

India pursues peace strategy and economic development for Nonaligned

by Daniel Sneider and
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The "interdependence" of the industrialized and nonindustrialized nations which must defuse the peace-threatening "world economic crisis" dominated the final economic declaration of the foreign ministers' conference of Nonaligned nations in New Delhi Feb. 9-13.

The "world economic crisis has assumed unparalleled dimensions" and "world peace and security [are] increasingly endangered" as a result, stated the declaration. From this standpoint, under the leadership of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the conference assumed a tough, but differentiated approach toward the advanced countries, condemning on one hand the "intransigence" of certain nations, while noting on the other hand that "a large number of developed countries were willing to consider the change implied in giving practical shape to the concept of interdependence" through greater industrialization of the Third World. The document condemns the "conditionalities" policy of the IMF explicitly, calls for a new international monetary system, and proposes new credit arrangements to provide low-interest credit for development.

Exemplary of the document's intention was its separation of competent from incompetent development strategies. "Unrestricted access of the developing countries to technology, particularly advanced technology [is] indispensable," it stated. The question of energy development was given special attention in this light. "[T]he policies of nuclear supplier countries denying the legitimate requirements of developing countries to develop their programs for peaceful usage of nuclear energy," is not tolerable. The Nonaligned Movement's meeting called for the transfer of energy technology, and for specific measures to ensure energy supplies as a priority for the nonaligned, mostly Third World, nations.

An Indian recommendation to set up a center for scientific research in India was also approved.

The New Delhi meeting, which will be followed by the next heads-of-state summit in Iraq in 1982, was a triumph for the moderate leadership of India in the developing sector. The Indian perspective, shared by countries like Iraq and Mexico—the latter an observer in

the Nonaligned Movement—is to defuse the left-right extremism encouraged by the Brandt Commission on North-South relations. In the past, the intrusion of cold war politics into the Nonaligned Movement had made it increasingly weak. The occasion of the last Nonaligned heads-of-state summit in 1979, a triannual event, in Havana, Cuba, and the ascension of Cuba to the head of the movement, threatened to split it between the left-radical, antitechnology "Third Worldism" of Cuba and the right-radical provocations of Anglo-Chinese assets like Lee Kuan-yue's Singapore.

In her opening speech to the conference, Mrs. Gandhi forcefully directed the conference toward achieving a strategic cooling-out of the Third World points of superpower confrontation. The power of the economic rejection of "appropriate technologies" and adoption of a high-technology perspective was, however, partially lost in the dust raised over these issues. Even so, on all the key points, the final draft communiqué—modified from the Indian original in a week of intense negotiations—struck a note of compromise.

On Afghanistan: The declaration calls for a "political settlement on the basis of withdrawal of foreign troops and . . . strict observance of the principles of nonintervention and noninterference." This refers both to the presence of Soviet troops and to the Iran- and Pakistan-based guerrillas.

On Kampuchea: India upheld the decision taken previously to leave the Kampuchea seat vacant, and refused to give visas to the "representatives" of Peking's former puppet Pol Pot regime.

On the Middle East: The delegates restated their condemnation of the Camp David agreement and called for an overall solution to the Palestinian question.

On the Iran-Iraq war: A special Nonaligned group of India, Cuba, Zambia, and the Palestine Liberation Organization was formed to attempt mediation of an end to the war. Even before the ink was dry, the Iranians rejected any mediation unless Iraq withdraws its forces, despite an Iraqi offer announced at the conference to cease fire and hold unconditional talks.

From Gandhi's statement on the global conjuncture

The following are excerpts from the text of the speech delivered by Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to inaugurate the opening of the Nonaligned Foreign Ministers Conference in New Delhi. The speech was delivered on Feb. 9, 1981:

On the historic and magic day when India's independence was proclaimed, my father [Jawaharlal Nehru] declared that India looked at the world with clear and friendly eyes and would cooperate with all nations and peoples of the world in furthering peace, freedom, and democracy. Since then we have worked consistently to democratize international relations, we have supported liberation struggles, we have fought against all foreign domination and racism, and have pleaded the cause of coexistence and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Peace is not that which teeters on the brink. That is the absence of war, yet it threatens war. Nor can peace be based on outmoded concepts of imperialism, military alliances, spheres of influence or balance of power and competition in nuclear and conventional terror.

Mr. Chairman, many changes have occurred since the Nonaligned Summit was held in your brave and beautiful country 18 months ago. We hear of a crisis of character, a crisis of civilization. What else can we expect when, having so recently seen the horror and heartbreak of war, countries still prepare for a new military confrontation? There is disquiet in Europe, gathering danger in Asia, and new pressures on Latin America and the Caribbean. Nonaligned countries are being asked to stand up and be counted for or against one side or the other. We see the familiar efforts to turn one nonaligned country against another, to weaken our solidarity and the cohesion of our movement. These are backed by economic threats and blandishments on the one hand and military might and bases on the other.

The realities of the world situation—the possibility of a nuclear armageddon by a single lapse or rash act—reinforce the relevance of nonalignment and demand a rededication to peace. From this conference should issue a call to the big powers to de-escalate belligerent rhetoric, to reduce presences in the Indian Ocean and in the various parts of Asia and Africa, and to resume the earnest search for understanding and peace.

We are all deeply distressed at events in Afghanistan.

