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What is increasingly called the “global South” is crucial to world politics and global governance. This group contains rising great powers and major centers of economic growth; many urgent security issues facing both developed and developing states; population problems and solutions; significant threats to global health; and development approaches that will profoundly affect the global environment. The developing countries constitute a clear majority in global institutions. Consequently, the global South should be a preoccupation for students of international organization and of global governance.

But neither the Western media nor Western scholars pay much attention to the multilateral policies and practices of the states variously described as the South, the third world, or developing countries. In particular, patterns of cooperation among these states in pursuit of common interests at the UN are often ignored or dismissed as of little consequence. They have attracted analytical attention from a small group of
scholars and remain a concern to numerous diplomats. However, a number of important issues are discussed in the three edited books under review and the main document emanating from the thirteenth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at Kuala Lumpur in February 2003.

It is certainly time to look long and hard at the future of multilateral policy being developed by the NAM and what is meant by “After the Third World?” Does the North-South institutional culture remain the main organizing principle at the UN; and if so, does it threaten the UN with irrelevance and redundancy, or is it essential for the world organization’s future?

In this essay I briefly discuss the works under review. Taking them as a point of departure, I then consider a number of themes relevant to the analysis of the current place of the global South in world politics and global governance that are insufficiently covered in the existing literature, including the works under review. First, given that many key institutional manifestations of the global South (for example, the NAM and the Group of 77) exclude key states that are frequently identified as “Southern,” or have included states not generally viewed as being in the global South, where exactly on the geopolitical compass is the South? What are its physical and ideological boundaries? Second, how do academics and practitioners differ in their understanding of multilateral diplomacy in the postcolonial era? Third, how and to what extent has the UN influenced the development of Southern foreign policy and cooperation among developing countries? Fourth, how has the end of the Cold War occasioned a redefinition of the purposes and practices of states in the global South?

Useful insights come from examining the relationship between the global South and two permanent members of the Security Council, China and the United States; these are key topics in the books and key illustrations of current Southern diplomacy. The persistence of Palestine as part of the Southern agenda and Malaysia’s role as the current chair of both the NAM and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) provide additional material to show why the global South should be taken seriously and be more widely researched.

The Books and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration

In the book edited by Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner, the concentration is on conceptual frameworks. Braveboy-Wagner suggests in her introduction that “global south foreign policy analysis must take into account
aspects of IR, of international political economy, of ‘traditional’ foreign policy analysis, and of social analysis induced by changes in the role of the state vis-à-vis other actors seeking to change both the domestic and the international environments” (p. 10). The other chapters discuss foreign policy in the Arab world, Africa, and Latin America as well as the specific approaches of small states (the editor is from Jamaica). It also explores postcolonialism, the interface between modernization and tradition, and what Randolph B. Persaud describes as the end of the “Bandung spirit” (recalling where much of it began in 1955, at the influential African and Asian meeting in Indonesia). It is unfortunate that no Asian countries are covered in the case material, though Malaysia and South Korea are discussed in the chapter on modernity.

Justin Robertson and Maurice East’s Diplomacy and Developing Nations looks at foreign policy in both theoretical and empirical terms. The chapters in this book consider “the degree of foreign policy-making change in developing nations after the Cold War. Particular attention is paid to understanding how developing nations engage with the international economy and the corresponding effect this engagement has on foreign policy institutions” (forthcoming, final pagination unavailable).

It proposes a typology to distinguish among different foreign policy making patterns and notes that these patterns vary significantly from centralized state control in Brazil, Egypt, and Malaysia to the multiplication of foreign economic actors in China, to marginalization in the Eastern Caribbean (Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent) and Ghana (pp. 1–3). It does not note that the countries discussed are all members of the NAM, with the exception of Brazil, China, Dominica, and the United States. Brazil and China are both NAM “observers” (Brazil from the 1960s and China from the 1990s), a category that means they could join but prefer keeping their distance to protect other bilateral relations. I review the useful chapter on the United States later; other cases deal with the fragmentation of diplomacy, the effect of changing technology, and the interface between civil society and the state throughout the global South.

The Pramila Srivastava–edited book contains a number of thoughtful chapters, mainly by distinguished Indian commentators, that focus specifically on a wide range of aspects within the NAM. It seems to have been designed to help make the Indian government update its non-aligned inheritance (Nehru, Tito, and Nasser were its founding fathers) and to discuss ways of strengthening today’s NAM.

