

## CHAPTER 1: COLD WAR ERA IN WORLD POLITICS

### INTRODUCTION

The aftermath of World War II ushered in a new era in global politics, dominated by the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. This chapter delves into the Cold War, marked by events like the Cuban Missile Crisis, which nearly led to nuclear disaster, and the creation of military alliances and treaties aimed at controlling the arms race. It also explores the global arenas where Cold War tensions unfolded and the role of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which sought independence from the superpowers. Additionally, the chapter discusses the efforts of developing countries to promote a more equitable global economy through the New International Economic Order (NIEO) and examines India's strategic stance during the Cold War, emphasizing peace and non-alignment. Understanding these developments provides insight into the Cold War's lasting impact on today's world.

### TOPICS COVERED

1. Emergence of two power blocs after the Second World War
2. Arenas of the Cold War
3. Challenges to Bipolarity
4. Non-Aligned Movement
5. The quest for new international economic order
6. India and the Cold War

### THE CONTEXT: END OF WORLD WAR II AND ITS GLOBAL IMPACT

**END OF WORLD WAR II AND ITS GLOBAL IMPACT:** World War II (1939-1945) involved most of the world's nations, beginning with Germany's invasion of Poland and escalating into a war that spanned continents. It saw unprecedented destruction, including the Holocaust and the atomic bombings of Japan. The war ended with the defeat of the Axis Powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—by the Allied Forces - the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, and France. The conflict extended beyond Europe to Southeast Asia, China, Burma (now Myanmar), and parts of Northeast India, causing immense loss of life and destruction. The war's conclusion in 1945 also marked the start of the Cold War, dividing the world into the Western Bloc, led by the United States, and the Eastern Bloc, led by the Soviet Union.

**THE ROLE OF ATOMIC BOMBINGS IN ENDING THE WAR:** The war officially ended in August 1945 when the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, forcing Japan to surrender. This decision remains controversial. Critics argue that Japan was close to surrendering, making the bombings unnecessary, and suggest

The atomic bombs dropped by the US on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, codenamed 'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man,' had yields of 15 and 21 kilotons respectively. Despite their devastating effects, these bombs were small compared to the nuclear weapons developed by the superpowers in the 1950s. The US and USSR began producing thermonuclear weapons with yields ranging from 10 to 15 thousand kilotons, making them a thousand times more destructive than those used in Japan. Throughout the Cold War, both superpowers amassed thousands of such weapons, capable of causing unimaginable global devastation.



that the U.S. aimed to limit Soviet influence in Asia and assert its dominance. However, supporters believe the bombings were essential for quickly ending the war and preventing further casualties among American and Allied forces.



**EMERGENCE OF SUPERPOWERS AND THE START OF THE COLD WAR:**

With Europe devastated and Germany and Japan defeated, the United States (USA) and the Soviet Union (USSR) emerged as dominant global leaders and two new superpowers. The ensuing Cold War was marked by ideological and geopolitical rivalry between the Western capitalist bloc, led by the USA, and the Eastern communist bloc, led by the USSR. This rivalry manifested in proxy wars in Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan, as well as in the race for nuclear supremacy and space exploration.

ASPECT	DETAILS
<b>WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)</b>	Global conflict involving major powers; extended beyond Europe to Asia and other regions
<b>ALLIED POWERS</b>	United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France
<b>AXIS POWERS</b>	Germany, Italy, Japan
<b>KEY EVENTS</b>	Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (August 1945); Japan's Surrender
<b>END OF WWII</b>	Marked by the defeat of Axis Powers; led to significant global changes
<b>EMERGENCE OF SUPERPOWERS</b>	US and USSR rose as dominant global leaders post-WWII
<b>START OF THE COLD WAR</b>	Began post-1945, characterized by US-USSR rivalry
<b>COLD WAR CHARACTERISTICS</b>	Deterrence (MAD): Prevented full-scale war; "Cold" conflict: Avoided direct military engagement: not a 'hot war.' Relied on rational and responsible behaviour by superpowers. Manifested in proxy wars, nuclear arms race, space exploration.
<b>PROXY WARS AND GLOBAL RIVALRY</b>	Played out in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan; nuclear arms race, space race