The unhappy conflict in West Asia between two of our own brothers has had adverse consequences for the peoples of these two countries as well as other nonaligned nations. These developments have given encouragement to forces which work against our movement and have increased the risk of intervention. Let us hope that big powers will not be tempted to take advantage to enlarge local disputes into wider confrontations. In the name of peace and the future of mankind, we plead with the combatants, and appeal to those who are waiting in the wings, to call their young men back to their homes. . . .

Experience has shown that political subjugation and economic exploitation go hand in hand. So, through political freedom, we hoped to achieve economic advance. The economic dimension of the policy of non-alignment is no less important than the political. In Algiers, Colombo and Havana, the conferences articulated the economic content of nonalignment. Yet for most of us economic prospects have been worsening with each passing month. I strongly urge that global negotiations be undertaken without further delay to pave the way for a new international economic order. . . .

Some affluent countries do recognize the interdependence of nations and the need for cooperation. Hence our negotiating positions should be formulated in a dynamic context and our energies concentrated on mapping out our own strategy.

At every meeting of the Nonaligned, big powers seem to redouble their diplomatic and publicity campaign to sow suspicion and division within us. As free peoples we must stand together. Working in unison on the basis of our original principles and purposes will fortify us to withstand pressures. Divided we are vulnerable; united we can and shall prevail. Let this simple truth guide your deliberations in the next few days. Let us not fall prey to suggestive propaganda. We are here not to juggle with words but to find a way to reinforce the authority and effectiveness of the Nonaligned movement.

From the call for nuclear technology and credit reform

The following are excerpts from the final political and economic declarations adopted by the Nonaligned foreign ministers conference. Subtitles are in the original.

Political Declaration

The greatest peril facing the world today is the threat of destruction as a result of nuclear war. The actions of the nuclear weapons states, which are en-

gaged in a new and frenzied round of the nuclear arms race, has created a situation in which mankind seems to have been condemned to live in the shadow of nuclear annihilation. Attempts have been made by some nuclear weapons states to promote the highly dangerous concept of limited nuclear war and to minimize the distinction between nuclear and conventional weaponry. . . .

In the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the ministers criticized the policy of the nuclear supplier countries in denying the legitimate requirements of developing countries to develop their programs for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The ministers reiterated the conclusions reached at the 6th Conference of Heads of State of Nonaligned countries and noted the conclusions of the first regular meeting of the Nonaligned coordinating countries on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. They particularly expressed the right of each nation to establish its peaceful nuclear program in accordance with its own priorities and requirements as well as the free and nondiscriminatory access to nuclear materials and technology for peaceful purposes. . . .

Economic Declaration

The world economic crisis has assumed unparalleled dimensions, as demonstrated by the growing imbalance in international payments, substantial deceleration in world economic activity and growth, sharp deterioration in the terms of trade of many developing countries, high levels of unemployment, underemployment and inflation, growing burdens of external indebtedness of developing countries, and insecurity and insufficiency of food supplies. In light of this grave situation and its underlying causes, the response of the developed countries has been most disappointing, particularly with regard to the provision of official development assistance and grossly inadequate levels of transfer of real resources to developing countries, the serious hindrances placed on the free access to the requisite technologies, and growing protectionism. . . .

They noted that in the negotiations on economic issues, a few economically powerful countries had been successful in impeding progress toward the achievement of a new international economic order through a restructuring of international economic relations. . . .

The ministers noted with satisfaction that on the other hand, a large number of developed countries have realized the inevitability of interdependence and were willing to consider the changes implied in giving practical shape to the concept of interdependence. They urged these countries to intensify their efforts to convince their partners to recognize the long-term community of interests of the developed and developing countries alike, which would contribute to a real restructuring of international economic relations. They appealed

to those developed countries which are intransigent and continue to resist the necessary changes in international economic relations to realize that the raising of the standards of living of peoples of the developing countries would be of international mutual benefit, and would contribute to the raising of global economic activity. They warned that world peace and security were increasingly endangered by the continuing and widening economic gap between the developed and developing countries. . . .

Money and Finance

The ministers noted with concern the continued absence of a viable international monetary system, which constitutes one of the most critical aspects of world economy. . . . The structure of the international monetary system, through its injustices and lack of adaptability, saddles developing countries with a disproportionate share of adjustment costs. These adverse effects are aggravated and perpetuated by the strict conditionalities built into the rules of the IMF and other financial institutions, which are often unsuited to the particular needs for adjustment assistance to developing countries. . . .

They expressed the view that a new, rational equitable and universal international monetary system should be consistent with the liquidity and development needs of the developing countries. . . . The ministers strongly recommended the institution by the developed countries of an interest-subsidy scheme as a method to link the availability of funds at market terms with the requirements of developing countries for funds on concessionary terms. . . . They noted that the existing financial institutions took little account of the aims and interests of developing countries, and that, on the contrary, the policies and practices of these institutions often had an adverse affect as far as the developing countries' priorities and interests were concerned. . . .

Science and Technology

The ministers expressed their concern over the increasing phenomenon of technology monopolization by the developed countries. They stressed the fact that the developed countries should intensify their scientific and technological cooperation, and stressed as well their cooperation with a view to breaking the barrier of monopoly imposed by the industrialized states. In this connection they reaffirmed that the unrestricted access of the developing countries to technology, particularly advanced technology, and the improvement of conditions for its acquisition were indispensable for accelerating the development of the developing countries by means of substantial changes in the international process for the transfer of technology. . . .