The Non-Aligned Kuala Lumpur Summit Declaration is a diplomatic working document and is more focused on the UN than are the books under consideration. The heads of state or government note that
they were meeting to address the most crucial global issues affecting their peoples with “the view to agreeing to a set of actions in the promotion of peace, security, justice, equality, democracy and development, conducive for a multilateral system of relations based on the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, the rights of peoples to self-determination and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the jurisdiction of States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law” (p. 1).

The main declaration, divided into four chapters, provides the movement’s views on major policy issues being discussed within the UN system. The first, “Global Issues,” includes material on the North-South dialogue; dialogue among civilizations; the strengthening, revitalizing, and democratizing of the UN; regional organizations; and disarmament and international security and terrorism. The second, “Analysis of the International Situation,” stresses Palestine and the Middle East, the major regional issue for the NAM now that the other former preoccupation (apartheid in South Africa) is no longer relevant. The third chapter, “Economic Issues,” begins by registering concern about the continued marginalization of developing countries and their inability to benefit from globalization. The fourth, “Social Issues,” reaffirms “that democracy, good governance at both the national and international levels, development and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the right to development, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing” (p. 69).

These and many other issues were all debated by the 105 (out of 116) nonaligned countries present at Kuala Lumpur. Iraq was the subject of a special declaration.

What Countries Constitute the Global South?

Surprisingly, the countries of the global South are not listed in either the Braveboy-Wagner or Robertson and East books. One could argue that there is no reason why conceptual books should do so even though they are concerned with the foreign policy of “Southern” states. However, the confusion is obvious from a few examples. Braveboy-Wagner devotes a footnote to Cyprus and Malta stating they are “non–third world” (p. 151). Although both joined the European Union in May 2004, they are still members of the Group of 77 (G-77) and the NAM, and both were represented at the Kuala Lumpur summit. Cyprus joined the NAM
as a founding member in 1961, and Malta joined in 1973. The most important nonaligned European member was Yugoslavia, the host of the Belgrade summit where the NAM was officially founded in 1961. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, now Serbia and Montenegro, continues to be suspended from the NAM. Europe—like Africa, Asia, and Latin America—has always been a regional category within the nonaligned. Whether the European category within the NAM or the entire movement as a whole makes sense in the post–Cold War era is unfortunately not addressed.

Meanwhile Robertson discusses the usage of the term developing nations and suggests that it “denotes a range of low to middle income countries that are engaged in an open-ended political and economic development process with commonalities and differences” (Robertson and East, p. 4). This presumably means that certain countries that purport to be NAM members are not actually considered in his analysis because their economies are too powerful or their human development is too high. According to the Human Development Report 2003, the NAM members with high human development are the Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Brunei, Chile, Cuba, Cyprus, Kuwait, Malta, Qatar, the Seychelles, Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Arab Emirates—that is, fifteen out of the fifty-five countries in this category. A definite shortcoming in these books is the lack of clarity about which countries are actually considered “developing” and what relationship they have with the NAM.

This problem is even more acute because the NAM has often given a political lead to the so-called G-77. The vast majority of the nonaligned are also in the G-77, but not all of them. This grouping deals primarily, but not solely, with economic matters. One is left wondering why there is no discussion of past and future membership, why the political groupings were set up and are still being used, and how they interrelate. These various groupings play and have played an essential part in the foreign policy making of virtually all members of the global South.

**Foreign Policy**

Perplexingly, neither Robertson and East nor Braveboy-Wagner as editors devote much space in their collections to how countries of the global South operate together in appropriate groupings to better pursue their foreign policy interests, particularly through UN negotiations.
Braveboy-Wagner (p. 187) suggests that a comprehensive model of global South behavior would need to consider the following:

- **Nation**: external and internal determinants, nature, and content of each third world nation’s behavior toward other nations and toward regional and international institutions.
- **Region**: external and internal determinants, nature, and content of behavior of a collective group of nations at the regional level, usually best analyzed through study of regional institutions.
- **Global**: determinants, nature, and content of the behavior of third world nations as a collective group, usually best analyzed through study of third world coalitions and institutions.