**DETERRENCE AND THE NATURE OF THE COLD WAR:**

The Cold War was rooted not only in the US-USSR rivalry but also in the understanding that nuclear warfare would result in catastrophic destruction that no country could withstand. The principle of 'deterrence,' also known as **Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)**, held that when two adversaries possess nuclear weapons capable of causing unacceptable destruction, a full-scale war becomes unlikely. Despite provocations, neither side risked war, as no political objective justified



the potential devastation. The deterrence of mutual assured destruction ensured both sides could retaliate, making war unthinkable. The **deterrence theory played a crucial role in maintaining the Cold War's "cold" nature** by effectively preventing nuclear warfare, as both superpowers had the capability to inflict unacceptable damage in retaliation, thereby avoiding actual conflict. Stability during this period depended on the superpowers' rational and responsible behaviour. Aware of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war, they exercised restraint and made cautious decisions. Despite intense rivalry, this deterrence effect preserved Cold War stability and prevented the outbreak of nuclear conflict, ensuring humanity's survival.

**COLD WAR CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPACT ON GLOBAL MILITARY DYNAMICS:** Despite intense rivalry, the **Cold War remained a "cold" conflict, avoiding direct military confrontation.** The **military dynamics** during this period relied on the expectation that both superpowers and their respective blocs would act rationally and responsibly, recognizing the immense risks of a nuclear conflict. The deterrence relationship played a crucial role in ensuring human survival by preventing a full-scale nuclear war. This sense of responsibility required restraint and a commitment to avoiding another world war. Paradoxically, the Cold War helped ensure human survival by preventing a direct, catastrophic conflict.

### CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS



The Cuban Missile Crisis involved two superpowers, the **United States of America (USA)** and the **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**. Key figures in this dramatic standoff were **Nikita Khrushchev**, the Soviet Premier, and **John F. Kennedy**, the President of the United States. The tensions **began with the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961**, which heightened Soviet concerns over Cuba's security and culminated in the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles on the island in **1962**. The Cuban Missile Crisis arose from the **USSR's fear of a potential U.S. invasion to overthrow Fidel Castro's communist government in Cuba**. In response, Khrushchev secretly deployed nuclear missiles in Cuba to deter American aggression and **counterbalance U.S. missiles in Turkey threatening Soviet territories**. The discovery of these missiles, just **90 miles from the U.S. mainland**, escalated tensions significantly, as they put major American cities and military bases within striking range, altering the balance of power and raising the threat of nuclear war.

The crisis reached its peak in **October 1962** when the **US discovered the Soviet missiles in Cuba, just three weeks** after their installation. President Kennedy responded with a **naval blockade**, euphemistically called a **"quarantine,"** to prevent further Soviet shipments of military equipment to Cuba. The action aimed to pressure the USSR into removing the missiles without escalating to full-scale war. The crisis was resolved when Soviet ships approaching the U.S. blockade slowed and turned back. This restraint, along with intense diplomatic negotiations, led to a peaceful



resolution. Khrushchev agreed to dismantle the missiles in Cuba in exchange for a U.S. commitment not to invade Cuba and the secret removal of American missiles from Turkey. **The crisis was notable for not escalating into a "hot war."** It highlighted the importance of diplomacy and the potential for peaceful conflict resolution, even in the face of severe threats.

**COLD WAR AS AN IDEOLOGICAL BATTLE:** At its core, the Cold War was not merely a contest for power but also an ideological battle between two competing visions of world order. The United States and its allies championed liberal democracy and capitalism, while the Soviet Union and its allies promoted socialism and communism. This ideological divide influenced not only the military and political strategies of the superpowers but also their cultural, economic, and social policies. **The Soviet decision to place missiles in Cuba was driven by a desire for strategic advantage and the protection of a key ally in the Western Hemisphere, thereby challenging the US hegemony and to counterbalance American military capabilities in Europe.** On the other hand, President Kennedy's response strategy was marked by a careful balancing act. He aimed to avoid triggering a nuclear war while still exerting enough pressure on the USSR to compel the removal of the missiles.

### THE EMERGENCE OF TWO POWER BLOCS

During the Cold War, the world was sharply divided into **two dominant power blocs**, each led by one of the superpowers striving to expand their influence globally. In this divided world, states aligned with one superpower to resist the influence of the other, aiming to protect themselves from rival states and secure military and economic aid. **The formation of alliances during the Cold War was a defining feature of the era's geopolitical landscape, beginning with the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on April 4, 1949.**

NATO was established by the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and eight other Western nations as a collective defence alliance, where an attack on any member in Europe or North America would be considered an attack on all. This move was strategically designed to counter the growing influence of the Soviet Union. **In response, the Eastern Bloc, under Soviet leadership, formed the Warsaw Pact on May 14, 1955, including nations like the Soviet Union, Albania, Poland, Romania, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria.** The Warsaw Pact served as a counterbalance to NATO's military presence in Europe and aimed to consolidate the Eastern Bloc under Soviet influence. These alliances created a sharp division in Europe, with Western European nations aligning with the US and Eastern European countries falling under Soviet control.

