

# The Non-Aligned Movement and Serbian Foreign Policy

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## ABSTRACT

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) today consists of 120 countries, which are almost two thirds of the total number of members of the United Nations. Its historical role in international relations is not insignificant, since the NAM has significantly contributed to ending the process of decolonization, reducing the political division of the world, strengthening solidarity among developing countries as well as achieving a more just world order. In the changed geopolitical circumstances that lead to the multipolarization of international political relations and the globalization of the world economy, the role of the NAM has become increasingly important. Its activities through the development of multilateral cooperation should eliminate various types of threats and risks to peace and security. Given that the NAM's attractiveness stems from its historical continuity and commitment to the establishment of a peaceful and democratic world order, as well as its political flexibility to adjust in the opposing relations of great powers and other important international actors, Serbia as the successor of the Yugoslav neutral foreign policy tradition, seeks to intensify cooperation with NAM countries, in order to strengthen its position in contemporary international relations.

**KEYWORDS:** The Non-Aligned Movement, Serbia, Serbian foreign policy, principles and goals

## POVZETEK

Gibanje neuvrščenih (NAM) danes sestavlja 120 držav, kar predstavlja skoraj dve tretjini celotnega števila članic Združenih narodov. Zgodovinska vloga gibanja v mednarodnih odnosih ni zanemarljiva, saj je NAM pomembno prispeval h končanju procesa dekolonizacije, k zmanjševanju politične delitve sveta, h krepitvi solidarnosti med državami v razvoju ter k doseganju pravičnejše svetovne ureditve. V spremenjenih geopolitičnih okoliščinah, ki vodijo v multipolarizacijo mednarodnih političnih odnosov in globalizacijo svetovnega gospodarstva, postaja vloga NAM vse pomembnejša. Z razvojem večstranskega sodelovanja naj bi dejavnosti NAM odpravile različne vrste groženj in tveganj za mir in varnost. Glede na to, da privlačnost gibanja izhaja iz njegove zgodovinske kontinuitete in zavezanosti k vzpostavitvi miroljubne in demokratične svetovne ureditve ter njegove politične fleksibilnosti za prilagajanje v nasprotujočih si odnosih velikih sil in drugih pomembnih mednarodnih akterjev, si Srbija kot naslednica jugoslovanske nevtralne zunanjepolitične tradicije prizadeva intenzivirati sodelovanje z državami NAM, da bi okrepila svoj položaj v sodobnih mednarodnih odnosih.

**KLJUČNE BESEDE:** gibanje neuvrščenih, Srbija, srbska zunanja politika, načela in cilji

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## INTRODUCTION

In the modern period of development of international relations, the international community is going through extreme uncertainties and dangers of re-regrouping and military-political polarization, which increases the negative effects on a number of aspects of interstate relations. The hotbeds of the crisis are deepening again, and new ones are emerging, just as they were during the Cold War between the two military-political blocs of the West and the East. Internal turmoil with uncertain outcomes is intensifying, and the increased tension between the United States and its allies on the one hand and Russia and China and their allies on the other does not contribute to a positive and balanced constellation of international relations, but rather to its imbalance and destabilization. The lack of unity in solving crucial economic problems in the relations between the countries of the North and the South also does not contribute to general development, but to social stagnation, poverty and decline. This situation presented the international community with a slew of additional problems, including environmental, health and cultural issues, which, combined with the negative consequences of revolutionary technical and technological changes, leave the world without perspective, i.e. without concrete answers and achievable and sustainable solutions. In the changed geopolitical circumstances and with the abundance of contradictory economic tendencies leading to the globalization of the world economy and the multipolarization of international political relations, the preservation of international peace and security remains the most important “objective necessity” of further progress and prosperity of all mankind.

The NAM in this sense is once again becoming an important factor in the international community's efforts to build a fairer and more democratic international order (Bogetić, 2019, p. 31; Tadić, 1976, p. 142).<sup>2</sup> Created as an antithesis to the politics of power and bloc division of the world, the NAM in modern international conditions independently or within the United Nations system, actively participates in solving general issues of human progress related to solving crucial economic and social problems such as poverty, pandemics, natural disasters, environmental pollution, nuclear disarmament, migration, terrorism, interna-

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<sup>2</sup> The aspirations of the NAM for the transformation of the international order have their roots in the so-called *Ten principles of Bandung*, which were proclaimed in the final Communiqué at the Conference of Asian-African Countries in 1955.

tional crime and interstate and internal conflicts. As one of the progressive and democratic political forces that are ready to fight together with other political forces in solving these problems, the NAM is also deeply engaged in affirming the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms generally associated with respect for human dignity, equality, solidarity, tolerance and social justice (Dimitrijević, 2021).

