the main economic challenge of the LDCs as follows:

The world economic [structure] has been dominated by the capitalist system, which has succeeded in advancing economic activities and promoting the prosperity of the developing countries. This growth has not been equal depending on the linkage between the social condition of each country in the third world and the global capitalist system. This unbalance is felt as unfair and it is hoped that a reformation reflecting justice and equity can be made.<sup>35</sup>

Thus, today's challenges for most developing countries are economic in nature. LDC leaders are concerned that, if the market economy system is applied to their country, problems such as debt, inflation, trade conflicts, and lack of capital will result. This would be due to the undeveloped internal economic structure of LDCs and their inability to handle the impact of the global economy. NAM is highly concerned about debt burdens of its members, and resolving those burdens is an important goal for the movement.<sup>36</sup>

The issue of debt was of international concern already in the 1980s. However, it has not received worldwide attention, because the DCs have succeeded in keeping the issue away from headlines, while negotiating individually with each debtor country. LDC leaders believe that the only way their countries can thrive economically is if the economic world order changes in order to become more equitable for all.<sup>37</sup> A major strategy in decreasing the dependence of the debtor LDCs is to diversify the source of foreign credit

33. "To Make the Non-Aligned Movement More Effective," 12.

34. F. Rachmadi, "Non-Aligned Movement: Problems and Challenges Encountered," *Strategic Review* (Jakarta) 18 (May 1992): 51-8.

35. Soedibyo, 45.

36. "Focus on LDC Debt," 10.

37. Soedibyo, 49. For more detail on NAM's economic growth and development goals, see "Heads of State or Government," 125.

from the three major economic powerhouses. This diversification of loans is one policy inspired by the principle of nonalignment based on the *equidistance approach*.<sup>38</sup> According to this approach, the nonaligned countries should maintain an equilibrium in their relations with the major blocs.

In the post-Cold War period, in the absence of a global ideological conflict, economic issues have become extremely globalized. When developing countries, such as Thailand, South Korea, and Indonesia, experience financial crises, the three major economic blocs of NAFTA, the EU, and Japan rush to assist with the help of the International Monetary Fund, which has recently furnished some of the largest assistance packages in its history.<sup>39</sup> This type of assistance, as during the Cold War era, is offered by the developed countries because it is in their best interest. Instead of being motivated by ideological rivalry, however, the current motivation for DCs is economic growth and prosperity.

This drive for economic growth and prosperity is the basis of the new rivalry among the three major economic powerhouses, which represents a new form of "bloc politics." The death of the Cold War did not end bloc politics but gave it a new form.<sup>40</sup> The economic rivalry among the three major economic powers provides the Non-Aligned Movement with a window of opportunity to pursue their autonomy by checking the influence of one major economic center with that of the others. For example, there is a rift between the United States and the EU and Japan regarding the trade embargo against Iran. In this dispute, the nonaligned states are siding with Japan and the EU and have clearly stated that they will continue to carry on business with Iran. Additionally, nonaligned Iran is using this economic rivalry to its advantage by strengthening its ties with the EU and Japan in order to neutralize U.S. economic pressure.<sup>41</sup>

38. For hints about the application of equidistance, see Agaev and Krylov, 90. For detailed information about the equidistance theory, see R. Petkovic, "Non-Alignment and the Equidistance Theory," *Review of International Affairs* 25, no. 581 (June 1974): 8-10.

39. For a careful analysis of the role and impact of the Asian economic crisis in association with the policies of the United States and the IMF, see S. Pearlestein, "At the Economic Summit on Asia: A Search for the 'Right Policy,'" *Washington Post*, 21 November 1997. On the role and impact of IMF in the developing world from a nonaligned perspective, refer to Agaev and Krylov, 92.