The global impact of these alliances extended beyond Europe, as the superpowers employed military and political means to draw countries into their spheres of influence. For example, the



Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was established on September 8, 1954, by the United States, United Kingdom, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Pakistan, and the Philippines to prevent communism from spreading in Southeast Asia. Similarly, the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), also known as the Baghdad Pact, was formed on February 24, 1955, by Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom to counter Soviet influence in the Middle East. However, these alliances were not without internal conflicts, as evidenced by the tensions between communist China and the USSR, culminating in a brief border war in 1969.



The emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961, with founding members like Yugoslavia, India, Egypt, Ghana, and Indonesia, offered newly independent nations a way to remain neutral and avoid alignment with either bloc. Despite their overwhelming military power, the superpowers sought alliances for strategic resources, locations, and economic and ideological support. This intricate network of alliances and geopolitical manoeuvres shaped the global landscape of the Cold War era, influencing the strategies and actions of both the Western and Eastern blocs.

### THE ARENAS OF THE COLD WAR

The term "arenas of the Cold War" refers to regions where tensions and conflicts occurred between the two opposing alliance systems. These conflicts, while sometimes resulting in significant loss of life, did not lead to the widespread devastation of nuclear war. Key examples include the Korean War (1950-1953), which involved leaders like Kim Il-sung, Syngman Rhee, Harry S. Truman, Joseph Stalin, and Mao Zedong. The war ended in a stalemate, leaving the Korean Peninsula divided along the 38th parallel and leading to the creation of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). In the Berlin Crises (1958-1962), leaders such as Nikita Khrushchev and John F. Kennedy were central figures. The Berlin Crisis of 1961 led to the construction of the Berlin Wall, symbolizing the division between East and West.



The Congo Crisis (1960-1965) saw key figures like Patrice Lumumba, Joseph Kasavubu, and UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld involved, with the United Nations playing a significant role in mediating the conflict and maintaining peace. The Vietnam War (1955-1975), with leaders Ho Chi Minh, Ngo Dinh Diem, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Richard Nixon, resulted in the unification of Vietnam under communist control after the withdrawal of American forces. The Afghanistan Conflict (1979-1989) involved leaders like Leonid Brezhnev, Hafizullah Amin, and Ronald Reagan, with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan leading to a prolonged conflict that drained Soviet resources and contributed to the eventual collapse of the USSR.

Despite the frequent crises, **diplomatic channels**, though sometimes strained, played a vital role in preventing misunderstandings from escalating into full-blown conflicts. For example, **non-aligned nations**, such as India under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, played a crucial mediatory role like Nehru's efforts to mediate between North and South Korea crisis. The United Nations, through the efforts of leaders like Dag Hammarskjöld, was instrumental in managing crises such as the Congo conflict.



As the Cold War progressed, both the United States and the Soviet Union recognized the need to manage and control their massive arsenals to prevent accidental or intentional nuclear war. Starting in the **1960s**, the superpowers signed several important agreements. The **Limited Test Ban Treaty (1963)**, involving key leaders John F. Kennedy, Nikita Khrushchev, and Harold Macmillan, prohibited nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, outer space, and under water, aiming to reduce radioactive fallout. The **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) (1968)** was established with key provisions to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and further the goal of disarmament. The **Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty (1972)**, signed by leaders Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev, aimed to limit the deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems to prevent an arms race in missile defence systems. These treaties stabilized the arms race and reduced the risk of nuclear war. The **Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)**, furthered the goal of arms control.

TREATY/AGREEMENT	DETAILS
Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT)	<p><b>Provisions:</b> Banned nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, outer space, and underwater.</p> <p><b>Signatories:</b> US, UK, USSR.</p> <p><b>Signed:</b> 5 August 1963 in Moscow.</p> <p><b>Entered into Force:</b> 10 October 1963.</p>
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)	<p><b>Provisions:</b> Allowed only nuclear weapon states to have nuclear weapons and prohibited others from acquiring them.</p> <p><b>Definition:</b> A nuclear weapon state is one that manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon before 1 January 1967.</p> <p><b>Nuclear Weapon States:</b> US, USSR (Russia), UK, France, China.</p> <p><b>Signed:</b> 1 July 1968 in Washington, London, and Moscow.</p> <p><b>Entered into Force:</b> 5 March 1970; extended indefinitely in 1995.</p>
Strategic Arms Limitation Talks I (SALT-I)	<p><b>Provisions:</b> a) Treaty on the limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty); b) Interim Agreement on the limitation of strategic offensive arms.</p> <p><b>Signatories:</b> Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and US President Richard Nixon.</p> <p><b>Signed:</b> 26 May 1972 in Moscow.</p> <p><b>Entered into Force:</b> 3 October 1972.</p>