Although due to inherited relations in the world, embodied in irreconcilable aspirations of developed and underdeveloped countries and uncoordinated interests of great powers, the NAM in the meantime moved away from its original ideas, this does not mean that the NAM did not remain committed to its original goals and principles of peaceful coexistence that generally derive from the principles and goals of the United Nations. The core of his philosophy remained permanent, and the principles that form the basis of his political doctrine remained unchanged. In the new conditions, the idea has matured that the fulfillment of the goals and principles of the NAM can be achieved exclusively through the collective strategy of all its member states. Since the 120 member states of the NAM make up almost two-thirds of the United Nations membership, it is clear that this strategy can be implemented not only by anticipating the new ideological paradigm of multilateral international relations but also by rationalizing the use of existing United Nations institutions in the realization of common goals and principles.

A wide range of global and regional problems and issues that the NAM has faced over the past decades, and which were discussed at eighteen conferences of Heads of State or Government: in Belgrade (Yugoslavia) - 1961; in Cairo (Egypt) - 1964; in Lusaka (Zambia) - 1970; in Algeria (Algeria) - 1973; in Colombo (Sri Lanka) - 1976; in Havana (Cuba) - 1979; in New Delhi (India) - 1983; in Harare (Zimbabwe) - 1986; in Belgrade (Yugoslavia) - 1989; in Jakarta (Indonesia) - 1992; in Cartagena (Colombia) - 1995; in Durban (South Africa) - 1998; in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) - 2003; in Havana (Cuba) - 2006; in Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt) - 2009; in Tehran (Iran) - 2012; in Porlamar (Venezuela) - 2016 and in Baku (Azerbaijan) - 2019, they speak in favor of its reaffirmation and reactivation in the system of contemporary international relations.

In the current constellation of international relations, the NAM seems to be gaining in importance as a balanced and reliable partner whose

activities in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres can contribute to a more equal division of roles in the growing multipolar world order (Jevtić, 1976, p.46). This is evidenced by numerous multilateral actions within the institutions of the United Nations and regional international organizations, through which the NAM states seek to promote joint responsibility for fulfilling international obligations contained in important international legal and political documents such as the UN Millennium Declaration of September 2000, then such as acts of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, of the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in 2002, of the World Summit Outcome in 2005, of the 2010 High Level Plenary Meeting on Millennium Development Goals, of the Rio + 20 Conference on Sustainable Development held in 2012, of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai in 2015, then the Resolution 70/1 of UN General Assembly of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the Action Agenda adopted in Addis Ababa on the occasion of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development held in 2015, the Paris Agreement adopted within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015, the New Urban Agenda - Habitat III, adopted in Ecuador in 2016 at the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and acts of the High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation held in Buenos Aires 2019 (Final document, 2019, pp.36, etc).

In the mentioned multilateral actions and activities, in addition to full-fledged member states, states and international organizations that have observer status in the NAM often participate (currently there are 17 states and 10 international organizations). Among the observer states is Serbia, which has a strategic interest in improving its foreign policy position in more intensive cooperation with the NAM. Namely, Serbia, as the legal successor of Yugoslavia, which was one of the key protagonists of non-aligned politics, strives to contribute to the promotion of the NAM and its progressive ideas and goals in order to build fairer and more democratic international relations. In that regard, at the beginning of 2021, Serbia launched an initiative to mark the 60th anniversary of the First NAM Conference in Belgrade.

Using traditional ways of diplomatic cooperation with non-aligned countries, in early October 2021, Serbia organized this important gathering at a high political level. In addition to the fact that this Confer-

ence contributed to the improvement of mutual relations with non-aligned countries, it also pointed out the somewhat changed foreign policy orientation of Serbia. Namely, at this Conference, Serbia unequivocally expressed its desire to further strengthen mutual cooperation and interdependence with the “Third World” countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which would be based on solidarity, equality and mutual respect, which would enable its more optimal positioning in the existing international relations. This *per se*, would not exclude its previously declared foreign policy priorities and goals concerning European and wider international integration processes.