40. Kumar, 51.

41. M. Z. Hague, "US Trade Embargo and Iran," *Economic Review* (Pakistan) 26, no. 6 (June 1995): 9.

The above instrumental and intrinsic values of the Non-Aligned Movement and its strategy have led many developing countries to call for a strengthening of NAM despite the end of the Cold War. In this regard, many NAM members, such as India, Indonesia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, associate the notion of nonalignment with economic development within the framework of the UN.<sup>42</sup> In particular, Tehran continues to urge support for strengthening the Non-Aligned Movement and for the application of non-aligned policies.<sup>43</sup>

### Cultural Identity

In addition to advocating political independence and economic equality, nonaligned states historically have sought to protect their national cultural identity.<sup>44</sup> More recently, this issue has become bound up in the global telecommunications revolution and the power of the international media. Many leaders of NAM claim that international news agencies (which are predominantly Western) broadcast not only news but also Western socio-political values, judgments, and traditions.<sup>45</sup>

Most Third World states established radio and TV stations mainly to promote national unity and identity. Many stations, however, cannot compete with their foreign counterparts, which promote foreign values. As one observer highlights, for the revolutionary Iranian clerics, Western television is a stronger foe than Western military power. The increase in satellite ownership by citizens of Third World countries has exposed them to music videos, *Beavis and Butthead*, and *Baywatch*. This led Iranian mullahs to declare war on the "Western cultural onslaught," as its highest-ranking cleric wrote: "Satellite dishes infect Islam with 'cheap alien culture' and

42. P. S. Jayaramu, "New World Order, Non-Aligned Movement and India," *Journal of International Affairs* 48, no. 1/2 (January-June 1992): 23-30; Soedibyo, 45; Iran News Agency, "Iran's Velayati Addresses NAM Meeting on UN Reform, Economic Development," 9 April 1997, British Broadcasting Corporation Summary of World Broadcasts, from Lexis-Nexus.

43. "Iran Urges Support for Non-Aligned Movement," *Africa News*, 4 September 1996.

44. Singham and Hune, 25.

45. "Non-Aligned Movement: Abuja Hosts Cominac V," *West Africa*, no. 4117 (September 1996): 147-8; "Non-Aligned Movement: Cominac in Abuja II," *West Africa*, no. 4117 (September 1996): 151; and H. I. Schiller, "Mechanisms of Cultural Imperialism," in *The Non-Aligned Movement in World Politics*, ed. A. W. Singham (Westport, Conn.: Lawrence Hill, 1977).

spread 'the family-devastating diseases of the West.'<sup>46</sup> This cultural struggle has even permeated the toy market, with the new Sara doll—one attempt of Iran to resist the “cultural corruption” from the West. The Sara doll was developed as competition for Barbie, an American woman who never wants to get pregnant and have babies. Sara is dressed in modest Islamic costumes as opposed to the Barbies found in Tehran shops wearing only revealing swimsuits.<sup>47</sup> The final result of the struggle between foreign and domestic media and products is a cultural duality between those citizens who maintain their indigenous values and others who adopt foreign ones.<sup>48</sup>

In response to this problem, most nonaligned countries endorse the New World Information and Communication Order. This “organization” was formed by NAM in order to decrease dependency on the news, information, and cultural media of the developed world by advocating cooperation among non-aligned states' media systems. This is accomplished within the spirit of South-South cooperation in improving the dissemination of news and information within nonaligned countries at national, regional, and global levels.<sup>49</sup> In practice, this has meant linking radio communication among the non-aligned countries instead of depending solely on sources from developed countries and increasing domestic film production, despite numerous financial and technical difficulties.<sup>50</sup>

46. P. Waldman, “Iran Fights New Foe—Western Television: For Clerics, Satellites Carrying MTV Are Deadlier than Guns,” *Wall Street Journal*, 8 August 1994.

47. Associated Press, “Iranians Pit Doll against ‘Evil’ Barbie,” *Orlando Sentinel*, 25 October 1996, A6.

48. See Nana S. Sutresna, “The Non-Aligned Movement in the 1990s: Reorientation and Resurgence,” *Strategic Review*, no. 32 (January 1995): 41–9, esp. 49. On the historical impact of the media in the Third World, see P. Ivacic, “Decolonization of Information,” *Socialist Thought and Practice* 16, no. 9 (1976); D. R. Mankekar, *One Way Free Flow: Neo-Colonialism Via News Media* (New Delhi: Indian Book Company, 1978); W. Pisarek, “The Communication Explosion and the Third World,” *Communication* 10, no. 10 (1975): 21–3; and H. Schiller, “Genesis of the Free Flow of Information Principles: The Imposition of Communication Domination,” *Democratic Journalist* 4 (1977): 7–12.

49. Regarding South-South cooperation, see “Non-Aligned Movement: Cominac in Abuja II,” 151; and “Non-Aligned Movement: Abuja Hosts Cominac V,” 147.