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks II (SALT-II)	Provisions: Treaty on the limitation of strategic offensive arms. Signatories: US President Jimmy Carter and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. Signed: 18 June 1979 in Vienna.
Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START-I)	Provisions: Treaty on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. Signatories: USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and US President George Bush (Senior). Signed: 31 July 1991 in Moscow.
Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II (START-II)	Provisions: Treaty on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. Signatories: Russian President Boris Yeltsin and US President George Bush (Senior). Signed: 3 January 1993 in Moscow.

### CHALLENGE TO BIPOLARITY: EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

In the polarized environment of cold war, newly decolonised nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America found themselves under pressure to align with either of these superpowers. However, an alternative path emerged: **Non-Alignment**, a policy that offered these nations a third option—to remain independent of both alliances for a peaceful and cooperative co-existence. The foundation of the **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**



can be traced back to the mid-20th century, rooted in the camaraderie and shared vision of five influential leaders. Yugoslavia's **Josip Broz Tito**, India's **Jawaharlal Nehru**, and Egypt's **Gamal Abdel Nasser** initiated this vision during a crucial meeting in 1956. They were soon joined by Indonesia's President **Sukarno** and Ghana's leader **Kwame Nkrumah**. These five leaders, driven by the desire to promote sovereignty and independence for their nations, came to be recognized as the **founding figures of NAM**.

#### THE FIRST SUMMIT AND THE EXPANSION OF NAM

The vision of these leaders culminated in the first Non-Aligned Summit held in **Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in 1961**. This summit was the result of three converging factors:

1. The growing cooperation and solidarity among the founding nations.
2. The intensifying Cold War tensions, which increasingly threatened global peace.
3. The emergence of numerous newly independent African nations on the international stage.

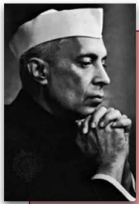
**EXPANSION OF NAM:** By 1960, the United Nations had welcomed 16 new African members, signalling the rise of decolonised countries as a significant force in global affairs. The **Belgrade Summit** was attended by representatives from 25 countries, marking the formal establishment of NAM. As the decades progressed, the movement expanded its membership significantly. By the 14th Summit in Havana in 2006, NAM had grown to include 116 member states and 15 observer countries. The most recent 19th Summit was held in January 2024 in Kampala, Uganda, under the theme *"Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence."* This expansion reflected

NAM's evolution into a broad-based international movement with diverse member states, each with its own political systems and interests.

**DEFINING NON-ALIGNMENT: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT:** At its foundation, NAM was centred around the idea of refraining from joining any military or political alliances. However, this stance should not be confused with isolationism or neutrality.

1. **Isolationism:** Historically, the U.S. practiced isolationism from its independence in 1787 until World War I, avoiding global affairs. In contrast, **non-aligned countries like India actively engaged in global diplomacy**, mediating between Cold War superpowers to promote peace and stability while remaining independent from dominant power blocs.
2. **Neutrality:** Neutral states avoid wars and refrain from taking sides, while **non-aligned states, like India, engaged in conflicts when necessary and actively worked** to prevent and resolve wars, playing a key role in international peacekeeping and diplomatic efforts.

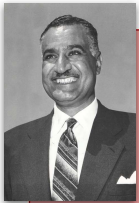
**NAM'S ROLE IN MANY CRISES:** During the **Suez Crisis of 1956**, NAM leaders like India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru were instrumental in mediating and de-escalating tensions between Egypt and the Western powers over control of the Suez Canal. In the **Congo Crisis (1960-1965)**, NAM member states, including Egypt and India, supported United Nations peacekeeping efforts, helping to preserve Congo's sovereignty amidst external pressures. During the **Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962**, NAM countries, notably India and Yugoslavia, acted as intermediaries between the United States and the Soviet Union, advocating for a peaceful resolution and averting the threat of nuclear conflict. Similarly, during the **Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988)**, NAM sought to mediate between the warring nations, promoting dialogue and peace, though the conflict ultimately continued for years. Finally, in response to the **Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979**, NAM **condemned the invasion and called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops**, underscoring its dedication to the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention. These interventions highlight NAM's proactive role in global diplomacy and its enduring relevance in promoting peace and stability in international affairs.



