

China's Attitude to the Non-aligned Movement and its Changes (1992-2021)

-- An Investigation Centered on People's Daily

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Abstract

Since its establishment in 1961, the Non-aligned Movement has always been on the world political stage as the spokesperson for the vast number of developing countries. , Non-group purposes and principles remain unchanged, and then re-positioning will continue to play a role. At the same time, China officially joined the Non-aligned Movement and became its observer country. Corresponding to the rise and fall of the Non-aligned Movement itself, China's attitude has also changed. From the report of the People's Daily, we can see the stages and continuity of China's attitude. Sex, interaction without dependence, connection without bondage, play a unique role in it with a more proactive attitude.

Keywords

Post-cold War; China; Non-aligned Movement; People's Daily.

1. Introduction

During the Cold War, China did not join the Non-aligned Movement, but it has always highly valued the Non-aligned Movement, believing that China and the Non-aligned Movement share the same philosophy and purpose, both firmly oppose hegemonism and power politics, and support third-world countries in their pursuit of Genuine independence and autonomy, complimenting the policies and practices of the Non-aligned Movement. The Chinese government has sent congratulations to all the summit meetings of the Non-aligned Movement. But at that time the interaction with the Non-aligned Movement was indirect because of China's isolation. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, China has still paid attention to the Non-aligned Movement. In particular, in 1992, China officially became an observer state of the Non-aligned Movement. The interaction with the Non-aligned Movement changed from indirect to direct. , the two have experienced a very close honeymoon period. However, with the passage of time and the changes in the international situation, the Non-aligned Movement has become controversial, and the differences among the internal countries have become more and more exposed, and its influence on the international stage has gradually weakened. Due to the weakening of the Non-aligned Movement itself, China's attitude towards the Non-aligned Movement has also undergone an obvious process of transformation. The academic research on the relationship between China and the Non-aligned Movement mostly focuses on the Cold War period. Therefore, this article focuses on the most authoritative and comprehensive report of the People's Daily, takes the 30 years after the Cold War as the time period, and takes the Chinese government as the object. Taking the change of attitude as a clue, this paper investigates the Non-aligned Movement, in order to sort out the development of the Non-aligned Movement after the Cold War, explore the changes in the relationship between China and the Non-aligned Movement, and observe the dynamic changes in China's attitude towards the Non-aligned Movement in the past 30 years.

2. The First Stage 1992-2002: Extremely Close Ties, Highly Appreciated by China

In 1992, the Cold War had just ended. With the 10th Summit of Non-aligned Countries, China officially became an observer state. In the 10 years to 2002, the People's Daily published a total of 77 articles on the Non-aligned Movement. Since the end of the Cold War, China has paid the most attention to the Non-aligned Movement and the period of closest relationship. During this period, China's attitude was very positive and proactive. Most of the support and praise for the Non-aligned Movement were given.

(1) Express gratitude to the Non-aligned Movement for accepting China, and stress the connection between the two

When applying to join the Non-aligned Movement, China has been monitoring the attitudes of its member states. Before the 10th Non-aligned Summit, the People's Daily published an article on January 3, 1992 entitled "Pakistan Prime Minister Says: Cooperation between the Non-aligned Movement and China is Good for World Peace". , China is very concerned about the views of the Non-aligned countries on China's participation in the Non-aligned movement, and the Non-aligned countries do indeed welcome it.

As early as the end of 1991, there were 42 countries that expressed their support for China's participation in the Non-aligned Movement in written or oral form, including India, Yugoslavia, Egypt and other major sponsors of the Non-aligned Movement. [1] On May 14, 1992, the foreign ministers of North Korea, Zimbabwe, and India met with Chen Huaqiu, then Chinese Vice Foreign Minister. North Korean Foreign Minister Kim Yong-nam said: "The members of the Non-aligned Movement all look forward to close cooperation with China." The Indian Foreign Minister Palero believes that China's accession has "great practical significance", and Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister Shamuyari directly pointed out that "all Non-aligned Movement member states warmly welcome and fully support China's accession". [2] On May 15, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Jovic and Indonesian Foreign Minister Alatas directly praised China's participation, saying that China had established "formal and practical" links with the Non-aligned Movement. [3] On October 19, 1995, at the 11th Summit of Non-aligned Countries, the host Colombian President Samper expressed his "appreciation" for China's support for the Non-aligned Movement and the good cooperation between the two sides. [4]

