

**SPEECH BY  
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AT THE XIV NAM SUMMIT UNDER AGENDA ITEM 8 "THE PURPOSES AND  
PRINCIPLES AND THE ROLE OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT IN THE  
PRESENT INTERNATIONAL JUNCTURE" AT HAVANA  
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Mr. Chairman,

In my opening statement this morning I have already addressed some aspects of the theme of this General Debate. I would, however, like to take this opportunity to elaborate on some of these points.

1. I had made the point that the purposes and principles of our Movement have remained valid to this day. We, member states of NAM, have remained true to the core values of the Movement. By and large, we have maintained our unity on broad issues on its agenda. In my view, our Movement is as relevant today as it was forty-five years ago. Indeed, it could be argued that given the circumstances and trends of our contemporary world, the existence of NAM has become even more important than before.

2. In the era of the Cold War, NAM had a definite, critical moderating role in global politics. In this era of creeping unilateralism, NAM should use its strength in numbers to check against excesses in the handling of international issues, especially regarding matters of peace and security. NAM should be able to use principled positions to demand for justice and equity in international relations.

3. We can translate our numbers into actual strength in terms of taking initiatives at the United Nations and other relevant international fora, particularly for promoting our collective interests. Comprising almost two-thirds of the membership of the United Nations, NAM should be in a position to empower the General Assembly, the legislative organ of the world body, where our strength can be democratically exercised without the distorting effect of the veto.

4. Our purposes and principles remain valid because, while the world has indeed changed, it has not changed that much or changed to our satisfaction. Many of the ills of the world, and the causes we fought for, which I had alluded to earlier, still remain. They demand our strong commitment and resolve to continue with the struggle until our goals are achieved.

5. What is required of us today is to redefine our Movement in the context of the needs of the times and to determine the ways and means of defending and advancing our interests. We must be clear of what these needs are, and be able to generate the political will to act collectively. We must also have a clear concept of

our role, and formulate appropriate plans and strategies, as well as establish networking, linkages and partnerships with members of the international community, particularly the influential and wealthy countries of the North, as represented by the EU and the G8.

6. While NAM should continue to be the forum and platform for the articulation of the views and positions of developing countries on issues of direct concern and importance to the Movement, we must, however, not allow it to be merely a "talk shop". We should not be long on rhetoric but short in action. Having articulated our common positions in the international fora, it is incumbent upon us to consistently uphold them at every level so as to project our unity and solidarity. For this purpose, it would be extremely helpful if other members of NAM could reinforce, and not dilute, the positions articulated by the Chair of the Movement on these issues so as to reflect the seriousness and unity of the Movement. We should avoid giving the impression that we are less than united as a Movement, as this could be exploited by others to weaken us further, as they have tried from time to time.

7. As you know, questions have often been raised since the end of the Cold War as to the continued relevance of our Movement. We, members of NAM, have to be vigilant against all these moves, as in my view, NAM has a unique role and purpose as a forum of the developing countries which cannot fully be replaced by these new fora or organisations.

8. Clearly, as I said earlier, the challenges confronting us are many and varied; hence the importance of strengthening our unity and solidarity. We need to act in concert in order to defend, preserve and promote our collective interests. This is to ensure that our views and positions can be more effectively promoted in the global arena. For this we need to resolve the conflict that occasionally arises between our national interests and the interests of NAM. Clearly, for the sake of NAM's credibility, standing and clout as the main forum of the South, we need to adjust or reconcile our narrow national interests with the larger collective interests of the Movement.

9. Also, as part of the revitalisation process, we need to expand and deepen our cooperation by going into new areas of common interest, programmes and activities, which can bring us closer together. During its chairmanship, Malaysia has made some efforts in this direction. We hope that further efforts would be made in order to add to the relevance and usefulness of the Movement to its members.

10. Those are some additional points that I wanted to make in this General Debate. The bottom line of our debate, indeed of all our efforts, is to ensure that not only NAM is still relevant, but that it is thriving and is a force to be reckoned with in global affairs. Of course, the challenge is for us to add substance to our rhetoric. Our glorious past during the earlier phase of our struggle should provide us with the inspiration to propel us forward to greater heights of achievement as a Movement.

11. I am confident that our deliberations here in Havana, coupled with the robust leadership that would be provided that Cuba, would bear the fruits that we desire - an active, even pro-active, united and cohesive NAM, whose views are sought and respected by the international community.

Thank you.