Braveboy-Wagner’s discussion of behavior and nation—specifically because she does not deal with how states’ interests and ideologies differ and how states achieve their goals—seems simplistic. A former British diplomat suggests that the real fundamentals of foreign policy are to be found in the basic facts of geography, resource endowment, level of economic activity, and degree of dependence on overseas sources of supply and export markets, besides transactions with the rest of the world. Other basics include participation in international organizations, formal alliances, and contractual obligations. Braveboy-Wagner’s approach ignores the importance of the historical understanding of foreign policies and the need to consider commitments under international law. Christopher Hill’s formulation is more on target: “The modern international system demands a perpetual awareness of the outside world and therefore an active diplomacy for the most part conducted in a wide variety of multilateral fora and by most agencies of the states, not just foreign ministers.”

It would have been helpful if the Robertson and East collection had given more space to the foreign policies of the global South during the Cold War so that the presumed changes in the post–Cold War period could be more easily identified. How did Robertson’s models of central elements of foreign policy making (conventional diplomacy, new state capacity, “capital driven,” marginalization, regime or elite survival, and privatization) actually work during the Cold War? What has changed and what has stayed the same? How, for instance, do the economic and security problems posed in the post–Cold War period for the global South compare with those faced by the NAM and the G-77 when they demanded a New International Economic Order (NIEO) in the 1970s? Or what lessons did Western countries learn from their unsuccessful
attempts at that time to wean the OPEC oil producers away from their divided “Southern” partners?\textsuperscript{10}

Siba N. Grovogui contributes usefully to alternative thinking about third world groups and their ideologies and history: “The general thrust of the collective actions of the global south was an unmistakable desire to expunge colonialism from international relations and to eradicate the bases of inequity and injustice in the international system or Western imposed structures of power, interest and subjectivity” (Braveboy-Wagner, p. 32). He suggests that “to account for such a trajectory, one needs new forms of knowledge and a reconfiguration of the objects of the field of foreign policy. . . . We must recognize the need for co-operation among all members of the international community for a just international order. We must also identify the structures of hegemony as well as account for our own actions, successes and failures” (Braveboy-Wagner, p. 48). This advice should be taken.

**Southern Coalitions in the UN During the Cold War**

Familiarity with the historical development of the foreign policies and cooperative behavior of the global South during the Cold War is a prerequisite for assessing changes in the position of these countries in the post–Cold War era. Is it true, as many contend, that pitting the North against the South is no longer relevant?

The UN Charter accelerated decolonization and arguably enhanced the security of many Southern countries emerging from colonialism.\textsuperscript{11} In spite of a certain amount of rhetoric emanating from both West and South, the charter was not a “Western” document; it was negotiated more broadly. Indeed, Braveboy-Wagner quotes Martin Wight, who argues that the existence of the UN “has exaggerated the international importance of the have-not powers, enabling them to organize themselves into a pressure group with much greater diplomatic and propaganda weight than they would otherwise have had” (p. 42). While correct, many would argue that the importance of the have-not powers was hardly exaggerated. The less powerful also profited from the charter’s concern for “equitable geographical distribution,” noted as one factor for choosing nonpermanent members of the Security Council and for recruiting staff. The application of this doctrine required pooling regions within the UN’s membership and facilitated organizing groups politically. New York provided a useful, and often unique, meeting place for diplomats.
The Latin Americans were the first to demonstrate the utility of working together as a group in the UN context.\textsuperscript{12} Eduardo Angel, the Colombian delegate at San Francisco, went on to the UN Preparatory Commission in London in August 1945. He noted that the twenty Latin American delegations had the choice of splintering and gaining nothing or working together with an enhanced position by controlling the majority of twenty-six votes that he mobilized with the help of members of the Arab League (that had been founded in 1945). Angel himself became the first president of the General Assembly in 1946, when decisions were also made about what numbers within the groups (Commonwealth, Eastern Europe, Middle East, Latin America, and Western Europe) should be represented among the Security Council’s non-permanent members. The same principles were applied to elect vice-presidents and chairs of the General Assembly’s main committees. The Organization of American States (OAS), which included the United States, was set up in 1948.

Arab and Asian countries came to the fore in November 1947 with their General Assembly vote against partitioning Palestine.\textsuperscript{13} Their concern for human rights, despite Braveboy-Wagner’s assertion to the contrary (p. 10), was shown by the fact that fifteen of them voted for the 1948 Human Rights Declaration. Only Saudi Arabia abstained with seven other countries (mainly the Soviet bloc).