50. Regarding the emphasis on self-reliance and South-South cooperation of LDCs as one of the principles requested at Colombia, see “Non-Aligned Movement: The Call from Colombia,” 129.

### Universalism and Internationalization

The NAM principles—world peace and disarmament, independence, economic equality, and cultural identity—indicate that nonalignment is a strategy by which a weaker state seeks to protect its national identity and independence in a world ruled by stronger states. Nonalignment strategy, however, also has a wider international aspect, which is a belief in universalism and internationalization. The latter refers to the efforts of the non-aligned countries to dominate the agenda of many international meetings, conferences, and organizations with their common economic, political, and social problems. In fact, one can argue that their foreign policies have succeeded in internationalizing their domestic agendas.<sup>51</sup> This foreign policy by weaker states is unprecedented in the history of the modern state system.

The most pronounced symbol of commitment by nonaligned states to universalism is their strong support for the UN system,<sup>52</sup> despite the difficulties created by veto power and the weighted voting practices that favor the great powers.<sup>53</sup> NAM states are generally committed to universalism in diplomacy and internationalization of those local problems that they consider to be too large to be handled in a national or even regional context.

There are three reasons for general support of the UN system. First, NAM and the UN have similar universal goals, particularly regarding the protection of weaker states vis-à-vis stronger ones. Second, the UN has served as the main meeting place for the nonaligned countries outside the structure of NAM.<sup>54</sup> Finally, the UN has been the most important forum through which the nonaligned states present their views on a variety of global issues to the great powers.

51. Rachmadi, 51–8. For a historical viewpoint, see J. Vrhovec, “Non-Alignment: A Universal Policy,” *Review of International Affairs* 30, no. 694 (March 1979): 1–4.

52. On the recent contribution of NAM to international organizations, see Syatauw, 144–6; A. Bakovic, “Non-Alignment and the United Nations,” *Review of International Affairs* 30, no. 711 (November 1979): 10–2; and K. P. Saksena, “Non-Alignment and the United Nations,” *International Studies* 20, no. 1–2 (January–June 1981): 81–101.

53. On the need for reform in the UN according to the Non-Aligned Movement, see “The Jakarta Message,” *Asiaweek*, 18 September 1992, 36; and Rachmadi, 55. On the historical veto problem in the UN, see Claude, 141–62.

54. In fact, the nonaligned states have conducted a great deal of their day-to-day activities and functions through their regular ambassadorial meetings at the UN.



In fact, the UN system serves the goals of nonaligned states so well that they have not established an international organization that would compete with it. It is interesting to note that during the life of NAM, the composition of the UN has changed from mostly European to mainly non-European members. The Non-Aligned Movement has helped change the functional focus of the UN from conflict resolution to economic development.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, the nonaligned countries succeeded in coordinating their actions within the UN system and formed a rather formidable voting bloc in the General Assembly, so that all great powers have to lobby their representatives. In fact, some have argued that through nonalignment, the developing world has democratized international relations, particularly the policy-making process within the UN.<sup>56</sup>

### Nonalignment in the Post-Cold War Period

Although the seeds of NAM were sowed during the hottest period of the Cold War, political developments indicate that the Non-Aligned Movement and the strategy of nonalignment have a life of their own in the post-Cold War period. NAM's head-of-state summits and lower-level meetings are still held as usual and with the same fanfare.<sup>57</sup> The main difference is that no attention is paid to ideological variations among the great powers, since the world is no longer divided across an ideological East-West axis. Nevertheless, there is much more emphasis on North-South issues and the division of the world based on economic development and quality of life. In fact, one can argue that NAM is trying to play the role of a union against management, with modest success.<sup>58</sup>

The evidence suggests not only that nonalignment still functions as an international movement but also that it has a role as a foreign policy strat-

55. For the significance of economic issues to NAM's new agenda, see Budimir Loncar, "Priorities and Preoccupations of the Non-Aligned Movement," *Review of International Affairs* 41, no. 974 (November 1990): 3-7. Also see Winfred Hutabarat, "NAM Has Taken on New Dimensions," *Indonesia Business Weekly*, 17 September 1993, 9.