On May 14, 1992, the plenary meeting of the Ministerial Conference of the Coordination Department of the Non-aligned Movement unanimously agreed to accept China as an observer. At this time, Vice Foreign Minister Liu Huaqiu conveyed the sincere gratitude of the Chinese government to all the member states of the Non-aligned Movement, Yugoslavia, the current presidency, and Indonesia, which will take over the presidency, and expressed the common experience, struggle and mission to bring China to the Non-aligned state. movement together. On May 16, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed appreciation for the Non-aligned Movement's decision to accept China, and pointed out that China has always adhered to the cause of the Non-aligned Movement, and the basic principles of China's independent foreign policy are consistent with the purpose of the Non-aligned Movement. This has been reiterated and emphasized many times in subsequent meetings. Liu Huaqiu also said at the 11th Non-aligned Summit in 1995: "Not only do China and the vast majority of developing countries have no fundamental conflict of interest, but they have many common interests." will continue to be a reliable and sincere friend of the Non-aligned Movement." [5] This expression was also quoted at subsequent summits.

In a word, China and the member countries of the Non-aligned Movement are both developing countries, share a similar historical background of anti-imperialist and anti-aggression, share the common goal of seeking economic growth and security, and have a stake in opposing

hegemonism and power politics. The greatest common divisor of is independence and development.

(2) Firmly support the role of the Non-aligned Movement in the new era

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the international situation changed dramatically, and the confrontation between the two military blocs ceased to exist. China has just joined the Non-aligned Movement and is a staunch defender of the Non-aligned Movement.

At the ministerial meeting of the Coordination Department of the Non-aligned Movement on May 14, 1992, Liu Huaqiu affirmed the necessity of its existence from the principles and purposes of the Non-aligned Movement. The direction is in line with the trend of the times, reflects the aspirations of the people of all countries, and has passed the test of history, but still has strong vitality.”[6] This is the first time the Chinese government has expressed its position on the issue of the existence of the Non-aligned Movement since the end of the Cold War, and its position is clear. and firm.

In the same year, on the eve of China's first attendance at the 10th Summit of Non-aligned Countries as an observer, Foreign Minister Qian Qichen pointed out in an interview with reporters at the airport that changes in the international situation are a fact, but the Non-aligned Movement is a forum for developing countries, and its role remains unchanged. very large. It was the same statement when I met with Zambian Vice President Mwanawasa two days later, which clarified the nature of the Non-aligned Movement. Foreign Minister Qian Qichen's speech at the General Assembly proceeded from reality and demonstrated the reason for the continued existence of the Non-aligned Movement, that is, the problems of peace and development faced by mankind have not been resolved, and the Non-aligned Movement still has a long way to go. First, the original conflict has not been resolved. Although the bipolar pattern has disintegrated, power politics and hegemonism still exist. Contradictions and conflicts once suppressed by the bipolar pattern have erupted one after another. Many third world countries are still struggling with poverty. [7] Therefore, far from being outdated, the Non-aligned Movement should play a more important role.

In 1994, the People's Daily published an article entitled "Non-aligned Movement Still Vibrant" in the International Forum column, which once again clarified China's attitude. The article pointed out that, far from being outdated, the Non-aligned Movement should continue to defend the interests of third world countries in international affairs.

At the 11th Non-aligned Summit in 1995, Liu Huaqiu described the Non-aligned Movement in the new era with "strong vitality". At the 12th Non-aligned Summit in 1998, Tang Jiaxuan described the Non-aligned Movement as "a force that cannot be ignored". After that, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs praised the contribution of the Non-aligned Movement in a "constructive role" at the press conference.