**Jawaharlal Nehru**  
Lifespan: 1889-1964  
Position: First Prime Minister of India (1947-64)  
Contributions: Advocated for Asian unity, decolonization, nuclear disarmament; promoted peaceful coexistence for world peace.



**Josip Broz Tito**  
Lifespan: 1892-1980  
Position: President of Yugoslavia (1945-80)  
Contributions: Fought against Germany in WWII; communist; maintained distance from the Soviet Union; forged unity in Yugoslavia.



**Gamal Abdel Nasser**  
Lifespan: 1918-1970  
Position: Ruler of Egypt (1952-70)  
Contributions: Supported Arab nationalism, socialism, and anti-imperialism; nationalized the Suez Canal, leading to the 1956 international conflict.



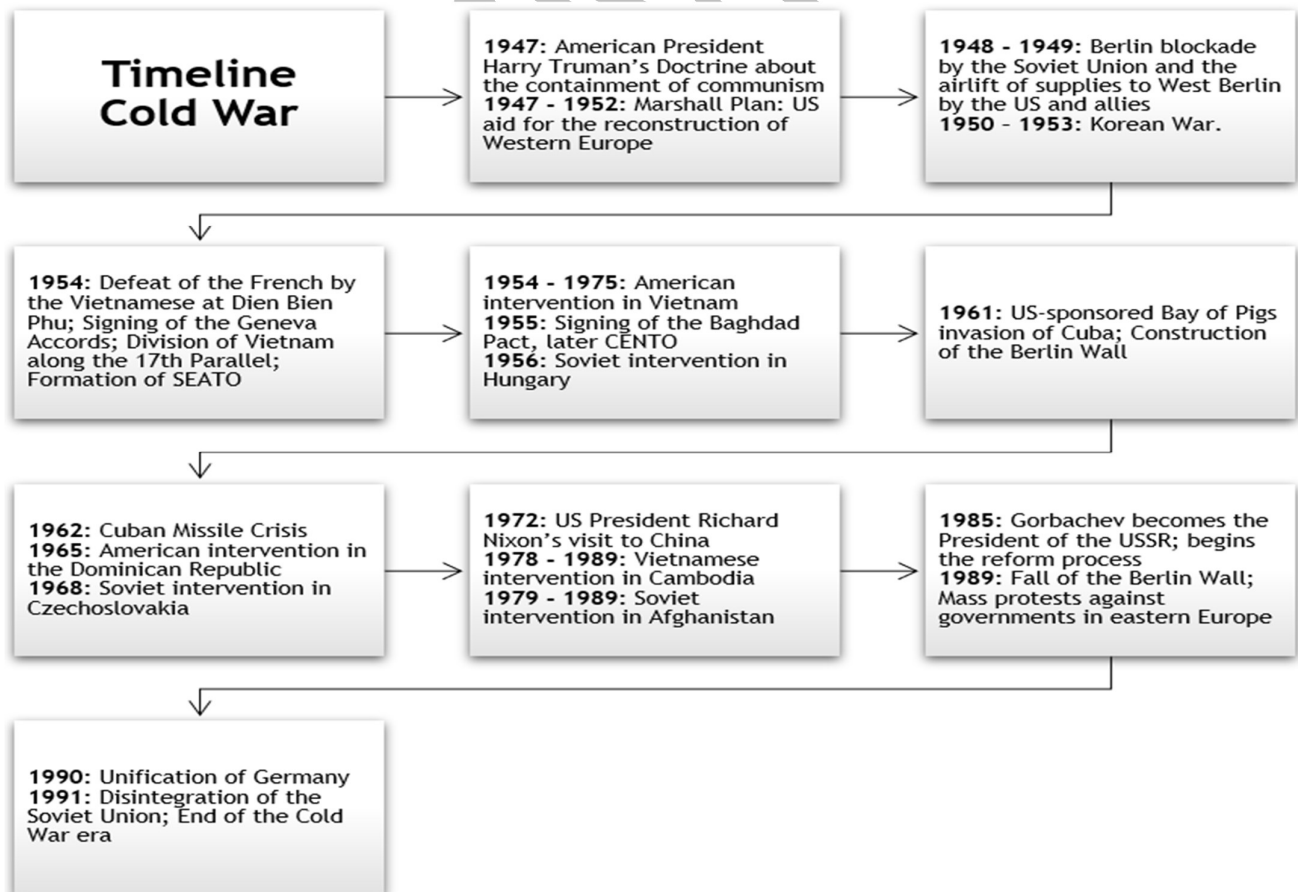
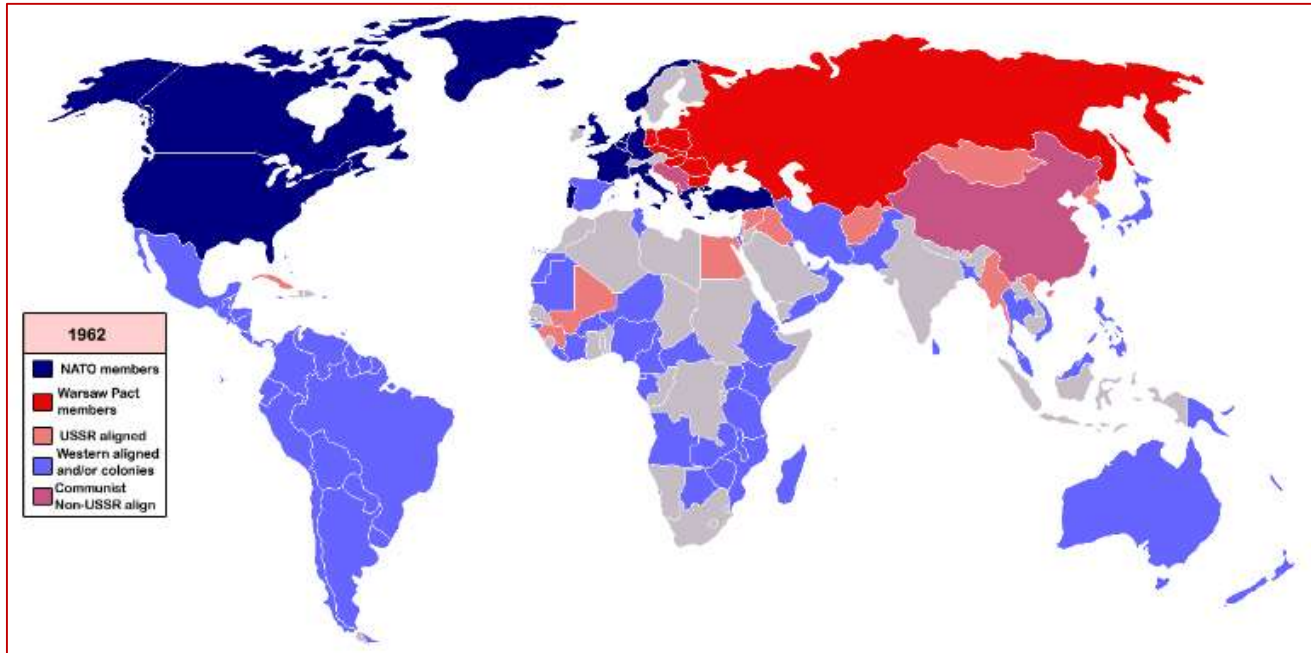
**Sukarno**  
Lifespan: 1901-1970  
Position: First President of Indonesia (1945-65)  
Contributions: Led the freedom struggle; supported socialism and anti-imperialism; organized the Bandung Conference; was overthrown in a military coup.



