

An Assessment of Non-Aligned Movement in Theory and Practice: Africa and India Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

African states and colonialists are like Siamese twins conjugated at the political, social and economic parts such that even after the African states were granted independence, their political economy were still dependent and pejoratively tied to the apron of the colonialists

Therefore, when independent African states announced that they would pursue a policy of Non-alignment with the super powers, it was like the dawn of a new era for the African continent. This paper examines therefore the extent to which Non-alignment allowed these states to have absolute control of their domestic and international affairs.

The paper analyzed the concept of Non-alignment, its origins and relations to African states. While some scholars have concluded that the Non-Alignment policy was a toothless bulldog, just an ordinary theoretical concept and was practically not practiced; the cold war years and subsequent years, was, where African policy of Non-alignment was to be tested practically. Against the position of these scholars, the paper assesses if the Non-Alignment was indeed a worthless exploration, and its impact on the development of African states

Keywords: *Economy: Diplomacy: Democracy: Independence: Capitalism: Socialism.*

INTRODUCTION

Africa is the second largest of the earth seven continents, covering 13% of the world populations; it is bounded by the Atlantic in the West, the Indian and Mediterranean on the North, and connected with Asia by the Sinai Peninsula. It consists of fifty-three (55) countries out of which forty nine are in the mainland and six were island (Encarta: 2008)

African states supplied 98% of world diamond, 80% of world cobalt, 75% of world Sisal, 70% of palm oil, 50% or more of world gold, 20% of world Manganese, 20% of world copper and tin, and vast Uranium sites in Congo & South Africa, yet the whole of sub-Saharan Africa with population of 450 million inhabitants has a GDP equal to Belgium, a small E.U country with less than 12 million people, and the whole of Africa with approximately 700 million people having a GDP equal to Spain, a single EU country with about 45-50 million people

She was termed the 'dark continent' by the Eurocentric scholars meaning a continent without civilization or any historical scorecard. This was contrary to Charles Darwin view in his

piece "Descent of Man (1871)" where he suggested that "Africa was the cradle of mankind', His theory was corroborated by Louis Leaky who expounded that the first contribution of Africa to human progress is the evolution of man himself. (Falola: 2000)

Until the beginning of independence first by Libya in 1951, Ghana and Guinea in 1957 and 1958 respectively (Lowe, 1997: p424) and Seventeen other countries in 1960, a year Olajide Aluko has christened "Africa's year of anus mirabilis" in other words the year of Africa independence, since then Africa states had secured political independence in totality. (Aluko, 1987)

Africa is one of the most endowed regions of the world, yet it is one of the most backward and poorest continents in the world today, half of the population of the continents is living below the poverty line on less than a dollar a day. Africa depended on foreign aid, and she is the most indebted as well as the most marginalized and fragmented region of the world. There were wars and political crises in virtually all the regions of the continent with cataclysmic

consequences. All these crises have had negative economic consequences on the political, social and economic life of the people. (Omu & Otoide: 2002)

With the prevalent internal problems within each state of the immediate post-independence era still been tackled, the Cold War further exacerbate the situation; it influenced the emergence of authoritarian regime in the form of one-party regime or military regimes. African states had no choice but to preserve what's left of their independence struggle: there sovereignty and sovereign status as an independent state. It was on this basis they adopted the Non-alignment theory, the only tool capable of securing their independence from the Cold War architects

NON-ALIGNMENT AS A THEORY

The term Non-alignment was first coined by George Liska who used to describe it "as the policy of the states who decides not to join either of the two power blocs in world politics of post war years". However, Non-alignment as a theory in international relations was developed by Indian First Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, way before India became independent in 1947. On his entry into the provisional government in 1946, he declared with conviction that 'India would put as much distance between itself and any political groups of blocs, which were directed at one another in conflict and which in the past as in the future led to world catastrophe...' but it was while Nehru was giving a speech on Dec 9 1958, that he used the nomenclature, Non-Alignment publicly as a core tenet of India's Foreign Policy.

