

Azerbaijan – active member of the world community

For the past several years, Azerbaijan has been steadily strengthening its positions in the international arena. Along with economic success, an important role is played by the country's peace-loving foreign policy based on good neighborliness, mutually beneficial cooperation and respect for the fundamental principles of international law. Azerbaijan is a popular venue for important international forums, cultural and sporting events, and is heavily involved in the activities of a number of international organizations, including leading ones. A vivid example of that is the election of Azerbaijan as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2012-2013. The latest manifestation of this trend is the 18th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Baku on 25-26 October 2019 and the election of Azerbaijan as the chairing country of the world's second biggest international organization after the UN for the next three years. An article by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov published in this issue of IRS-Heritage is dedicated to this significant event.

Among other stories of this issue, an article on the history of the emergence and development of Azerbaijani jazz may be of interest to readers. It is about a branch of jazz music that bears the unique imprint of Azerbaijani cultural traditions, above all the mugham art. The article provides information about outstanding musicians who have made a significant contribution to the development of Azerbaijani jazz.

The issue also includes several articles on certain issues of Azerbaijani history. Worthy of mention is a continuation of the article on the history of Azerbaijani-Swiss relations at the beginning of the 20th century and an article by a renowned Azerbaijani historian who was once an employee of the USSR representative office in UNESCO, Ramiz Abutalybov, and French historian of Georgian origin Giorgi Mamulia about the events surrounding Azerbaijani emigration in the early stages of World War II (1939-1940). The story about the events of the 19-20th centuries that laid the foundation for the secession of Derbent and adjacent Azerbaijani lands in favor of Dagestan is also worthy of note. Fans of outdoor activities may be interested to review the story about climbing to the Bazarduzu summit, the highest mountain peak in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In conclusion, let me express hope that you stay with us in the coming year too and, therefore, continue to replenish your knowledge about the history and culture of Azerbaijan – the Land of Fire.

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AZERBAIJAN TO ADVANCE NAM'S GLOBAL AGENDA

Azerbaijan's chairmanship to the Non-Aligned Movement: upholding Bandung principles for concerted and effective responses to the challenges of contemporary world





The world today needs, more than ever, respect for international law and effective global institutions to ensure compliance with it.

The recent environmental, economic and social indicators demonstrate that the models for progress and development need to be modified and adapted. Conflicts, aggressive expansionist policies, environmental degradation, human rights abuses, financial crises coupled with other threats such as terrorism, separatism, trans-national organized crime and extremism continue to affect millions of people around the world.

The role of the Non-Aligned Movement in this regard is of utmost significance. Throughout its history, the Non-Alignment Movement has played a fundamental role in strengthening international peace and security by promoting adherence to the Bandung Principles.

Being the second largest international political organization after the UN, the Movement provides a broad and inclusive forum for political consultations and practical cooperation.

The Movement was formed during the Cold War as a group of States that did not seek to formally align themselves with either of the confronting blocs but sought to remain independent or neutral. It was officially founded at the Belgrade Summit in 1961.

Throughout its history, the Movement has persis-

tently called for strict adherence to the norms and principles of international law, has provided major thrusts in the areas of disarmament, better economic well-being, social justice and environmental sustainability, and has been able to shape the concept of non-alignment as a positive and engaging endeavor. Some of the most important achievements of the 20th century such as decolonization and the emergence of a global social development agenda are among the Movement's most impressive contributions to the world so far.

Yet, there is still a way to go until the long-standing goals of the Movement such as peace, security, development, economic cooperation and the democratization of international relations aspired by the UN Charter and Bandung Declaration are ultimately realized.

The Republic of Azerbaijan became a full-fledged member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in May 2011 and declared its strict adherence to the founding principles of the Movement. It pursues an independent foreign policy and is not a party to any military alliance. At the same time, Azerbaijan is a rapidly developing country that puts special emphasis on sustainable development, democratization, fostering respect for human rights and social justice.

On 25-26 October 2019, Azerbaijan hosted the 18th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the



Non-Aligned Movement in its capital city of Baku. The Summit was one of the most represented events in the history of the Movement in terms of the number and level of participating delegations. High-level representatives from 120 UN Member States and 42 international organizations took part at the Summit.

The Baku Summit was also remarkable as Azerbaijan has taken over chairmanship of the Movement from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Azerbaijan assumed chairmanship of the Movement at a critical time for all Member States of NAM, which necessitates concerted and effective responses to the challenges of contemporary world. Proceeding from this understanding, the Republic of Azerbaijan has set its chairmanship priorities to strengthen the role of the Movement in the international relations system and to promote the founding principles of the Movement which entail the fundamental norms and principles of international law.

Azerbaijan's chairmanship of the Movement will coincide with two important occasions for the Non-Aligned Movement – the 65th anniversary of the Bandung Principles (2020) and the 60th anniversary of the establishment of NAM (2021). Both anniversaries will provide an excellent momentum for NAM Member States

to take stock of the achievements made so far and reflect upon how shared vision and combined strength could respond to the multifaceted and emerging challenges that the world continues to face.

As the incumbent chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Azerbaijan will ensure that both anniversaries are celebrated in the most appropriate manner that will reinforce the current stance of the Movement in the system of international relations.

The major task before the NAM today is to adjust its role to new realities in the geopolitical landscape by promoting and upholding its founding principles which continue to be as valid and relevant as they were when incepted.

During its chairmanship, Azerbaijan will spare no effort towards further enhancing the role and visibility of the Movement as an anti-war and peace-loving force promoting, preserving and strengthening multilateralism with the United Nations at its core.