(3) Pay attention to the economic turn of the Non-aligned Movement

In 1991, the then Kenyan President Moi realized the predicament of the Non-aligned Movement in the new international environment. He appealed: "The Non-aligned Movement should now begin to seek a new role in the rapidly changing world geopolitics. Member states need to reconsider how to adapt to the new world order.”[8] The key to this “new role” being different from the “old role” is the shift of focus from the political field to the economic field. The focus of political coordination has shifted to economic coordination, and from diminishing confrontation to ever-expanding cooperation.” [9]

China also recognizes this. Foreign Minister Qian believed that the tenth meeting of governments and summits of Non-aligned countries will serve as a link between the past and the future. Because this meeting stands at the intersection of history and takes place at a time when the bipolar pattern is shifting to a multipolar world.

On July 28, 1992, People's Daily reported the economic turn of the Non-aligned Movement for the first time after the end of the Cold War. That is, President Suharto of Indonesia called on the Non-aligned countries to focus on economic construction. [10] Afterwards, when Suharto met with Foreign Minister Qian Qichen on September 3, he clearly stated that the focus of the Non-aligned Movement should be adjusted appropriately. In addition to political issues, it should also be concerned with economic issues. The People's Daily published on June 9, 1994, "Non-aligned Movement Still Full of Vitality", which pointed out that the focus of activity shifted to economic development, strengthening South-South cooperation, and promoting North-South dialogue, which would bring new vitality to the movement. At the 11th summit, Liu Huaqiu made it clear that the meeting attached great importance to economic issues; the Durban Declaration issued by the 12th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of Non-aligned Countries in 1997 emphasized that poverty eradication and economic growth are important to developing countries. Said should be placed in an overriding position. It can be seen that the Non-aligned Movement pays far more attention to economic issues than politics, and China's focus has changed accordingly.

The Non-aligned Movement is committed to the establishment of a new world economic order. On this issue, China's attitude is positive. At the tenth meeting of foreign ministers of Non-aligned countries in 1992, Indonesia's Alatas stated that a new situation of dependence should be avoided, that is, economic dependence known as neo-colonialism. At this summit, Indian Prime Minister Inderjit Singh pointed out that many aids are attached with non-economic conditions; Iranian President Rafsanjani expressed the need to form a healthy economic climate; Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir pointed out that the environment, human rights, democracy Institutions have become tools of economic control in developed countries; the heads of government of Pakistan, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania have all proposed resuming North-South dialogue to address extreme economic imbalances. Foreign Minister Qian Qichen also expressed his attitude on behalf of China, calling on developed countries to show sincerity, not to put any additional conditions on aid to developing countries, and to respect their rights and needs, so as to establish a fair, reasonable and mutually beneficial international cooperation. New economic order. Finally, in 1994, the 11th Non-aligned Foreign Ministers' Meeting adopted the "Final Document", which formed a consensus on "rejecting anyone's attempts to expand trade and provide economic assistance with human rights".

3. The Second Stage: 2003-2012, Continue to Support, But Think Calmly

After entering the 21st century, the influence of the Non-aligned Movement continued to weaken, and many problems became more obvious. At the same time, this period was also a critical period when China joined the World Trade Organization and its economic growth entered the "Golden Decade". There has been a subtle change in the attitude of the movement, with less enthusiasm and expectations than it was in the previous 10 years. From the Thirteenth Summit of Non-aligned Countries in 2003 to 2012, although China continued to pay attention to the Non-aligned Movement, it was far from the first stage. Compared with the first stage, China is no longer like a guest, no longer praised blindly, but like a responsible brother who calmly analyzes and thinks about the Non-aligned Movement, speaks out about its shortcomings, and can put forward China's future development. plan. But in general, China is still optimistic about the future of the Non-aligned Movement, and its attitude is still positive and positive, and China has shown a more self-confidence in it. A more active image, the voice is also growing.

(1) The focus on the Non-aligned Movement has weakened

In the first stage from 1992 to 2003, the 77 articles on the Non-aligned Movement published by the People's Daily contained more than 40,000 words, while in the second stage from 2003 to

2012, there were only 23 articles of about 16,000 words, a decrease of 16,000 words. more than double.