In his word he said "when we say our policy is of Non-alignment, obviously we mean Non-alignment within military bloc. It is not a single native policy. It is a positive one... we don't align ourselves with either bloc.... The policy itself can be a policy of acting according to our best judgment, and furthering the principle objectives and ideas that we have...." (Rasool & Pulwama: 2013)

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was created and founded during the collapse of the colonial system and the independence struggles of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and other regions of the world and at the height of the Cold War. During the early days of the Movement, its actions were a key factor in the decolonization process, which led later to the attainment of freedom and independence by

many countries and peoples and to the founding of tens of new sovereign States. Throughout its history, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has played a fundamental role in the preservation of world peace and security

While some meetings with a third-world perspective were held before 1955, historians consider that the Bandung Asian-African Conference is the most immediate antecedent to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement. This Conference was held in Bandung on April 18-24, 1955 and gathered 29 Heads of States belonging to the first post-colonial generation of leaders from the two continents with the aim of identifying and assessing world issues at the time and 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. Such principles were adopted later as the main goals and objectives of the policy of non-alignment. The fulfillment of those principles became the essential criterion for Non-Aligned Movement membership; it is what was known as the "quintessence of the Movement" until the early 1990s.

In 1960, in the light of the results achieved in Bandung, the creation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was given a decisive boost during the Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly, during which 17 new African and Asian countries were admitted. A key role was played in this process by the then Heads of State and Government Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia and Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, who later became the founding fathers of the movement and its emblematic leaders.

Six years after Bandung, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was founded on a wider geographical basis at the First Summit Conference of Belgrade, which was held on September 1-6, 1961. 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, and 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. The membership criteria formulated during the Preparatory Conference to the Belgrade Summit (Cairo, 1961) show that the Movement was not conceived to play a passive role in international politics but to formulate its own positions in an independent manner so as to reflect the interests of its members.

Thus, the primary of objectives of the non-aligned countries focused on the support of self-determination, national independence and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States; opposition to apartheid; non-adherence to multilateral military pacts and the independence of non-aligned countries from great power or block influences and rivalries; the struggle against imperialism in all its forms and manifestations; the struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism, 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; socioeconomic development and the restructuring of the international economic system; as well as international cooperation on an equal footing. Since its inception, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has waged a ceaseless battle to ensure that peoples being oppressed by foreign occupation and domination can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries played a key role in the struggle for the establishment of a new international economic order that allowed all the peoples of the world to make use of their wealth and natural resources and provided a wide platform for a fundamental change in international economic relations and the economic emancipation of the countries of the South.

During its nearly 50 years of existence, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has gathered a growing number of States and liberation movements which, in spite of their ideological, political, economic, social and cultural diversity, have accepted its founding principles and primary objectives and shown their readiness to realize them. Historically, the non-aligned countries have shown their ability to overcome their differences and found a common ground for action that leads to mutual

cooperation and the upholding of their shared values.

The Bandung conference was held in Indonesia in 1955, it was a great historical event for the formerly colonized world, Twenty Nine (29) Asian and African countries were in attendance, significantly excluding Israel, South Africa, Taiwan and North and South Korea.

The Bandung conference eventually led to the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961.

Many Asian and African countries became independent after the war. They were born as nations in the midst of cold war rivalries between the Western and Eastern camps respectively led by the then two super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union.

Not only did the superpowers established political and ideological camps, they also setup a military blocs

The Soviet Union together with its East European allies formed the Warsaw Pact in 1953 as a counter-point to the military alliance of the Western powers called NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization led by the United (Shiviji: 2012)

The Non Aligned Movement was the second international organization, after the United Nations, with most members. It represents 55% of the world population and its member states hold almost Two-Thirds of the seats in the UN General Assembly. The Non Aligned Movement at the Bandung Conference discussed primarily subject related to Colonialism, Race Discrimination, General Disarmament and ban on nuclear weapons. (Rauch 2008)

PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

Five conditions were formulated and had to be fulfilled by any country seeking to participate in the Non-Aligned Movement, they are outlined below... (Singham & Hune: 1986)

- The country should operate an independent policy based on co-existence of states and non-alignment or demonstrate a tendency towards implementing such a policy.
- The country should permanently support national liberation movements.
- The country should not be member of a multilateral military alliance in the context of the conflict between the great powers.