NAM is not against any particular state or alliance of states. Individual or collective self-defense is an inherent right of every UN Member State as per Article 51 of the UN Charter. Therefore, NAM does not and cannot object the existence of military blocs, as long as their



members do not resort to the violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty of other states. This true image of NAM should be further promoted in order to avoid any misperceptions which can wipe out prospects for concerted action of NAM with non-member countries and other organizations.

The Final Communiqué of the Bandung Conference of 1955 expressed a firm conviction that the friendly cooperation in accordance with Ten Principles of Bandung would effectively contribute to the maintenance and

promotion of international peace and security, while cooperation in the economic, social and cultural fields would help to bring about common prosperity and well-being for all.

Over more than six decades of existence, the Bandung Principles have contributed to the promotion of justice and equality in international relations and ensured respect for the norms and principles of international law with a view to achieving sustainable peace and development.



Since their inception, the Principles have been navigating the countries that had expressed their adherence to them through the turbulences of the Cold War period. Following the end of Cold War, the absence of two confronting blocs has in no way diminished the relevance and validity of the Bandung Principles. Quite contrary, in light of more complex challenges to peace and development such as armed conflicts, terrorism, aggressive expansionist policies, environmental degradation, human rights abuses and financial crises, they have become more important than ever.

Chairmanship of Azerbaijan to the Non-Aligned Movement will also aim to consolidate the unity within the Movement.

It is imperative that NAM Member States remain united and steadfast in view of the emerging threats and challenges to the international peace, security and development. Member States of NAM should focus on the issues that unite rather than divide them. The principle of consensus must continue to guide the decision-making process within the Movement as a sign of unity, sustained solidarity and shared commitment of Member States.

Another important priority for Azerbaijan during its chairmanship to NAM will be to strengthen the effectiveness of the Movement. Member States should rest assured that the Movement is a dynamic and effective mechanism to represent, coordinate and support their interests and priorities in an adequate and timely manner. For that reason, first and foremost, the Movement needs to strengthen its existing coordination mechanisms in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi, Paris and

the Hague, bearing in mind the role of the Coordinating Bureau in New York as the focal point for coordination of the Movement.

Timely reaction to and application of effective remedies to situations that affect Member States is of utmost importance. NAM should immediately react to the emerging situations requiring its urgent attention, so that Member States could rely on the strength and support of the Movement during their hard times.

NAM Troika format is an important tool for ensuring long-term sustainability of NAM's management. It brings an element of continuity to the activities of the Movement which is of vital importance for the attainment of objectives initiated by the chairs and endorsed by Member States. This format needs to be further strengthened.

We believe there is untapped potential of NAM Member States to develop economic cooperation among themselves using the NAM framework. Since most NAM Member States are developing countries, it is in the interest of all Member States to explore every opportunity that will pave the way for better economic cooperation.

Azerbaijan as an incumbent chair of the NAM will first and foremost endeavor to reinvigorate the already existing structures of the Movement on economic cooperation, such as the Standing Ministerial Committee on Economic Cooperation and Joint Coordinating Committee. The latter was established to coordinate the position of the Movement on economic issues with Group of 77 and China. Azerbaijan as a member of both organizations will spare no effort to ensure the coordinated engagement of both institutions on the deliberations deriving from multilateral economic cooperation agenda.

Azerbaijan believes that cooperation within NAM should be extended beyond its current limits to cover the so far unexplored areas of common interest (economy and trade, education, culture, health, climate action, women affairs, etc.) for Member States. Therefore, Azerbaijan will do its best to boost the sectoral cooperation among NAM Member States by organizing meetings of NAM ministers of different portfolio.

While recognizing the significant role the parliaments of NAM Member States can play in ensuring full and effective compliance with founding principles of the Movement, launching the parliamentary dimension of cooperation within NAM would also be useful.

Another important target of Azerbaijan's chairman-



ship to the Non-Aligned Movement will be to establish and strengthen the youth segment of the Movement.

The world today is home to the largest generation of young people in history – 1.8 billion. Close to 90 percent of them live in developing countries, where Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement constitute absolute majority.

Connected to each other like never before, young people contribute to the resilience of their communities by proposing innovative solutions and driving social progress. At the same time, they continue to face multifaceted challenges, including, among others, access to quality education, healthcare, decent work, forced displacement, different forms of discrimination and marginalization, all of which impede them to achieve their full potential. The way young people navigate through and overcome these challenges is critical to the progress of mankind.

Youth development and youth engagement are essential elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well. Youth-related targets are under several SDGs and are inter-related. Proceeding from this understanding, the Republic of Azerbaijan, in its capacity as the host country of the 18th NAM Summit and the country receiving presidency of the Movement, organized the first-ever Youth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement on 24-25 October 2019 in Baku.

The major objective of this initiative was to gather youth representatives from NAM Member States and

enable them to exchange ideas, vision and perspectives on current challenges they face in ensuring their sustainable progress and how these difficulties could be overcome through concerted and adequate responses of their states.

As part of the result-focused and institutionalized approach to the matter, Azerbaijan introduced at the Baku Youth Summit a non-governmental initiative of NAM Youth Network which would aim to provide a platform for coordination among youth representatives of NAM Member States to address youth development challenges and convey the unified messages of NAM youth to the international community.

The Network will, in close cooperation and partnership with relevant UN agencies and youth initiatives, represent the interests of NAM youth at different international fora. It will also help to raise youth awareness of the important mission the Non-Aligned Movement is carrying in light of the growing challenges to peace and security, as well as to multilateralism.

Azerbaijan, during its chairmanship to NAM, will further build upon the NAM Youth Network Initiative and endeavor to make it one of the most effective youth organizations in the Global South.

Chairmanship to the Non-Aligned Movement will undoubtedly contribute to the consolidation and advancement of the position of the Movement as one of the key players in designing international policy responses to the challenges of contemporary world. 🌟