56. Vrhunec, 16.

57. Winfred Hutabarat, "NAM: One Year After," *Indonesia Business Weekly*, 17 September 1993, 4.

58. On the notion that NAM acts like a union spokesman or "main guardian of the Third World," see Syatauw, 135.

egy in the post-Cold War era.<sup>59</sup> Although there are no more ideological poles from which one can claim independence, the nonalignment strategy provides a weak state with a variety of policy options in a divided world. Despite the lack of major ideological divisions, there are still clear global divisions across cultural, economic, and political issues that group states with shared interests.<sup>60</sup>

During the Cold War, many advocates of nonalignment strategy tried to avoid a costly direct involvement in the superpower conflict, but they indirectly benefited from the global rivalry between great powers. NAM slogans suggesting that these states were in neither the Eastern nor the Western camps actually translated into their obtaining certain benefits from both sides. With the exception of states like Saudi Arabia and Cuba, most NAM members used the above general policy and gained at least some economic and military assistance from both blocs.

One can argue that there are now more clashing interests in the increasingly interdependent world than there were during the Cold War.<sup>61</sup> In fact, one student of international politics predicted more conflicts as the result of "the clashing of civilizations" by focusing mainly on the cultural/religious dimension of interactions.<sup>62</sup> One of the shortcomings of this theory is that it ignores the other sources of conflicts: commercial, economic, environmental, and so on.

The main issue is that the nature, scope, and sources of conflicts have changed. In the past, superpowers mainly focused on security issues, and the conflicts between the two camps were relatively few although intense. The quantity and quality of the conflicts were more or less managed by the superpowers in order to avoid the possibility of an accidental major war, which easily could have become nuclear.

59. For brief views of several experts on NAM, see "NAM: What the Experts Think," *Economic and Business Review Indonesia* 21 (29 August 1992): 12-3.

60. For a clear analysis of the economic triangle, see Dick K. Nanto, *The U.S.-EC-Japan Trade Triangle* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 4 June 1992).

61. For a thorough discussion of concepts of interdependence and autonomy, see Youri Devuyt, "Transatlantic Trade Policy: U.S. Market Opening Strategies," *CWES European Policy Paper Series* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Center for West European Studies, 1995).

62. See Samuel Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993): 56-73; and idem, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

There were also conflicts within each ideological bloc, some of which were resolved by the overwhelming power of the bloc leader in the interest of the community, in order to maintain unity against the threat of the opposing bloc. Examples include the Soviet invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 and U.S. pressures on the British, French, and Israelis to cease hostilities against Egypt during the Suez War in 1956. Other intra-bloc disputes were either resolved quickly or marginalized in order to avoid a fractured alliance. Examples of the marginalized conflicts include those between the Russians and other nationalities in the former Soviet republics. In the West, Washington marginalized the French decision to leave NATO in the 1960s. It also minimized the Greek-Turkish conflict over Cyprus to avoid a fractured NATO. During the Cold War era, generally speaking, the interbloc rather than intrabloc clashes were highlighted and received attention.

Since there is no more global threat, the previously unresolved, marginalized, or ignored regional clashes, disputes, or conflicts are coming to the surface, causing many regional problems on a variety of issues. The bulk of the clashes are not limited to security issues anymore; they entail cultural, economic, environmental, legal, and political problems. The old bloc politics have gone, replaced by new ones. The past military power centers are overshadowed by economic ones. The complexity of the current world order is due to the fact that the economic tripolar structure exists simultaneously with a political unipolar system as well as a bipolar military balance between the United States and Russia.

Although there is cooperation among the three global economic poles on some issues, there is fierce competition over possessing natural and human resources for the production of goods and services, securing market shares, and developing new technology. This economic competition for controlling resources, markets, and technology is reminiscent of the traditional rivalry between NATO and the Warsaw Pact for spheres of influence around the world, especially in the Third World.

In an interdependent world, some blocs overlap, since major powers have variety in their bloc membership, each for a different purpose. For instance, the United States and Canada (from NAFTA) are both members of the G-7, which includes the major European industrial powers as well as Japan.

These two states are also members of NATO, which excludes Japan. Nevertheless, the United States has a special bilateral relation with Japan in addition to a multilateral one in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and in the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC), which excludes European powers. Beyond APEC, the United States also has multilateral ties with Australia and New Zealand (through the Australia, New Zealand, and United States Pacific Security Pact, or ANZUS), both of which are a part of the commonwealth that includes Canada and the United Kingdom but excludes the United States.