- In the event that the country has agreed bilateral alliance with a great power, this alliance should not have been entered into in the context of the great power conflict.
- In the event that the country has entrusted use of military base to a foreign power, this concession should not have been made in the context of a great power.

There were also the so called 5 principles of peaceful coexistence to be adopted by all members of the movement, they are: (Singham & Hune: 1986). These are; Mutual respect for other nation's territorial integrity; Non – interference in the internal affairs of other country; equality and mutual support; peaceful Coexistence, and non-Aggression

From these five conditions and five principles, the concept of Non-alignment can be clearly defined as thus:

- Non-alignment means not getting involved in the conflict of the great powers.
- Non-alignment means recognizing all states as having the same rights and therefore rejecting any involvement in the internal affairs of other countries.
- Non-alignment means operating a fundamentally peaceful foreign policy. (Rauch:2008)

However, popular African historian, Said Abdul Azeez defined a Non-aligned state as “one that has no binding military, political or economic ties to a power center outside its borders. It formulates its foreign and domestic policies in so far as it can independently of any outside consideration of allies or bloc leaders. It has no obligations other than to its own definitions of its national interest, though it may carefully consider the effects of its own actions on the other state if it chooses to do so” (Said: 1968)

NON-ALIGNMENT IN PRACTICE

The common worries and concerns of scholars and diplomats are whether African states were able to follow and act on the Non-Alignment policy they adopted and accepted openly and agreed to pursue. Many African states have been hugely criticized for proclaiming Non-alignment but not acting it.

The question therefore was how a state that practice Non-alignment behaves in her relationship with other states. Emphasis should be made here that not only did most Independent African states at independence

proclaimed to be Non-aligned they even adopted it as a core part of their foreign policy principles. Regardless of this, African leaders had been castigated on their position of being a member of Non-align movement because they still largely depended on the super powers aid and techno-scientific support.

Ghana foreign policy generally has been centered on non-alignment and the practice of positive neutrality and specifically within the West Africa sub region, the principle of good neighborliness. This enables Ghana to restore peace in a warring country as seen in the Ivorian Crises well until President Mill adopted a policy of “Isolation”(Sarpong: 2013)

Kwame Nkrumah speaking in the aftermath of Ghana's Independence claimed that “Ghana's foreign policy was based on Dignity, Peace, Friendship and Non-alignment. This policy was conceived in the context of the atomic arms race and the Cold War. However, Ghana's policy of Non-alignment did not imply indifference to the issues in the world, nor did it mean isolationism, it also did not mean anti-Western or anti-Eastern Bloc” (Botwe-Asamoh: 2005, p142)

From the Western point of view Nkrumah was tagged to be “Pro-East”, he forged and had romantic alliance with the East and he had Socialist agenda of a United State Of Africa, a form of political and economic unification of the African continent while vehemently opposing multinational entities. (Talton: 2013) His romantic ideas also manifested in his speeches and opinion for the establishment of the United States of Africa (Olatunde, 2013)

South Africa initial reaction to the Non-alignment policy and the movement was indirect and began with the struggle against apartheid, where they played a fundamental role against the racist regime. South Africa had been at the core of the Movement effort to uphold the principles of freedom, justice and equality. Following the first democratic elections, South Africa joined NAM in 1994, while the support gathered from the Movement in its apartheid struggle influenced their Non-alignment stance, a thorough analysis points to its foreign policy stance as yet another factor. The main thrust of South Africa foreign policy is the pursuit of its national interest and priorities. Firstly, in the conduct of its international relations, South Africa is committed to garner support for its domestic priorities, to promote the interest of the African Continent, democracy and human rights, uphold justice and international law in

relations between nations, seek the peaceful resolutions of conflicts and promote economic development through regional and international co-operation... by adhering to and strongly supporting a multilateral, rules based system. (Chhiba: 2011)