**Kwame Nkrumah**  
Lifespan: 1909-1972  
Position: First Prime Minister of Ghana (1952-66)  
Contributions: Led the freedom movement; advocated socialism and African unity; opposed neo-colonialism; removed in a military coup.



**RELEVANCE OF NAM'S PRINCIPLES:** As global dynamics continue to evolve, the principles of non-alignment—sovereignty, independence, and peace—remain relevant. The theme of the 2024 Kampala Summit, "Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence," reflects NAM's ongoing commitment to addressing contemporary global challenges through cooperative and multilateral approaches, continuing the legacy of its founding leaders.



## NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER (NIEO)

During the Cold War, the **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)** expanded its focus from merely mediating between superpowers to **addressing the economic challenges** faced by many of its member countries by mid-1970s. A significant portion of these nations, particularly the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), were struggling to achieve the economic development necessary for true independence. Without significant progress, they risked remaining dependent on wealthier nations, including their former colonial rulers. In response to these challenges, the **New International Economic Order (NIEO)** was established in 1974. The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** formally adopted the **Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order** on May 1, 1974, driven by the realization that economic progress was essential for true sovereignty and self-sufficiency. This initiative emerged from growing discontent among developing nations regarding the inequities of the global economic system.

The NIEO gained momentum following the 1972 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report titled "Towards a New Trade Policy for Development." The report outlined several key proposals aimed at reforming the global economic system. These included:

1. **Empowerment of LDCs:** The NIEO aimed to give LDCs control over their natural resources, ensuring they benefit from them rather than being exploited by developed nations.
2. **Improved Market Access:** It sought to enhance LDCs' access to Western markets, making international trade more favourable for their economic growth.
3. **Technology Transfer:** The NIEO aimed to lower the cost of technology transfers to LDCs, promoting their technological and economic development.
4. **Enhanced Role in Institutions:** It advocated for stronger representation of LDCs in international economic institutions to ensure their interests were considered.

The NIEO initiative was strongly supported by several prominent Non-Aligned countries. **India emerged as a leading advocate, promoting economic justice and equity on the global stage.** **Yugoslavia**, under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito, was instrumental in pushing for economic reforms and fostering solidarity among developing nations. **Egypt**, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser, was a vocal supporter, emphasizing the need for fair economic policies. **Indonesia**, under Sukarno, played a significant role in championing the cause of economic reforms for developing nations, while **Ghana**, under Kwame Nkrumah, was a key proponent of Pan-Africanism and economic independence for African nations. By the late 1980s, the NIEO encountered significant setbacks. Developed countries resisted the proposals, viewing them as detrimental to their interests, while internal divisions within NAM hindered a unified approach. These challenges led to the decline of the NIEO, though its legacy continues to underscore the need to address global economic inequalities and strive for a fairer international system.

## INDIA AND THE COLD WAR

As a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), India adopted a multifaceted approach to the Cold War, reflecting its strategic interests and commitment to global peace. India's strategy during this period was two-pronged: first, the country maintained a neutral stance on alliances, carefully avoiding alignment with either of the Cold War blocs led by the United States or the Soviet Union. This decision was crucial in **preserving India's sovereignty and maintaining an independent foreign policy.** Second, India actively advocated for the autonomy of newly independent

nations, opposing their inclusion in the rival alliances. By doing so, India sought to protect these nations from becoming pawns in the superpower rivalry, ensuring their independence and promoting a more balanced global order.

India's non-alignment was far from a passive stance; it involved active diplomacy and mediation in global affairs. As Jawaharlal Nehru asserted, non-alignment was not about "fleeing away" from responsibility but about playing a proactive role in reducing Cold War tensions. India engaged in conflict mediation to prevent escalation, as seen during the Korean War, and worked with other NAM members and regional and international organizations to counterbalance superpower influence. Nehru envisioned a "genuine commonwealth of free and cooperating nations"

that could contribute positively to easing Cold War rivalries, reflecting India's strategic interest in global peace and stability. The non-aligned policy provided India with several strategic benefits.

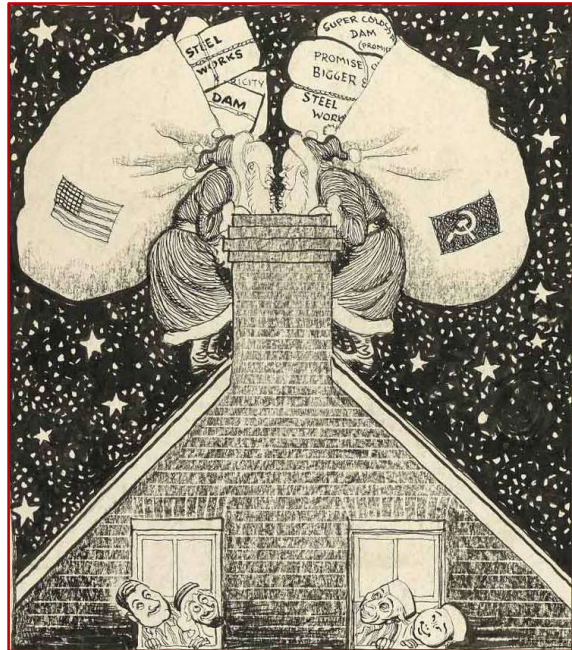
1. **Autonomous Decision-Making:** The non-aligned policy allowed India to make independent decisions and pursue its national interests without being constrained by the superpowers' agendas, which was crucial for maintaining its global independence.
2. **Strategic Balancing:** Non-alignment enabled India to balance the superpowers against each other. India could shift its stance if pressured by one bloc, preventing either side from dominating or coercing it.