### **A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE OF NAM IN CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

As it is known, at the very beginning, non-alignment represented the foreign policy orientation of certain non-aligned countries in South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa. On the European continent, Yugoslavia was the leading socialist state that accepted and developed a policy of non-alignment. The non-alignment policy manifested not only opposition to the world’s bloc division, but also the aspiration of former colonial and enslaved peoples to achieve full emancipation and independence, which was to ensure free development according to their own choice without retaining any form of dependence on superpowers, that is, the centers of military, political and economic power. The emancipation of the people, which took place in the conditions of the Cold War and the bipolar international community, took place in parallel with the processes of decolonization and building a new system of international relations.

For the NAM at that time, the United Nations was the mainstay and instrument through which the NAM could fulfill its role in creating and transforming a new international order. Acting through the United Nations system, in the given circumstances of the Cold War (but also in the post-Cold War period), the NAM learned a lot about the realization of unique goals concerning the preservation of peace and security in the world and the promotion of friendly relations and international cooperation. Membership in the United Nations prevented the isolation of non-aligned countries and developed their cohesion on the basis of their own political orientation, which arose from the principles of active peaceful coexistence of formally sovereignly equal states and peoples (Bartoš, 1955, pp.17-19; Mates, 1974; Petković, 1974).

From the moment when the goals and methods of non-aligned politics were clearly profiled at the First Conference of NAM held in Belgrade in September 1961, through a kind of neutrality based not on abstinence or distancing from active participation in international relations, but *vice versa*, active participation in international relations both in times of peace and in times of war, the demands of the non-aligned countries for a positive transformation of the world developed and spread in parallel with the development of the NAM whose formal institutionalization began in the early 1970s, to last and develop to this day.

The evolution of the NAM in the last sixty years, despite occasional crises (the so-called *crisis of continuity and authority*), but also the rise (the so-called *golden age of non-alignment*), indicates that the NAM had a real role in creating and building a new and fairer international order (Bogetić, 2019). In this sense, the influence of ideas and doctrines of non-alignment in the domain of international politics demonstrates the progressive power of the NAM, which assimilated universal values such as striving for independence, equality and self-determination of peoples, then preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of newly independent states in their struggle against imperialism and neocolonialism, that is, against all kinds of aggression, occupation, racism, domination and torture.

In terms of the development and transformation of international economic relations, the strategic orientation of the NAM was and remains a struggle to bridge the growing tendency for “the rich to become richer and the poor to become poorer”. In this regard, closing the gap between the industrialized North and the underdeveloped South was the leading paradigm in the conception and implementation of the strategy of the New International Economic Order (NIEO), which under the auspices of the United Nations led to the adoption of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties. This international legal act, along with other subsequent reform acts adopted at the international level on the initiative or with the active participation of the NAM, enabled a more successful and non-discriminatory integration of the non-aligned countries into the international division of labor and world economic flows. The NAM was thus recognized at the universal international level, which was the impetus for its further work on the development and restructuring of international economic relations between developed and developing countries (North-South), and within developing and

less developed countries gathered within the South-South platform and the Group of 77 (which, in addition to the NAM member states, eventually included a number of transition countries from Eastern Europe, as well as other countries from profiled sub regional groups).

As a result of these processes in the international community, the NAM has gradually become an indispensable instrument of international economic cooperation that articulates the needs and demands of “Third World” countries that strive to strengthen their economic independence and achieve full economic freedom. Hence, today, besides the United Nations, the NAM remains the only cohesive political and economic factor of underdeveloped countries called to increase the efficiency of its external action as well as the effectiveness of its internal functioning in achieving world peace and solving the world’s most important economic, social and humanitarian problems (Milinković, 1996).

