

Disarmament and Development

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When assuming the reins of government in 1946, my father, Jawaharlal Nehru, declared India's determination "to keep away from the power blocs or groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale." Later, he explained that once, "foreign relations go out of your hands into the charge of somebody else, to that extent and in that measure you are not independent... So our policy will continue to be not only to keep away from alignments, but also to try to make friendly co-operation possible. We approach the whole world on a friendly basis."

As more countries became free, the number of those who believed in peaceful coexistence and wished to keep out of

military alliances increased steadily. It was natural for these nonaligned countries to come together, not to form another bloc but to raise the voices of the exploited millions through a moral and political movement.

The very growth in the membership of our Movement — twenty-five in Belgrade, a hundred now — proves that nonalignment meets a felt need of vast numbers of people in various continents.

Its significance is not to be measured by the number of divisions or the megatons of destructive power we command but by the intensity with which we desire peace and freedom, development and international justice.

Other governments may have conflicting opinions on right and wrong. We, the nonaligned have chosen peace, which surely is the right and inevitable choice. We have sought and continue to seek friendship with all, except governments which are racist or threaten the hard-earned freedom of others. Nonalignment is not vague, not negative, not neutral.

Nonalignment is national Independence and freedom. It stands for peace and the avoidance of confrontation. It aims at keeping away from military alliances. It means equality among nations and the democratization of international relations, economic and political. It wants global co-operation for development on the basis of mutual benefit. It is a strategy for the recognition and preservation of the world's diversity.

... Humankind is balancing on the brink of the collapse of the world economic system and annihilation through nuclear war. Should these tragedies occur, can anyone of us, large, small, rich or poor, from North or South, West or

East, hope to escape? Let us analyse the economic crisis. We of the developing world have no margin of safety. We shall be the first and worst sufferers in any economic background. In this interdependent world, where you cannot "stir a flower without troubling a star," even the most affluent are not immune to such disturbances.

... Development, independence, disarmament and peace are closely related. Can there be peace alongside nuclear weapons? Without peace, my father said, all our dreams of development turn to ashes. It has been pointed out that global military expenditure is 20 times the total official development assistance. Each day, each hour, the size and the lethality of nuclear weapons increase. A nuclear aircraft carrier costs \$ 4 billion, which is more than the GNP of 53 countries. The hood of the cobra is spread. Humankind watches in frozen fear, hoping against hope that it will not strike. Never before has the earth faced so much death and danger.

The destructive power contained in nuclear stockpiles can kill human life, indeed all life, many times over and might well prevent its reappearance for ages to come. Terrifying is the vividness of such descriptions by scientists. Yet, some statesmen and strategists art as though there is not much difference between these and the earlier artillery pieces. The arms race continues because of the pursuit of power and desire for one upmanship, and also because many industries and interests flourish on it. More recently, the notion has been propagated that tactical nuclear weapons are usable in "limited wars." Powerful States propagate the untenable doctrine of deterrence. New areas are being brought into the scope of strategic groupings, military blocs and alliances. New bases and facilities are being established. That is why our responses must be surer, swifter and sharper.

The desire for peace is universal even within countries which themselves produce nuclear weapons and in those where they are deployed. The Nonaligned Movement is history's biggest peace movement. It welcomes these spontaneous upsurges of peoples. But Governments persist in propounding, practising and pursuing the self-same strategic interests, spheres of influence, balance of power, and tutelary relations reminiscent of the earlier theory of divine right.

The paradox of our age is that while weapons become increasingly sophisticated, minds remain imprisoned in ideas of simpler times. Technically, the colonial age has ended. But the wish to dominate persists. Neo-colonialism comes wrapped in all types of packages-in technology and communications, commerce and culture. It takes boldness and integrity to resist it. There are intense political and economic pressures. The limited economic viability, indeed the very survival of many of the nonaligned, especially those with small populations, is threatened through artificial barriers in trade, technology transfer and access to resources. It should be within our ability to devise measures to help these small nations to maintain their independence and nonalignment.

Only with coexistence can there be any existence. We regard non-interference and non-intervention as basic laws of international behaviour. Yet different types of interventions, open or covert, do take place in Asia, in Africa, in Latin America. They are all intolerable and unacceptable. Interference leads to intervention and one intervention often attracts another. No single power or group of powers has the justification or moral authority to so interfere or intervene. You cannot condemn one instance but condone another. Each situation has its own origins. Whatever they be, solutions must be political and peaceful. All States must abide by the principle that force

or the threat of force will not be used against the territorial integrity or political independence of another state.

... Our plans for a better life for each of our peoples depend on world peace and the reversal of the arms race. Negotiations confined to a closed circle of nuclear-weapon powers have made little progress. We are non-nuclear States, who want nuclear energy used only for peace. But we too have a right to live and be heard. In the name of humanity and on behalf of us all, I call upon nuclear-weapon powers to give up the use of nuclear weapons in any circumstances; suspend all nuclear weapons; and resume disarmament negotiations with determination to reach agreement.

... Nationalism does not detach us from our common humanity. What a marvellous opportunity is ours with the immense knowledge and increasing capability. Let us grasp it, though it be in the midst of dangers. Faith in the future has brought so many across the continents and the oceans to meet here. We are here because we do believe that minds and attitudes can and must be changed and the injustice and suffering can and must be diminished. Our world is small but it has room for all of us to live together and to improve the quality of the lives for our peoples in peace and beauty.

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