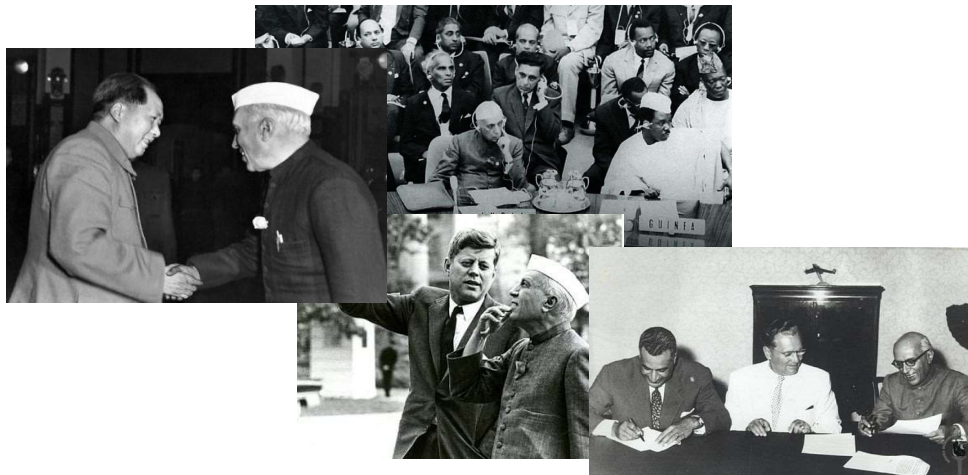
India's non-aligned stance faced criticism for being 'unprincipled' or inconsistent. Some observers argued that India avoided taking firm positions on key international issues under the guise of national interest. The signing of the **Treaty of Friendship with the USSR** during the Bangladesh crisis was viewed by some as aligning with the Soviet bloc. However, India maintained that the treaty was necessary for securing support during a critical period and did not preclude good relations with other countries, including the U.S.

With the Cold War's end and the USSR's dissolution in 1991, non-alignment's role in India's foreign policy diminished. However, its core values—collective strength of decolonized states and the pursuit of a more equitable global order—remain relevant. Non-alignment emphasized the potential of newly independent nations to act independently of major powers and sought to democratize the international system. These principles continue to influence India's foreign policy and the broader quest for global justice and balance.

## INDIA'S INVOLVEMENT VIA NAM

India's involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has been marked by several significant interventions that reflect its commitment to global peace, decolonization, and economic justice. Here are some of the best interventions by India through NAM:





1. **Korean War Mediation (1950-1953):** India, led by Prime Minister Nehru, played a key role in mediating the Korean War, proposing a ceasefire and participating in negotiations that led to the armistice.
2. **Cuban Missile Crisis (1962):** India, under Nehru, advocated for de-escalation and a peaceful resolution during the Cuban Missile Crisis, urging both superpowers to avoid military conflict.
3. **Bosnian War and Herzegovina Crisis (1990s):** India, through NAM, called for a peaceful resolution, condemned ethnic cleansing, and emphasized dialogue, sovereignty, and human rights.
4. **Decolonization Support:** India, as part of NAM, supported African and Asian independence movements, notably backing Algeria's fight for freedom and opposing apartheid in South Africa.
5. **New International Economic Order (1974):** India championed the NIEO to address economic inequalities, advocating for reforms to give developing countries greater control over their resources and fair market access.
6. **Suez Crisis (1956):** India condemned the invasion of Egypt by Britain, France, and Israel, supporting Egypt's sovereignty and contributing to the international pressure for troop withdrawal.
7. **NAM Leadership:** India played a leading role in NAM summits, shaping the movement's agenda on disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and anti-colonialism issues.

## CONCLUSION

The Cold War era, defined by the emergence of two dominant power blocs following the Second World War, profoundly shaped global politics and international relations. The geopolitical struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union extended across various arenas, influencing conflicts and diplomacy worldwide. This bipolarity faced significant challenges as new nations sought to assert their independence and reshape the global order. The Non-Aligned Movement emerged as a pivotal force during this period, advocating for a middle path that resisted alignment with either superpower and promoted peace and sovereignty. Concurrently, the quest for a New International Economic Order highlighted the need for global economic reforms to address inequities between developed and developing nations. India's strategic non-aligned stance and active diplomacy underscored its role in navigating Cold War tensions and advocating for a balanced international order. Collectively, these elements reflect a complex era of ideological confrontation, evolving alliances, and the pursuit of a more equitable global system.