As a legitimate representative of developing countries, the NAM today has the historic task of actively contributing to the reaffirmation and strengthening of democracy and the rule of law as a precondition for achieving human progress and addressing key international issues in the political, economic and social spheres such as sustainable development and poverty eradication, prevention of pandemics, natural disasters, environmental pollution, climate changes, illegal migrations, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear disarmament, fight against terrorism and international crime and finally, general prevention of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Having in mind the changes that have taken place in international relations since the end of the 20th century, it is clear that for the consistent realization of such a task, the reform of the United Nations is first necessary, but also the reshaping of the NAM itself (Strydom, 2007; Keethaponcalan, 2016). The reaffirmation and reactivation of the NAM, therefore, presupposes a structural and functional reorganization of the world organization as well as its comparative institutional transformation that would be more concentrated on current international conditions that require preserving international peace and security and promoting economic and social development (Dimitrijević, 2021). In that sense, the new political reality does not deny the role and place of the NAM in the current constellation of international relations, since the NAM in general has not lost its determination to deal

with the above mentioned international issues, despite all the turbulence that has befallen the international community since the end of the Cold War to this day.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF SERBIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE NAM**

After the political changes in 2000, Serbia (then part of the FRY) was unwilling to raise the issue of renewed membership in the NAM. This, as is well known, was preceded by the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), during which non-aligned countries took different positions, in principle advocating that the Yugoslav dispute should be resolved through diplomacy and peaceful means. However, unfavorable political circumstances in the international community, and thus within the NAM, prevailed, because at the Conference of Heads of State or Government of the NAM in Jakarta in 1992, non-aligned states had divided opinions on the role of the FRY in the Yugoslav crisis. On the one hand, Islamic states blamed the FRY for the ongoing crisis (especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina); while on the other hand, African and Latin American countries supported the FRY's position regarding the disintegration of the SFRY. The question of the legitimacy of the FRY's further participation in the NAM was therefore an open political question.

Divided opinions arose from differing views on the qualification of the Yugoslav conflicts. Following the Jakarta Conference, two meetings of the Coordination Bureau were held in New York. At the first meeting, on September 30, 1992, the status of the FRY in the NAM was discussed. Due to conflicting opinions, no consensus was reached at the Coordination Bureau meeting on the status of Yugoslavia. A transitional and compromise solution was adopted to postpone the talks on the FRY without setting firm deadlines. At the initiative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the country that chaired the NAM at the time, a "gentlemen's agreement" was reached on the status of the Yugoslav delegation. In this way, the FRY tacitly accepted the suspension of its membership status in the NAM, until its international legal status in the United Nations and in the wider international community was clarified. Beginning in September 1992, the FRY was *de facto* denied the right to participate in the work of the NAM, although it was not formally excluded from its membership (according to the "empty chair" principle previously adopted in the case of Kampuchea) (Damian Lakićević, 2009, p.500).



From that period until today, Serbia's foreign policy attitude towards the NAM has significantly improved. Namely, although in the 1990s it was believed in Serbia that the NAM lost its importance in the post-Cold War period, time has confirmed that the former Yugoslavia's ties with the NAM remained very important for the foreign policy positioning of its successor states, especially for Serbia which, even in the most difficult moments of the Yugoslav crisis, remained faithful to the basic principles and goals of the NAM, and its constructive ways of cooperation between non-aligned states and "Third World" countries.

In the late 1990s, some Serbian political parties (mostly those of left-wing political orientation), renewed ties with the non-aligned, and after 2000, this progress was pushed aside by the then political belief that full membership in the European Union more significant than its earlier connections with NAM (Svilanović, 2001). For that reason, the FRY asked South Africa (which chaired the NAM at the time) to be granted observer status within this international political forum. Following the regulation of the FRY's membership in the United Nations, at the meeting of the NAM Coordination Bureau on 25 September 2001, the FRY's request for observer status in the NAM was accepted. This status was verified at the Ministerial Conference in November 2001 in New York.

Serbia's new positioning in the NAM and some progress in relations with non-aligned countries took place on the NAM Ministerial Conference held in Tehran in 2008. Namely, at that Conference, Serbia asked for the support of non-aligned countries in the UN General Assembly in order to address the International Court of Justice for an opinion on the legality of the unilaterally declared secession of the Kosovo and Metohija (KiM). The strengthening of mutual ties and the renewal of traditionally good relations between Serbia and non-aligned countries came to the fore on that occasion, which did not diminish Serbia's foreign policy orientation to join the European Union (Jeremić, 2009).

It is very interesting that in that same period, Serbia presented its foreign policy priorities to the world. Thus, in the statements of Serbian officials, four pillars were mentioned as Serbia's foreign policy priorities: cooperation with the European Union, the United States, Russia and China (Isac Fond, 2013, p.17). Although nowhere was the possibility of renewing the membership in the NAM officially mentioned, in essence, it was implied that the renewal of cooperation with non-

aligned countries would contribute to the strengthening of relations with these four international factors.