Since the tenth Non-aligned Summit, the Chinese delegation has basically been attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, namely Qian Qichen and Tang Jiaxuan. The first summit meeting of the 21st century, the thirteenth summit meeting of the Non-aligned Movement, was attended by Vice Foreign Minister Wang Guangya, the fourteenth Vice Minister Yang Jiechi, and the fifteenth Vice Foreign Minister Wang Guangya. Minister He Yafei and Assistant Minister Ma Zhaoxu for the 16th time. It can be seen that the size and level of the delegation to the summit cannot be compared with the previous meetings.

This phenomenon is largely determined by the declining status and role of the Non-aligned Movement in the world. At the 13th Non-aligned Summit in 2003, the new Executive Chairman Mahathir proposed to "revitalize the Non-aligned Movement". [11] It can be seen that the Non-aligned Movement has weakened somewhat compared to the last century. On February 26, 2003, "People's Daily" published a commentary "Peace for Development - Commentary on the Thirteenth Summit of the Non-aligned Movement", which clearly pointed out that the theme of this meeting was "Facing the New Situation". , how to revitalize the Non-aligned Movement". [12] The "Non-aligned Movement Meets New Challenges" published in 2006 reported on Cuba's call to reshape the Non-aligned Movement into an indispensable force in the world, and pointed out that "after the end of the Cold War, with the The emergence of some internal contradictions caused the Non-aligned Movement to gradually sink into a low ebb." [13] The Non-aligned Movement is no longer in its sights.

(2) Support the Non-aligned Movement to play a role within the framework of the United Nations

On the one hand, the influence of the Non-aligned Movement is not as strong as it used to be; on the other hand, the loose mechanism of the Non-aligned Movement leads to its lack of binding force, so the Non-aligned Movement is quite troublesome in dealing with conflicts in important parts of the world. United Nations to maintain order.

At the 13th Non-aligned Movement Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2003, South African Foreign Minister Zuma proposed that the United Nations should play a leading role in the peaceful settlement of the Iraqi issue. The summit meeting a few days later also agreed to "respond to various challenges and problems on the basis of strict compliance with the UN Charter" and "resolutely condemn unilateral military actions and threats to use force against other countries without the authorization of the UN". During this period, local conflicts continued, but the Non-aligned Movement played a very limited role in military conduct. Wang Guangya, a Chinese representative who participated in the meeting, agreed with the meeting. He proposed to give full play to the role of the United Nations in international affairs, and that unilateralism and the threat of force all deviate from the UN Charter. Later, at the 14th Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Wang Yi also emphasized the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations and improve the international multilateral mechanism. dominance in international affairs". [14]

China firmly upholds the international system with the United Nations at its core, and naturally also believes that the Non-aligned Movement should place itself under the framework of the United Nations.

(3) Rethinking the Non-aligned Movement

Compared with the first stage, China has moderated its enthusiasm for the Non-aligned Movement in the second stage, and re-understood the Non-aligned Movement from a rational level. In the People's Daily's report on the Non-aligned Movement during this period, the words "compliment" and "compliment" did not appear, but rather "support".

Based on the reality that the various problems of the Non-aligned Movement are clearly exposed, China does not hide it, but directly points out. In 2009, People's Daily published "Non-

aligned Movement Entering the "Sharm el-Sheikh Period", which listed the comments of scholar Chen Xiangyang at the end. On the basis of analyzing the international situation, he pointed out that the resolution of the Non-aligned Movement meeting was not binding. Organizational positioning and goals are facing adjustment, and it is necessary to find a new positioning that is in line with their own reality in the multi-polar pattern and the new situation of global governance. At the same time, Non-aligned countries are also constantly dividing and reorganizing, and they need to build new consensus and strengthen solidarity and mutual assistance. [15]

This kind of outspokenness has never been seen before. The most fundamental factor is the objective factors of the Non-aligned Movement itself, as well as the subjective factors of China. While pointing out the shortcomings, China has also demonstrated its due responsibilities as a major country, and put forward Chinese views and Chinese solutions on issues that urgently need improvement.

In 2003, at the Thirteenth Summit of Non-aligned Countries, Wang Guangya expounded China's views on safeguarding the rights and interests of developing countries and promoting the establishment of a new international political and economic order, and proposed that China and other developing countries would expand cooperation fields and improve cooperation effects. After that, at the 14th Congress, Yang Jiechi also expounded China's views on safeguarding the development rights of developing countries and the further development of the Non-aligned Movement, and supported the reform of the Non-aligned Movement in order to exert its potential, revitalize its vitality, and achieve greater progress. Participate in the resolution of major international issues in a flexible and proactive manner.