Thus, there is a complex network of alliances, blocs, and international organizations connecting major powers to one another at different levels and on a variety of issues. Bloc members are facing one another on a number of fronts, not limited to purely security issues anymore. The world has truly become a complex political environment, which seems an anarchical society to some experts.<sup>63</sup>

The examples of significant clashes among the DCs, especially the major powers, include:

the growing division between the United States and European governments about the extraterritorial impact of U.S. laws on European companies that invest in certain countries;

the American-Japanese controversies over the criminal behavior of U.S. servicemen in Okinawa, the issue of closing bases, and the Japanese closed-market strategy for food products;

the increasing objections of the French government to the Hollywood movie industry for overprojecting the Anglo-American culture and values in France;

the Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand complaints about the gradual loss of their national identity to the rapidly growing American symbolic presence in their respective countries;

63. For example, see Hedley Ball, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

the intensified economic competition among the multinational corporations of the United States, Japan, and Germany for global and domestic market shares and resources;

cases of crossnational industrial espionage among the U.S., European, and Japanese companies;

mutual security espionage between close allies like the United States and Israel;

Canadian-American environmental disputes over the issue of acid rain in central Canada due to lower standards of U.S. industries in the Midwest;

Sino-American disputes over the Chinese human rights record, unfair business practices, and sales of missiles to rogue states; and

the growing gap between Washington and Moscow regarding the expansion of NATO, the oil of the Caspian Sea region, ethnic conflicts in the former Soviet republics, the Russian arms/technology sales to rogue states, and so on.

Thus, the world is not a totally peaceful place yet, although the probability of global nuclear annihilation has decreased to almost zero. The old conflicts have been replaced by newer ones. Many of the old alliances (i.e., the Warsaw Pact, Central Treaty Organization, and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) have collapsed, while others (i.e., NATO and ANZUS) are in a transitional period. As the saying goes, countries do not have permanent friends or foes, but they have permanent interests. The aforementioned examples imply the obvious conclusion that where there is an interest, there is a possibility of conflict. It is the very existence of such clashes and conflicts that provide the nonalignment strategy with a window of opportunity. By balancing the interest of one power against another, a smaller state can survive and even thrive if the conditions are suitable. Therefore, in contrast to some of the policies of great powers, nonalignment strategy is not conflictual in nature.<sup>64</sup>

Beyond their borders, most NAM states will try to maintain and expand

64. For a similar view of the nonconflictual nature of nonalignment see Djiwandono, 368.

mutually beneficial ties with states in the three major global poles of the economic strategic triangle. These DCs are the main consumers of LDCs' commodities and natural resources. The export of the latter is the main source of hard currency for the developing world, which is economically vulnerable to shifts in the international market and price structure.

The international trade patterns suggest that approximately 75 percent of total global trade occurs among the DCs (North-North trade), about 10 percent among the LDCs (South-South trade), and almost 15 percent between the rich and poor nations (North-South trade). Thus, the DCs as a group are in a power position compared to the LDCs, but the national interests of the great powers do not necessarily coincide with one another. This provides a policy option for LDCs that pursue a nonalignment strategy and are well connected to the global economic strategic triangle. If these minor powers play their cards right, they can acquire some policy advantages. The emphasis on the divisions among the great powers, however, does not ignore the fact that most DCs at the international commercial, economic, and technical conferences have a tendency to take similar positions as a group, which puts the LDCs (despite their significant numbers) in a disadvantaged position.

For most LDCs and nonaligned states, playing their cards right means diversifying their trade partners, as well as their sources of technology and capital, in order to avoid overdependency on any one foreign power. This strategy is particularly important for those Third World states that find themselves in a direct or indirect struggle with a major power. For instance, the Brazilian government has significantly increased its economic ties to the EU and Japan in the last decade, in order to counterbalance U.S. economic presence and influence in the country. The aim of this policy is to check the economic presence of Washington in a country that falls within the traditional U.S. sphere of economic and political influence. Similar policy goals motivated India to strengthen its economic ties with the United States and, consequently, to keep its policy options open by playing its new U.S. card against its historical European and Japanese cards.

In sum, the nonalignment strategy and movement will continue to function in the post-Cold War era, as adjustments are made in making them

more applicable to the current global conditions. In fact, the nonalignment policy will be at center stage in the success or failure of most Third World states' attempts to survive and nurture their regime and to protect their autonomy and policy-making independence as far as possible in an increasingly interdependent world.