Namely, it was considered that the revival of that cooperation is not incompatible with Serbia's aspirations to join the European Union and to build constructive relations with the great powers (USA, Russia and China). According to the Serbian political elite, strengthening cooperation with the NAM could therefore be in the function of the foreign policy positioning occupied by the European Union itself through individual agreements with "Third World" countries (which includes cooperation of the great powers and international factors with these countries). This is indicated by the organization of a ministerial Conference in Belgrade in 2009, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the NAM, when the FRY, under the presidency of Egypt, managed to revive political cooperation with non-aligned countries (Beta, 2009). This political event confirmed that the revival of cooperation with non-aligned countries is not only for Serbia's economic interest, but also a significant political factor, the so-called a "reservoir" of votes in international organizations and forums (primarily in the United Nations and its agencies) that leads to its better international positioning, as well as a return to the international political scene (Đukanović, 2011, pp.36-47).

This foreign policy orientation was obviously imbued with a voluntaristic assessment of overall international relations, as well as an opportunistic attitude according to which the NAM as a significant international actor works not only for its own benefit, but also in the general interest as a responsible player and connecting factor in solving the most important international problems. Since the NAM takes into account not only the personal interests and needs of the current generation of the world's population, but also the interests of other countries and the needs of future generations, cooperation with it could represent the realization of Serbian foreign policy goals and priorities. This is all the more so because Serbia represents the international legal successor of the former Yugoslavia, which was one of the leading founders and members of the NAM. In the current international circumstances, Serbia needs to insist on consistent adherence to the principles of active peaceful coexistence confirmed in international political practice, *inter alia*, by respecting the principles contained in the United Nations Charter, such as the prohibition of the use of force or the threat of force against sovereignty, territorial integrity and polit-

ical independence of states, prohibition of intervention in the internal affairs of other states, prohibition of exerting pressure on other states, then by accepting obligations to respect fundamental human rights, equality and the right of peoples to self-determination, resolving international disputes peacefully, promoting international cooperation and consistent fulfillment of all international obligations.

Following the mentioned foreign policy direction, Serbia, which is dominated by the “right-left” government (coalition of the Serbian Progressive Party and the Socialist Party of Serbia), wholeheartedly tries to use its foreign policy heritage to protect its vital interests and reaffirm its reputation in the international community. In defining its strategic orientation, Serbia has remained limited by one important shortcoming, and that is a clear foreign policy strategy which cannot be replaced with more or less formal statements by officials or with the solutions adopted in its national security, defense and EU accession strategies (Evropski pokret u Srbiji, 2011).

#### **PRIORITIES OF SERBIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN COOPERATION WITH THE NAM**

Although the Law on Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia stipulates that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “proposes to the Government a strategy for the development of foreign affairs and other measures shaping the Government’s foreign policy”, and that the Minister of Foreign Affairs forms advisory bodies to formulate foreign policy proposals, such a legal possibility not realized in practice. Namely, Serbia has consciously postponed the definition of its foreign policy priorities in accordance with the stated regulations, indirectly relying on voluntaristic statements of its political officials, more or less formal statements of the Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as parliamentary resolutions.

Thus, for example, it can be interpreted that the basic foreign policy priorities derive from the Resolution of the National Assembly on the Protection of Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity and the Constitutional Order of the Republic of Serbia. Then, that the foreign policy priorities derive from the interpretation of the official statements of the Government of the Republic of Serbia which support the basic principles of international law and the implementation of the assumed international obligations. Also, these priorities can be derived from the Decision declaring the Republic of Serbia a military neutral state. Referring to

this Decision, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has repeatedly stated that it wants to build good relations with all countries in the world, including non-aligned countries. It is also interesting that the statement of the current President of Serbia states that “the Government of the Republic of Serbia continues to pursue an active, clearly profiled and designed foreign policy, which contributes to a better positioning of the Republic of Serbia at the regional, European and wider international level” (Vučić, 2016).

It seems interesting that the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Nemanja Starović, almost pointed out one such approach, specifying that it would be the most optimal solution in the current circumstances. He explained that Serbia remained committed to the basic principles on which NAM is based, such as peaceful cooperation and sovereign equality. According to him, these principles have “permanent, timeless value, but also special significance in today’s world when the great powers are increasingly inclined to unilateral action, to which the only real answer is multilateralism”. (Euronews Serbia, 2021).