At this time, China did not just follow other countries to support the Non-aligned Movement meeting, but had its own clear views and opinions. Therefore, although China did not pay as much attention to the Non-aligned Movement as it was in the first stage, China's Non-aligned The sound in motion is intensified.

4. The Third Stage: 2012 to Present, Intermittently, Only Focusing on Important Issues

From the 16th summit in 2012 to the end of 2021, the People's Daily published only 9 articles related to it, and in these articles, the terms expressing China's concerns about the Non-aligned Movement were replaced by the previous "support", "Highly rated" was changed to "valued". This change is closely related to the international situation facing China itself. In 2010, China became the second largest economy in the world, and the gap with the United States continued to narrow, and Sino-US relations tended to be tense, solving the phased problems and reconciliation of economic development. The conflict between China and the United States has become a top priority.

After 2012, that is, starting from the 16th Non-aligned Summit Senior Officials Meeting, China's attention to the Non-aligned Movement has been further reduced, and the content of the reports has been less than half of the second stage, and almost all of them are reported as ordinary international news. In the report, there is not much content to be directly judged. Only one article, "China attaches importance to the positive role of the Non-aligned Movement" published in September 2012, reported the statement of Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu, who said that China attaches great importance to the Non-aligned Movement in international affairs. play an active role in the United Nations, while advocating to strengthen the role of the United Nations. Compared with the previous stages, the length of this discussion has been greatly reduced, and it is only a normalized speech at the meeting.

During this period, China did not pay much attention to the Non-aligned Movement itself, and mainly used the Non-aligned Movement to pay attention to international hotspot issues.

According to the People's Daily, the Iranian nuclear issue and Ukraine's withdrawal from the Non-aligned Movement are China's main concerns. In 2012, the 16th Non-aligned Movement Summit was held in Tehran. The People's Daily specially wrote two articles to analyze this, and the length was the longest in this period. Iran used this meeting to ease the nuclear issue to a certain extent. Judging from the statements in the report, China is supportive of Iran and its handling of it. It mentioned that: Western media took the opportunity to amplify the differences between Egypt and Iran on the Syrian issue, and did not want to see Egypt and Iran reconciling the two important Middle East powers, so they took the opportunity to "sprinkle a spoonful of cold water". [16] It can be seen that China's attitude on this matter is relatively clear. But it does not involve attitudes towards the Non-aligned Movement itself.

Second, in 2014 Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko submitted a bill to the parliament to abandon the Non-aligned Movement, which attracted China's attention. This move was interpreted by the media as Ukraine's desire to join NATO. The People's Daily only reported this objectively and did not comment directly, but quoted a NATO official: "Ukraine still has a long way to go to join NATO." [17] Although China takes a neutral position on this, it still regrets that Ukraine has abandoned the Non-aligned Movement. The People's Daily also followed up with a report on the relationship with Russia affected by Ukraine's move.

5. Conclusion

After the end of the Cold War, the focus of the Non-aligned Movement gradually shifted from the political sphere independent of the two major blocs of the United States and the Soviet Union to the economic sphere dedicated to building a fair and reasonable new international economic order. The Non-aligned concept and the pursuit of independent goals still have considerable appeal among developing countries and are still widely represented in the international community, as reported by the Fars News Agency of Iran: A platform against Western hegemony." The Non-aligned Movement has always been an important force and platform for uniting developing countries to safeguard their own interests. China's attitude has changed as the Non-aligned Movement itself has faded from the international stage, but China's international status as the world's largest developing country has not changed, and its independent foreign policy of peace has not changed. The greatest common divisor has not changed. Compared with alliance diplomacy with an alliance nature, China's development of "partnership without alliance" partnership with other countries is not aimed at third countries, but is a kind of cooperative diplomacy. Therefore, in the future, China will continue to pay attention to and support the development of the Non-aligned Movement, and will work with it to "write a new chapter of developing countries' self-improvement through unity and make new contributions to the cause of world peace and development."

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