The UN contributed to the growing understanding between Egypt, India, and Yugoslavia (expelled from the Cominform in 1948) when they worked together on the Security Council at the start of the Korean conflict in 1950.\textsuperscript{14} Yugoslavia soon realized that a truly independent India was not really being run by the West. At the end of 1952, the U.S. secretary of state, Dean Acheson, wrote to President Harry Truman stating that the outstanding fact of the General Assembly was its dominance by the Arab-Asian bloc. A further example of such influence was the determination of the representatives of Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia to ensure that the right of self-determination was inserted into the two human rights covenants on civil and political rights and on economic, social, and cultural rights that were being drafted in the early 1950s. The Arab Group also began systematically to take the initiative on Palestine away from the West in the late 1950s. The African Group was formed in 1958, just two years before the influx of sixteen sub-Saharan countries into the UN.

Outside the UN, the Bandung Conference in 1955 was a seminal coming together of African, Arab, and Asian states and represented their views on the major issues of the time that confronted them. Yugoslavia and certain Arab countries used the period immediately following to
engage with many Latin American and African countries and to seek ways of influencing the Soviet Union and the United States on disarmament. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was formed in 1960 and within a decade would constitute a formidable third world coalition of economic leverage.

These moves, as well as East-West tensions provoked by the building of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union’s resumption of nuclear testing in August 1961, underlay the first NAM summit, in Belgrade. It was attended by twenty-five mainly Arab and Asian countries, though others present included the Algerian National Front, Cuba, and Mali. The central issues then are remarkably similar to today’s listing: great power disarmament, elimination of colonialism, economic development, the right of all countries to self-determination, UN reform, apartheid, and Palestinian rights.

Almost all NAM members are also part of the G-77, which was set up in June 1964 in the context of the first meeting of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The first Joint Declaration of seventy-seven developing countries (mainly from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean, but also from Europe) pledged to maintain and strengthen their unity and to determine common objectives and joint programs of action. Both the NAM and the G-77 worked out ways to discuss and decide major foreign policy issues, many of which were pursued through the UN. In particular, the NAM developed a system of summits (including Cairo in 1964 and Lusaka in 1970) and what became a New York Coordinating Bureau. This was formalized in the 1970s and 1980s, during the Cold War, and summits—together with preparatory meetings by foreign ministers, often a year before—were held in Algiers (1973), Colombo (1976), Havana (1979), New Delhi (1983), Harare (1986), and Belgrade (1989).

The countries of the global South were most successful in the UN between the early 1960s and mid-1970s, when they managed to enlarge, to their advantage, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and the number of vice-presidents of the General Assembly. During this period, they also ensured the negotiation and entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. They were also able to set up an enlarged disarmament committee, a committee (of twenty-four) on decolonization, a special committee on apartheid, and UNCTAD. On the thorny issue of the Middle East, a representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) first addressed the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly in 1965, a breakthrough that had previously been rejected by the West. And the two sets of covenants—including the more controversial one that
Western Europeans and the NAM had pushed on economic and social rights—with identical articles on self-determination (a nonaligned initiative) were opened for signature in 1966. The People’s Republic of China took over the Chinese seat in the Security Council in 1971 following a two-thirds majority vote in the General Assembly.

The formation in 1975 of the Group of 7 (the largest market economies) to discuss Western macroeconomic policies outside the UN was deliberately removed from this process. It marked Western disenchantment with aspects of multilateral diplomacy increasingly controlled by the global South.

Extending Group Interests:
The Case of Palestine, 1967–1972

The evolution of the Palestine question after the June 1967 war provides a good example of the way that the NAM and related groupings of developing countries used their influence to get their views at least partially taken into consideration in the UN context. The relationship between the United States and the NAM was played out in the negotiation of what became Security Council Resolution 242. This text would become the generally accepted baseline for negotiations. It was an amalgamation of two draft resolutions, one put forward by three nonaligned states (India, Mali, and Nigeria) and one by Washington. Only the former mentioned the word Palestinians. The final resolution only mentioned the need to achieve a just settlement of the Middle East refugee problem. The General Assembly went on to pass a resolution (supported by the Soviet Union) referring to the right of the Palestinians to return to their homeland and suggesting that this principle was embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Subsequently, the PLO began to attend NAM meetings, beginning with a consultation in Belgrade in June 1969.