In 2014, she openly advocated for a peaceful resolution of the ongoing conflict in the country of Syria, and further claim they are committed to the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, freedom and justice. (Mashabane: 2014)

In Kenya, Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta delivering a speech on occasion of Kenya's independence from Britain In 1963 declared: "the aim of my government which starts today is not to be pro-left or pro-right. We shall pursue the task of nation building in friendship with the rest of the world. Nobody will be allowed to tell us, to tell me: you must be friendly to so and so. We shall remain free and whoever wants friendship with us must be a real friend." (Talton; 2013)

In the case of Nigeria, Tafawa Balewa speaking in the House of Reps Debate said "Nigeria shall not blindly follow the lead of anyone; so far as it is possible, the policy on each occasion will be selected with proper independent objectivity in Nigeria's national interest. We consider it wrong for Nigeria to associate itself with any other power bloc, but that Nigeria will follow an independent Line" (House Of Representative Debates, 20th Aug 1960, Lagos)

EXTENT TO WHICH INDIA AND AFRICA WERE PRACTICALLY ALLIGNED

Even India whose major foreign policy centered on Non-alignment and perceived it in New Delhi as an ideal vehicle for drawing nearer to these goals, which were: to preserve Indian's independence and ability to act; to maximize Indian's possibilities for influence and; to make India into a global player, with a voice that will command attention in the shaping of world order. (Rauch: 2008)

There is no evidence of strict adherence to the principles of Non-alignment in India since 1947, although colonized by the British, and operated a Multi-party system, India up until 1990, had a One-party system similar to that of Socialism, the unchallenged Indian National Congress or Congress Party as it was fondly called had been in power since independence. It was recently that the BJP was formed as a second party. Also, since independence, India had pursued a closed

and quasi-socialist economy. Furthermore, the Soviet Union has been a good friend of India since independence and was even taken further in 1972 to all intents and purposes an alliance partner. She joined the Nuclear Arms race and detonated her first Nuclear weapon in 1974. Lastly, there was a closer relationship between India and the People's Republic of China. (Rauch: 2008)

Nigerian historian Olajide Aluko had defined Non-alignment as equidistance between the two power blocs, and if there is a tint towards any of the power bloc, such nation is said to be either Pro-west or Pro-East and at therefore, such nation will be deemed to be aligned and therefore not Non-aligned, (Ifidon: 2010;) if this ample definition captures the meaning of Non alignment, in this case it would be correct to safe and correct to deduce that India from 1947 had been Pro-east and Non-aligned.

African states have also had to go through this surgical analysis of its foreign policy posture in a bid to ascertain if she practically pursued her Non-alignment objectives. Nigeria, had always declared that Africa is the centerpiece of her foreign policy, and had proclaimed a policy of non-alignment. However, because of her traditional ties with Great Britain and her extensive economic relations with the western, Nigeria was de facto Western-oriented. (Garba: 1987: p162).

Akinyemi in his book 'Foreign policy and Federalism' further stated that Nigeria foreign policy between 1960-1967 was politically and economically aligned, that it was to the desire of Nigeria political leaders to maintain close ties with the West. (Akinyemi; 1979 Pg150-151)

There were several strong beliefs and reasons that made several scholars to conclude that Nigeria was "aligned" from 1960-1966. The aforementioned agreement signed and reached by Nigeria political leaders buttressed and justify the fact that Nigeria is practically aligned

- Nigeria signed the Anglo-Nigeria Defense Pact or Agreement with Great Britain in 1958.
- It established an unbalanced pattern of diplomatic relations with the outside world as she placed restrictions on the number of diplomats in the Soviet Embassy and not on the American Embassy.
- There were restrictions to travel to any Soviet Blocs countries and on the import of Communist literatures.

