

**Statement by the Prime Minister at the
XV Summit of the Non Aligned Movement**

Sharm El-Sheikh Egypt-15/07/2009



**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to begin by conveying the sense of strong affinity and solidarity of the people of India for the people of Egypt and the Arab world. I congratulate His Excellency President Hosni

Mubarak on his assuming the chairmanship of the Non-aligned Movement. Mr. Chairman, we know that your profound wisdom and able guidance will take our Movement forward. You will have India's fullest support.

I also wish to express our deep appreciation to His Excellency President Raul Castro of Cuba for his leadership of NAM over the last three years.

Meeting as we do on Arab soil, my thoughts turn to the people of Palestine, who have endured great suffering and hardship. Our Movement must do more to facilitate a comprehensive, just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the Palestinian issue.

The Nonaligned Movement owes a great deal to the visionary zeal of its founding fathers like President Tito, Pandit Nehru, President Nasser and also those who carried this vision forward like President Fidel Castro and Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

At the first NAM Conference in 1961, India's first Prime Minister and one of the founding fathers of the Movement, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said, and I quote "The power of nations assembled here is not military power or economic power, nevertheless it is power. Call it moral force". Unquote.

These words hold true even today. History has shown that non-alignment is an idea that evolves but does not fade. We must take it forward, harnessing it to meet the challenges of today.

The Non-aligned Movement gave voice to the colonial world, leading to their political emancipation. It heralded their hope that their new found political freedom would translate into economic progress and the removal of poverty, hunger and disease; that they would become active and equal participants in shaping a world order that would facilitate the realisation of their development objectives. We are still far from achieving this objective.

No Non-aligned Summit has ever been held in an economic and financial crisis of the magnitude that now grips the world.

This crisis, the worst in living memory, emanated from the advanced industrial economies, but the developing economies, the members of our Movement, have been the hardest hit. The global recession has strengthened protectionism in developed country markets, drastically reduced developing country exports, and choked credit and capital flows to the third world.

With the benefits and burdens of globalization so unfairly distributed, it will be even harder for our economies to cope with the crisis. If the aftermath of the crisis is not carefully managed, and if the abundance of liquidity leads to a revival of speculative activities, we may well see a period of prolonged stagflation.

Crucially for the developing world, a continuing slowdown will force more and more of our people back into poverty, bringing down levels of nutrition, health and education. The progress we have made at great cost and sacrifice will be wiped out. The Millennium Development Goals will become a mirage.

The Non-aligned Movement has a great stake in ensuring that steps planned to revive the

global economy take into account the concerns of the developing countries. These include the challenges of food security, energy security, the environment and the reform of institutions of global governance. They are embedded in the economic crisis and must be dealt with comprehensively and with a sense of urgency. We have a crucial stake in a rule based multilateral trading system and in an early conclusion of a balanced and fair agreement in the Doha round.

The systems of global governance have not kept pace either with the growing interdependence of nations or with contemporary realities. Though we have a global economy of sorts, the global polity does not represent the hopes, fears and aspirations of the majority of the world's people. The relevance of NAM has, hence, never been greater than today. Cooperation, trade and investment among our countries can contribute significantly to reviving the world economy.

Decision-making processes, whether in the United Nations or the international financial institutions continue to be based on charters written more than sixty years ago, though the world has changed greatly since then.

Developing countries must be fully represented in the decision-making levels of international institutions if they are to remain effective and have the legitimacy they need to play their role in an increasingly integrated world.

Our planet is threatened by the accumulation of greenhouse gases resulting from over two centuries of industrial activity and unsustainable lifestyles in the developed world. Any equitable solution to the problem of climate change should acknowledge this historical responsibility.

Developing countries are the worst affected by climate change. They have the biggest stake in ensuring the success of global efforts to tackle climate change. We recognize more than anyone else our obligation to preserve and protect the environment. We are already making our own significant contributions in this regard, but climate change action must not perpetuate the poverty of the developing countries.

The weight of NAM should be used to achieve a comprehensive, balanced and above all, equitable outcome in the ongoing multilateral negotiations, leading up to the Copenhagen Conference in December this year.

Nowhere are the challenges humankind faces more pressing than in the continent of Africa. NAM should work to give Africa's problems, and equally its prospects, pre-eminence in the global development agenda. Making Africa an active participant in global economic processes is a moral imperative. It also makes good economic sense.

India is committed to develop a comprehensive partnership with Africa. As a first step, we held the first India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in 2008. We are ready to work with other NAM countries to enhance our partnership in areas that are of priority to Africa.

The youth constitute an overwhelming proportion of many of our populations. If we can impart skills to our youth and create productive jobs for them, the developing world can become a major source of future global economic growth. The challenge before us is to make

the poor of the world more skilled and more bankable. NAM itself can pioneer an initiative in this regard and India will be ready to participate in it.

The diversity of our membership is our greatest strength. We respect each other's paths to development, distinct cultural traditions and national priorities. Extremism, intolerance and terrorism are our antitheses; they seek to destroy us and our Movement.

In recent years, terrorist groups have become more sophisticated, more organized and more daring. Terrorists and those who aid and abet them must be brought to justice. The infrastructure of terrorism must be dismantled and there should be no safe havens for terrorists because they do not represent any cause, group or religion. It is time that we agree on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

The Non-aligned Movement was formed to try to save the world from a political and military rivalry that threatened to destroy it. We fought against the injustice of colonialism, and the arrogance of the Cold War. Our Movement made a significant contribution to widening circles of cooperation, peace and stability in the world. Our voice was heard with respect.

The world has changed and the challenges have grown more complex. The moral force that Pandit Nehru spoke of was a force that came from the power of ideas and from an abiding faith in the principles of justice and reason. How we can exercise this force for the collective good of humanity is what the Movement must deliberate upon. We look forward, Mr. Chairman, to your leadership, as we seek to fashion a contemporary and compelling vision for the Non-aligned Movement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sharm El-Sheikh

[BACK TO HOME PAGE](#)