Meanwhile, the importance of Jerusalem was underlined by both the ambivalence of the United States and the response of the Security Council to the damage caused in September 1969 by an arson attack on the Al Aqsa mosque. In heretofore unusual language, Resolution 271 of 15 September called on Israel to refrain from hindering the discharge of the functions of the Supreme Muslim Council of Jerusalem and condemned Israel for its failure to comply with two General Assembly and two Security Council resolutions on Jerusalem that had been adopted since the June war. Arab League foreign ministers then immediately took the initiative to convene a meeting of Islamic foreign ministers that set up the Organization of Islamic Conference with the PLO as an observer.
The interface between these efforts by various groupings of developing countries and the UN was demonstrated when the sponsors of the 1969 General Assembly Resolution 2535 B XXIV, which specifically and formally reaffirmed “the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine” and called on the Security Council to take effective measures to implement resolutions on Palestine, were deliberately not Arab. The eleven sponsors included Somalia, Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

The impact soon became clear. France joined the widening range of countries concerned with the Palestinian cause when they ensured that a clause was added to the 1970 General Assembly Resolution 2628 XXV recognizing that respect for the rights of the Palestinians was an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. General Assembly Resolution 2649 XXV, adopted after the NAM Lusaka summit, suggested that the peoples of South Africa and Palestine were linked by being denied the right to self-determination. Another link was forged when the Organization of African Unity (OAU) attempted to mediate the Middle East conflict in 1971. Six African states subsequently broke diplomatic relations with Israel following the failure of the mission. The NAM worked together globally and regionally in ways that fostered common interests. African concerns about apartheid were linked with Arab-Asian concerns about Palestine. Multilateral diplomacy worked.

European movement on the Palestinian issue was noticeable by 1972 when the United Kingdom and other European countries voted for, rather than abstained on, General Assembly Resolution 2949 XXVII, which was similar to the earlier one drafted by the French in 1970. The United States abstained. And nine Latin American countries joined Chile and Cuba and voted for the first time for a pro-Palestine resolution.

The stage for the October 1973 war was set in July when the United States cast its first veto on a draft NAM resolution that suggested a just solution could only be achieved on the basis of the rights and legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians. The United States subsequently abstained on Security Council Resolution 446, which determined that Israeli policy and practices in establishing settlements in Palestine and other Arab territories had no legal validity.

In these respects, the Palestinian case illustrates the complex interweaving of the NAM that spanned most of the global South with regional and other subgroups within it in pursuit of the shared objective of Palestinian self-determination. That Western support of Israel and the Western reluctance to acknowledge the Palestinian problem weakened over time reflected the effectiveness of Southern cooperation in putting their views forward.
After the Cold War

The ending of the Cold War forced the NAM to reconsider its strategy. As a Yugoslav who had followed the 1989 NAM Belgrade summit noted, the movement had previously “upheld the strategy of non-integration in the world in order to avoid being sucked into the vortex of the Cold War. [Now] the Movement instituted a new strategy of integration in the world in order not to be left out from the mainstream of economic and technological development. Instead of the unsuccessful concept of the New International Economic Order, priority was given to various forms of regional linkages with developed countries.”

Similarly, other significant changes took place in the NAM’s priorities. Action to protect the environment and to promote human rights as well as peace and development moved up. A more flexible attitude appeared toward the West, because no major NAM problem could be solved without establishing a dialogue and cooperating with Europe, the United States, and Japan. Clearly the global South’s multilateral policy was changing.

Some argue that the end of the Cold War weakened the collaborative dimension of “Southern” multilateral policies. Persaud’s chapter in the Braveboy-Wagner book suggests, for example, that the “Bandung spirit” has evaporated and that there is no longer a coordinated foreign policy decisionmaking body, for multilateral or other purposes, of the global South (p. 51). Instead they “must essentially choose between their own locally developed solutions to problems, on the one hand, and solutions handed down from the global power bloc on the other” (p. 62).

This observation, I would submit, is incorrect. The NAM still exists and has adapted to the end of the Cold War by seeking more pragmatic and ad hoc partnerships with sympathetic Western states issue by issue. There is a striking difference between the thoughtful NAM documents adopted at the 1988 foreign ministers’ meeting at Nicosia and the old-fashioned and bitter documents produced at the 1986 Harare summit. The movement is now, after the successful February 2003 Kuala Lumpur summit, working under the leadership of Malaysia. Previously the South Africans had chaired the movement from their 1998 Durban summit. The other post–Cold War NAM summits were held in Jakarta (1992) and Cartagena (1995). The NAM certainly is more defensive, as Persaud suggests, but they continue to work together within the Security Council and elsewhere. They also cooperate closely with the G-77 through a Joint Coordinating Committee. And these dynamics matter for UN outcomes.