- Four (4) out of the first Five (5) diplomatic missions established outside Africa were in the West, a Soviet mission was only established in Lagos only in the late 1961 and even by early 1965, even while Nigeria had 11 missions in countries in the West, she still had only one in the East.
- Nigeria sought and received aid from the United States, precisely \$80Million
- Nigeria's Non-attendance at the conference of the Non-Aligned Countries at Belgrade in 1961.
- Nigeria's rejection of the Troika Principles for the administration of the UN proposed by the Soviet Union (Ifidon: 2010)

However, when the Civil War broke out in Nigeria, the warmth with the West did not survive. Nigeria was engaged in a struggle for the very survival of the country and Nigerian policy makers had expected that, because the US had gone through its own Civil War, "to preserve the Union", it would be sympathetic to Nigeria's determination to maintain her national unity, but both the American government and her public opinion disappointed Nigeria by refusing to sell arms to Nigeria. (Garba: 1987 p162)

With the US Arms Embargo and Britain hesitation to attend to Nigerian needs, the Soviets became the major arms supplier to the Nigerian Military Government, whose involvement was only a matter of wartime necessity and portends no political realignment of Nigeria traditional pro-Western stance. (Elombah: 2012)

Furthermore, after General Gowon paid a state visit to the Soviet Union, on his return announced that Nigeria most ambitious industrial undertaking, the iron and steel complex at Ajaokuta was to be built by the Russians into Nigerians and hundreds of Nigerian Engineers began to be trained in the Soviet Union in steel technology. (Garba: 1987 p175)

After the Nigerian Civil War, Nigeria's relationship with the West and the East differed from one issue to another, while Nigeria agreed with the Soviet Union on the Angolan Crises by supporting the MPLA led government in Angola. It was the South African that persuaded African countries, particularly Nigeria to take such a step. Nigeria's recognition of MPLA and its full scale diplomatic campaign for support, for Angola within and outside Africa led to a

very serious disagreement between the Nigerian and US governments, to the extent that on three separate occasions the Nigerian Government refused to approve visits to Lagos for US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger (Garba: 1987 p164-165)

Nevertheless, the realities of bilateral economic relations outweighed political and diplomatic disagreements. Americans technology had a role to play in Nigeria's policies of rapid economic developments. Also, Nigeria had Oil to sell, and supported the US in the UN in regards the Arab Oil Embargo, thus making Nigeria become the second largest supplier of Oil to the US, and by 1980, Nigeria enjoyed a favorable trade balance of nearly \$1billion. (Garba: 1987 p165)

For these states Non-alignment had to do with the conservation of the sovereignty they acquired after years of been under colonial domination, whereby alliance with one or the other cold war power bloc implies the neo-colonialism, since been in alliance with a stronger power does limit the freedom of action of a weaker state.

Yet they do not want to be neutral in the imperialist struggle for world domination between the Soviet Union and the United States. The adoption of non-alignment was therefore motivated by a desire to defend and conserve their sovereignty in the face of contrary pressure.

The pursuit of each nation's national interest was therefore the only leverage available at the forefront of Nigeria and other states, and when a state coincidentally identifies with a super power or bloc politically, economically or social internationalized domestic policy, she does so because her interest was thereby being better served. This is what Balewa meant when he said "Nigeria shall not blindly follow the lead of anyone; so far as it is possible, the policy on each occasion will be selected with proper independent objectivity in Nigeria's national interest.

Furthermore, during the cold war, African states in practice were still having robust relationship with the superpowers- USSR and USA. The superpowers saw post-colonial Africa as fertile territory for their ideologies and for the reaping of rich resources at low cost.

Moscow, judging the anticolonial fervor to be a good fit with Marxism, waded in first. In 1960, Nikita Khrushchev embraced African leaders at the United Nations, and Soviet embassies

sprouted in barely known African countries.