In the elaboration of foreign policy priorities, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Nikola Selaković, went a little further. He said in a statement on the occasion of the ministerial conference: “The NAM has been with us throughout his history a beacon of freedom and that today, in a time of serious global challenges, the NAM has the opportunity to reaffirm its libertarian traditions and advocate for a world of equals. Serbia, as a military neutral and politically independent state, will give its most sincere contribution to such goals”. Referring to the current threat of a Covid-19 pandemic, which he said had clearly shown that inequality, lack of solidarity and empathy in the world had become very apparent in the harshest way, the minister added: “We hope that by strengthening mutual ties and cooperation, as a group of states and peoples that share the same values and interests, we will strengthen our common capacity to face the challenges of tomorrow”. Considering that these challenges are already ahead of us (as he himself was convinced during his “vaccination diplomatic mission” in Africa and the Middle East), the Minister emphasized “that international law should be a pillar of the world’s political and security architecture” and that “many members of the NAM are aware that it is by insisting on international law that they are working in their favor and in favor of preserving regional and global stability” (Beta, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

The issue of the role and place of the NAM in modern international relations is not questioned. The merits of the NAM in reducing the military-political division of the world, strengthening solidarity among developing countries (South-South cooperation), as well as in conducting a North-South dialogue, in order to achieve a fairer international economic order, continue and deepen to this day.

From the historical experience so far, it is clear that the United Nations encouraged the emergence and development of the NAM. The United Nations was a universal political forum in which non-aligned states could develop their activities and pursue their interests together with the interests of the international community as a whole. The world organization provided opportunities in which the policy of non-alignment is affirmed and through which the bloc pressures of the East and the West can be resisted. The United Nations played a decisive role because it enabled the rapprochement of the NAM states, which in the process of decolonization gained independence and freedom from the yoke of the former colonial powers.

The active participation of the NAM in the activities of the United Nations and its agencies has grown over time with the increasing number of the non-aligned countries in the membership of the world organization. Today, the NAM consists of 120 countries, which is two thirds of the total number of members of the United Nations. With an impressive and numerically superior voting power, the NAM has practically influenced the course of contemporary international relations inside and outside the United Nations system. In this way, the United Nations has become the NAM significant stronghold, an irreplaceable system for achieving its goals and principles, and an important instrument for justifying its real strength in international relations. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Serbia is interested in deepening cooperation with the NAM, since in that way it can optimize its foreign policy position and harmonize its foreign policy priorities with the goals of the wider international community.

In general, cooperation with the NAM can lead to the expansion of opportunities for Serbia's proactive action in achieving its own vital interests. However, such situation presupposes a clearer definition of foreign policy priorities through the foreign policy strategy, which

Serbia should adopt in the near future. With its foreign policy strategy, Serbia would be able to clearly define its political, economic, social and cultural goals in cooperation with the NAM countries and the countries of the “Third World”. The strategy would also enable it to achieve an adequate political climate at the domestic level, which is an important precondition for the institutionalization of bilateral relations with all important non-aligned countries.

At the multilateral level, Serbia also can use United Nations mechanisms, as well as regional international organizations and forums (e.g. the African Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, etc.). Strengthening cooperation with non-aligned countries would contribute to the improvement of Serbia’s international position, which would be very important in the negotiation process on regulating the status of KiM. In this regard, Serbia can use the good experiences of Yugoslavia, which once faced serious political problems, especially when it came into conflict with the USSR and the Eastern Bloc, and when its ties with the non-aligned allowed it to get out of the international blockade and to regain its reputation on the international political scene.

Serbia can use the foreign policy tradition of Yugoslav cooperation with non-aligned countries in an optimal way in the process of European integration. Namely, Serbia can use the good political and economic ties previously established with the “Third World” in strengthening its relations with the members of the European Union and other countries in the Western Balkans. Such an approach in no way deviates from Serbia’s foreign policy commitment to future membership in the European Union. Moreover, such an approach can be of mutual benefit in the process of harmonizing foreign policy positions with the European Union (Politika, 2021).

Finally, Serbia’s cooperation with the NAM can open new avenues of global cooperation, by which the NAM member states can get closer to developed countries of the world, including member states of the European Union (Damian Lakićević, 2003, p.169, Đukanović, Lađevac, 2009, p.358).

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