In May 2003, the Malaysians initiated a brainstorming meeting in Paris to discuss a range of issues, including revitalization, but they failed
to achieve consensus on the future of Iraq. The Co-ordinating Bureau in New York continues to address major issues while NAM cooperation has been strengthened in Geneva and The Hague as well as in Vienna. The prime minister of Malaysia, as NAM chair, participated in the inaugural enlarged dialogue meeting at the annual G8 summit held under the French presidency in June 2003. The G-77, and separately the NAM, noted with disappointment at their annual New York meetings in September 2003 that the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference earlier in the month had failed to produce an agreement that would have addressed the interests and concerns of developing countries. However, they did observe that countries of the global South had played a fundamental role in the negotiations. The moderate mainstream of the nonaligned (noticeable since 1989) continued to prevail.

The NAM’s current problems are recognized in some of the Srivastava chapters, but few contributors suggest that the movement is dying. In one of these chapters, Rajesh Kumar considers that the members should oppose all limitations, in whatever form, imposed on their freedom by external forces (p. 174). Rejuvenation should include: strengthening the role of the UN; reforming the Security Council; and addressing the problems of the following regions and issue areas: Africa, the Middle East peace process, Afghanistan, global nuclear disarmament, drugs and terrorism, development, debt, international trade, and the environment. The Srivastava book also discusses South-South cooperation; the setting up of the South Commission, a brainchild of Malaysia’s prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad; and the need to deal with the rise of ethnicity.

The Impact of China

The NAM’s continuing significance is also evident in the attitude of major powers. One example is China. Stuart Harris’s chapter in Robertson and East concludes overall that Beijing has been successful in integrating its economy into the world system over the past two decades. Its diversified and largely technically professional foreign policy bureaucracy is linked with a nonstate structure of interests, in the economic field in particular. This picture fits in with China’s behavior at the UN after it gained its permanent seat in 1971. By the end of its first decade, and with the threat of losing its vote in the General Assembly under Article 19 of the UN Charter (for nonpayment of dues), China had to accept its fiscal responsibilities for peacekeeping. It was closer to the Soviet Union in its attitudes toward the Middle East and South Africa and was able to keep a low profile in the 1980s, though it joined
with other permanent members in trying to resolve the Iran-Iraq War. In
the post–Cold War era of the 1990s, China abstained on a number of
Chapter VII resolutions, including those related to the establishment of
peace enforcement operations, the Rwanda tribunal, and an unsuccess-
ful call for a cease-fire in Kosovo. These concerns persisted into the
new millennium, especially over Iraq.

It would be interesting if the books under review had some discus-
sion of China’s current relationship with the G8 and its post–Cold War
relations with the NAM. Given the collapse of the Soviet Union, India
was no longer in a position to exercise a veto on China’s association with
the NAM. China, after some careful diplomacy, was able to announce
that it was to become an observer in 1991, a status granted in 1992.
NAM members were pleased to be linked with a permanent member of
the Security Council, and the Chinese were pleased to be able to call on
NAM votes more easily (for example, in the Human Rights Commis-

The Impact of the United States

In contrast to China, the United States sees little interest in cooperating
with the institutions of the global South, though they were represented
as guests at both the Durban and Kuala Lumpur summits. As in the rest
of its foreign policy, Washington emphasizes bilateral more than multi-
lateral diplomacy. Achin Vanaik, in “U.S. Dominance and Diplomatic
Choices in Developing Nations” in the Robertson and East book, sug-
gests, like Persaud and others, that developing countries have had much
less leverage in their diplomatic behavior since the end of the Cold War.
The argument is that this imbalance has been especially acute since the
aggressive response of the United States to September 11. However,
Vanaik notes that U.S. hegemony in the long term depends not only on
force, but on a measure of consent to internalizing the U.S. model as a
desirable economic, political, and social ideal and that this consent is
weakest in West Asia. After September 2001, the United States could
legitimate military expansion more easily, obtain entry in depth to oil-

Vanaik suggests that investments from the United States and the
European Union (EU) have consciously earmarked and targeted ten
“emergent markets.” Three (Brazil, China, and Mexico) are observers in
the NAM, four (India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand) are members, and two (South Korea and Poland) are neither. Argentina, the tenth, was a former member. Vanaik argues that the United States wants developing nations to integrate into the neoliberal economic order, endorse U.S. policy, and be domestically stable clients or allies.