President Kennedy responded by appointing a high-profile politician, the former Governor of Michigan, G. Mennon Williams, as Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, a signal that Washington planned to keep as many African countries as possible out of the Communist fold. Africa was regarded as a dynamic place for talented young diplomats as Kennedy's New Frontier did battle with the Soviets and the Chinese over foreign aid and propaganda.

In Zanzibar, for example, the island in the Indian Ocean off Tanzania, a revolution in 1964 put a Chinese-trained Marxist politician in charge. An aggressive young diplomat, Frank C. Carlucci, later head of the National Security Council in the Reagan Administration, was dispatched to keep the island out of the clutches of Beijing. Kenya Is the Prize

In capitalist-oriented Kenya, newly independent from Britain in 1963, the Soviets and their East European satellites rushed to open embassies. Washington quickly followed, offering exchange programs in America for Kenyan students to offset the offers from Moscow universities. A prominent politician, Oginga Odinga, was financed by Moscow in his political struggle with the first President, Jomo Kenyatta, a tactic that served to reinforce American enthusiasm for Mr. Kenyatta.

The superpowers' early interest in Kenya was not so much a result of what Kenya had but of where it was located: on the Indian Ocean with the port of Mombasa and near Zaire, Africa's second largest country, rich with minerals in the heart of the continent.

In the former Belgian colony of the Congo, later renamed Zaire, the United States engaged in what are viewed as some of its most nefarious cold war covert actions. Fearful that its first leader, Patrice Lumumba, was too cozy with Moscow, the Central Intelligence Agency decided he had to go, even dispatching a specialist in poisons to plan his death. That plot never took place, but eventually the C.I.A. arranged a coup in which Mr. Lumumba was slain and Mobutu Seso Seko, an army colonel, came to power.

In memory of their African hero, the Soviets established Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow where thousands of third-world students were trained by the end of the cold war. This year, the scholarships were canceled.

President Mobutu was a staunch friend of the United States, and successive American administrations, Democratic and Republican, looked the other way as he looted the country. The Battle for Angola Above all, what Washington got was a base for its operations in Angola, a cold war theater of operations as hot as that in the Horn.

When Angola became independent of Portugal in 1975, the Soviets and Americans supported different factions competing for power. The Americans were involved because Angola possessed rich oil deposits, and the Secretary of State, Henry A. Kissinger, argued that a Soviet-dominated Angola would endanger the Atlantic sea-lanes. The Cubans sent thousands of troops to bolster the new Marxist Government and the United States launched a covert action to support the anti-Communist Jonas Savimbi.

CONCLUSION

There are no more Eastern and Western bloc but the forces invading Africa are much stronger than the Cold War rivalry. Now is the time that Africans must step up and grab the bull by the horn. This paper has examined the concept of non-alignment which was derived from the principles and conditions upon which the Non-Aligned Movement was established and how African states has subscribed to its practices, they even went ahead to make it a foreign policy tenet that was rigorously pursued. As it was seen Non-alignment was not a toothless bulldog, it allowed African states to determine the course of their action within the African continent and even beyond. It helped protected the sovereignty and territory of Africa from Cold War, this was evident with the French using Africa as a testing ground of which Ghana spoke out vehemently and Nigeria broke diplomatic relations with France. Whether African states were "aligned", Pro-West or Pro-East, in their quest for Non-alignment, bores down to the common denominator which was "National Interest".

It led to considerable economic gains from both the Western and Easter Bloc, at different times. With the Cold War gone, African states can build upon the new emerging economic force, to develop and meet the target of millennium goal

It has been proved beyond reasonable doubt that African states and particularly India were aligned with the Cold war juggernauts during this time for foreign aid, loan, and grant and techno scientific support.

The inescapable conclusion drawn from this analysis is that Africa states and India during the Cold War period were theoretically Non – Aligned in the Cold War era but practically aligned in terms of assistance and support from the United States and Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR)

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