

E-Content

Non-Alignment Movement (NAM)

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Introduction

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- The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is a group of states which are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc.
- It has **120 members** as on April 2018 comprising 53 countries from Africa, 39 from Asia, 26 from Latin America and the Caribbean and 2 from Europe (Belarus, Azerbaijan).
- The organization was founded in Belgrade in 1961, and was largely conceived by India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru; Indonesia's first president, Sukarno; Egypt's second president, Gamal Abdel Nasser; Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah; and Yugoslavia's President, Josip Broz Tito.

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Why was it started

- After the Second World War, the world was divided into two blocs West and East led by USA and USSR respectively and the cold war between them was started. There were some countries like India who were newly independent of colonial rule wanted to be sovereign.
- Thus, in 1955, in Bandung, newly independent states of Africa and Asia gathered to inaugurate a new approach to inter-state relations at the **Asia-Africa Bandung Conference** held in Indonesia.
- This Conference gathered 29 Heads of States belonging to the first post-colonial generation of leaders in pursuing out joint policies in international relations.
- The principles that would govern relations among large and small nations, known as the "Ten Principles of Bandung", were proclaimed at that Conference.

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- Such principles were adopted later as the main goals and objectives of the policy of non alignment.
- Six years after Bandung, The Non-Aligned Movement was founded and held its first conference (the Belgrade Conference) in 1961 under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Sukarno of Indonesia.
- The Conference was attended by 25 countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Yemen, Myanmar, Cambodia, Srilanka, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yugoslavia.
- The Founders of NAM have preferred to declare it as a movement but not an organization in order to avoid bureaucratic implications of the latter.

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- The purpose of the organization was enumerated in Havana Declaration of 1979 to ensure "the national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of non-aligned countries" in their struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, and all forms of foreign subjugation.
- During the cold war era the NAM played a vital role in stabilizing the world order and preserving peace and security. Non alignment of NAM doesn't mean the neutrality of state on global issues, it was always a peaceful intervention in world politics.
- Beside this objective, it also supported the struggle against imperialism in all its forms and manifestations; the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, foreign occupation and domination; disarmament; non-interference into the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among all nations; rejection of the use or threat of use of force in international relations; the strengthening of the United Nations; the democratization of international relations .

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The Ten Principles of Bandung

- As J.L Nehru was founding members, the principles of NAM was largely guided by Panchsheel principles, some of them are:
- Respect of fundamental human rights and of the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
- Respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
- Recognition of the equality among all races and of the equality among all nations, both large and small.
- Non-intervention or non-interference into the internal affairs of another -country.
- Respect of the right of every nation to defend itself, either individually or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
- Refraining from carrying out or threatening to carry out aggression, or from using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
- Peaceful solution of all international conflicts in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
- Promotion of mutual interests and of cooperation.
- Respect of justice and of international obligations.

NAM in Cold War Era

- **Against Apartheid:** The evil of apartheid was massively prevalent in African countries like South Africa, its was on the agenda of NAM right from first conference. During 2nd NAM conference at Cairo the government of South Africa was warned against the discriminatory practices of apartheid.
- **Disarmament:** The Non-aligned Movement repeatedly comes out for maintenance of peace, 'the cessation of arms race and the peaceful coexistence of all States. In the General Assembly, India submitted a draft resolution declaring that the use of nuclear weapons would be against the charter of the United Nations and crime against humanity and should therefore be prohibited.

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- **UNSC reforms:** Right from its inception NAM was in the favour of UNSC reforms, it was against the domination of US and USSR. It wanted the representation of third world countries to make UNSC more democratic. Members echoed with same demand at 17th NAM conference at Venezuela.
- **Failed to resolve regional tensions:** In the era of cold war the tension in South Asia escalated due to regional conflict between India- China and India-Pakistan. NAM failed to avoid tensions in the region, that further led to the nuclearisation of the region.

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India's Position

- India being a founder and largest member in NAM was an active participant in NAM meetings till 1970s but India's inclination towards erstwhile USSR created confusions in smaller members. It led to the weakening of NAM and small nations drifted towards either US or USSR.
- Further disintegration of USSR led the unipolar world order dominated by US. India's New Economic Policy and inclination towards US raised questions over India's seriousness over non alignment.
- Prime Minister of India skipped the 17th Non Aligned Movement (NAM) summit held in Venezuela in 2016, it was only second such instance when Head of a state didn't participate in NAM conference.

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- Moreover, NAM continued losing relevance for India in a unipolar world, especially after the founding members failed to support India during crisis. For instance, during 1962 War with China, Ghana and Indonesia, adopted explicitly pro-China positions.
- During 1965 and 1971 wars, Indonesia and Egypt took an anti India stance and supported Pakistan.
- India in particular, but also most other NAM countries, have integrated themselves to varying degrees within the liberal economic order and have benefited from it.
- India is a **member of the G20** and has declared itself as a **nuclear weapons power** and has for all practical purposes abandoned the call for global nuclear disarmament.

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- India has also engaged itself with new and old global powers. India joining the **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue**, a coalition seen by many as a counterforce to China's rise in the Indo-Pacific and **Shanghai cooperation organisation** led by China shown India's balancing approach in new world order.
- India is striving hard for a multipolar world order and asserting itself as one of the player. Multi polar world order is very much closed to NAM principles.

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Relevance of NAM

- NAM continues to hold relevance as a platform and due to its principles.
- **World peace** - NAM has played an active role in preserving world peace. It still stands by its founding principles, idea and purpose i.e. to establish the peaceful and prosperous world. It prohibited invasion of any country, promoted disarmament and a sovereign world order.
- **Territorial integrity and sovereignty** - NAM stands with this principle and proved its repeated relevance with the idea of preserving the independence of every nation.

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