He is right to think ahead and suggest five weak points in this possible approach: the anarchy of the world financial system; the fact that levels of inequality of wealth and income could cause problems between the United States and developing country elites; the possibility of rifts occurring between U.S. unilateralism and European multilateralism; the emergence of counterbalancing alliances against the United States; and U.S. policy toward Israel and Palestine. The last is probably the most important. It should be clear that these goals are quintessentially multilateral ones. After the experience with the Iraq war, it is unclear whether Washington will be more inclined than in the past to pursue its foreign policy agenda through the UN and other multilateral forums.

The Issue of Israel and Palestine

Vanaik states that “steady U.S. support to an Israel more belligerent than ever and the determination of both to deny a truly just solution to the Palestinian crisis is a guarantee that long-term instability in the Middle East will prevail. Militarily, Israel and the US cannot be challenged in West Asia. Politically and strategically, they are not winning. Palestine is the greatest political weak spot in the new American imperium.” Again, this is one issue area that has preoccupied the NAM since the outset and remains high on the agenda of virtually all UN organizations, even technical ones.

Christopher Hill notes that the best example of contemporary revisionism in foreign policy is that of Israel. He suggests that it has had a policy of extending its territory through settlements in the West Bank “and this, together with the failure to resolve what has become a transnational refugee problem, has reverberated very seriously across the international politics of the whole Middle East region. . . . A revisionist foreign policy conducted in a sensitive geopolitical zone always has the potential to spill over into other problems.” In this case, the problem has been compounded by the fact that international law and many UN resolutions have been ignored by Israel and the United States for years. The new Ariel Sharon policy on Israeli maintaining certain West Bank settlements, supported by the Bush administration, directly clashes with
a host of older and more recent Security Council decisions and questions the illegality of Israeli occupation.

All this is particularly relevant since the Israelis took by force (also against international law) more land than they were offered (55 percent) by the 1947 General Assembly partition resolution. As Ilan Pappe has noted in the context of the current nongovernmental peace plan, “There is no acknowledgement of the cause of this conflict, the 1948 ethnic cleansing; there is no process of truth and reconciliation that will make Israel accountable for what it did either in 1948 or afterwards. Under these circumstances, neither the Palestinians nor the Arab world at large will feel able to accept a Jewish state.” This sentiment, of course, would be applauded by all fifty-seven members of the OIC, fifty-one of which belong to the NAM. It is also the view expressed in a host of resolutions by the other NAM members and the G-77 as well as by a number of European states.

The problem of Palestine has always been one of the major concerns of the NAM because it bears the marks of both colonialism and ethnic cleansing. The first NAM summit in 1961 condemned the imperialist policies pursued in the Middle East and declared the movement’s support for the full restoration of all the rights of the Arab people of Palestine in conformity with the UN Charter and resolutions. More recently, Palestine was a priority in both the Final Declaration (pp. 29–31) and in the heads of state summit statement at Kuala Lumpur. Both documents drew attention to the ongoing settler colonialism in the Occupied Territories, including in East Jerusalem.

Hill suggests that thought has to be given to the international system as a whole, “with its evolving patchwork of rules, norms and institutions.” I agree. Military pressure is often less effective than agreed legal and governance standards in influencing the foreign policies of states. As Andrew Hurrell has argued, “States need international law and institutions both to share the material and political cost of protecting their interests and to gain authority and legitimacy that the possession of crude power can never on its own secure.” Again, the relevance of the multilateral policies of the global South is key to the resolution of this problem and to our understanding of the dynamics of global governance.

Malaysia’s Current Role

Although both the Robertson and East and Braveboy-Wagner books have some material on Malaysia and its policies, neither deals sufficiently
with Malaysia’s role as chair of both the NAM (since February 2003) and the OIC (since October 2003). It is hard to imagine a better set of reasons to take seriously the global South than multilateral Malaysia. It was a founding member of ASEAN in 1967 and joined the NAM in 1970. As Howard Lentner notes, Malaysia succeeded both “in keeping its economic fundamentals sound” and in “maintaining social peace” after the communal riots in 1969 (Braveboy-Wagner, p. 178). He suggests that Malaysia’s policy of providing special economic opportunities for rural Malays was effective, in part because the traditional wealthy Chinese entrepreneurial class were not specifically attacked in doing so.

Hari Singh’s excellent chapter on Malaysia in Robertson and East suggests that “a continuing concern with high politics, supplemented by limited decentralization and supranationalism, reinforces the realist tradition in Malaysian foreign policy.” He argues sensibly that Malaysia’s involvement in ASEAN, the NAM, and the OIC “all constituted a realist response on the part of a small power to act in concert with other states so as to improve its bargaining power in the international system.” Singh suggests that Mahathir’s belief system led Malaysia to try to balance Western influence, enhance its national power, assert Asian identity and dignity, and build coalitions with other developing nations, while pursuing a partnership with the developed West. These ideas have been applied to economic development, military-security, and political-ideological issues. The greater need for subtlety in a unipolar world is also underlined. Malaysia was willing to endorse certain U.S. policies in the earlier Gulf War and immediately after September 11, while being particularly critical of U.S. policies in the Middle East.

One of Singh’s major conclusions is that “Malaysia’s influence in world politics has been far greater than its national power potential, almost approximating to that of a middle power, and in the main this was due to its imaginative foreign policy and high profile diplomacy.” He also notes that the nonaligned “legitimates the expansion of Malaysia’s political and economic influence in the Third World, especially under the banner of South-South cooperation.”

Malaysia has coordinated carefully within the UN and OIC as the NAM chair. In early November 2003, it suggested in the General Assembly debate on new or restored democracies that democracy must be viewed as a means of achieving social justice and equity and not just as an end in itself. In April 2004, the OIC, along with Cuba and Zimbabwe, sponsored a resolution at the Human Rights Commission that condemned Israeli violations in Palestinian territories by a vote of 31–7. The same month, it met in emergency session in Malaysia to put forward
its dissenting views on the occupation of Iraq and President Bush’s change of position on the legality of certain West Bank settlements. Contemporary UN politics do not make sense unless Malaysia, including its involvement with the NAM and its history, is taken seriously.

Conclusion

The three books under review should be of interest to analysts and diplomats, from both the North and the South. Given the ambiguities in membership and partially overlapping groups, a substantial shortcoming in two of the books is that there is no precise listing of what states are members of major organizations within the global South, and there are no reasons given why states try to become members or observers or why they have abandoned membership. What are the pluses and minuses of each? Some readers may find it strange that the formation of various coalitions within the UN and the policies of the NAM and other groups of developing countries within the world organization are, with rare exceptions, given insufficient space in the Braveboy-Wagner and Robertson and East books. As Singh has noted for Malaysia, acting in concert with other like-minded states improves bargaining leverage in the international system.

The NAM, the G-77, and the OIC have like many other organizations adapted to the post–Cold War environment. Institutional adaptations and changing approaches are essential elements of contemporary diplomacy and negotiations, and third world governments (now usually called the global South) continued to use the NAM at its post–Cold War summits in Jakarta (1992), Colombia (1995), South Africa (1998), and Kuala Lumpur (2003) to achieve consensus and guide their common stances on numerous multilateral policy issues. In September 2003, the fact that the Group of 21—a select group of the most economically powerful developing countries—attempted to influence the World Trade Organization (WTO), under the leadership of Brazil and China (NAM observers) and India and South Africa (NAM members), suggests again why “Southern” groupings are important to our understanding of multilateralism.

Moreover, NAM members continue to call for economic restructuring and see Southern institutions of all kinds as useful in fostering this agenda and in maintaining other long-standing political demands on issues such as Palestine. New states (for instance, Timor Leste, the UN’s newest member, is also a new member of both the NAM and the G-77) as well as weak states learn about multilateral policymaking through the UN system. In short, and despite many claims that the institution is a
Sally Morphet recently retired from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and is now a visiting professor at the University of Kent. She covered all eight NAM summits from 1979 to 2003 and all except one of the seven foreign ministers meetings during that period.


5. The Group of 77 has 134 members. All the nonaligned except Belarus and Uzbekistan belong to it (i.e., 114 countries). The group has a further twenty members, including Argentina, Brazil, China, Haiti, Romania, and Uruguay. Its website is www.g77.org/main/gen_info.

6. Timor Leste and St. Vincent were accepted as new members during the conference.


13. Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, and Yemen, plus Cuba and Greece.


18. The United States abstained, and France, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom supported the Security Council resolutions.

19. The OIC’s website is www.oic-un.org/about/over.htm.

24. Russia joined the club behind Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the United States.