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The Organization of American States and the Non-Aligned Movement in the Cold War

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 Michelle Paranzino

T.C. Sass Chair of Maritime Irregular Warfare at the US Naval War College. She is the author of *The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Cold War: A Short History with Documents* (Hackett, 2018) and is currently writing a book about Ronald Reagan and the War on Drugs.

E-mail: michelle.paranzino@usnwc.edu

Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5685-051X>

ABSTRACT: This article examines the interlinked trajectories of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Organization of American States (OAS) during the Cold War, hypothesizing that increased disillusionment with US dominance of the OAS was one of the factors driving the growth of Latin American membership in the NAM. The article makes an initial attempt to view the histories of each organization alongside the other, while conceding the existence of other fundamental aspects of Latin American interest in non-alignment and association with the “Third World” political project. Nevertheless, the politicization of the OAS to achieve US foreign policy objectives in Latin America is put forward as one of the less studied influences shaping the development of the NAM.

KEYWORDS: Organization of American States; Non-Aligned Movement; Cold War; Latin America; US foreign policy.

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1 Introduction

Though scholars and policymakers subjected the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Organization of American States (OAS) to intense scrutiny during the Cold War, after the collapse of the Soviet Union this attention began to fade. The OAS, as the most recent configuration of the inter-American system, has deeper roots in the history of hemispheric relations and ideas of pan-Americanism, whereas non-alignment and “Third Worldism” as a political project were explicit reactions to the dominance of the Cold War superpower rivalry in international affairs. Recently, there has been a revival of scholarly interest in both organizations, and especially the NAM. One strain of scholarship examines the movement’s genesis, antecedents, and summits, focusing on two prevalent but distinct currents — European neutrality and Afro-Asian solidarity as evidenced in Bandung¹. Rinna Kullaa has explored the European origins of the NAM, focusing on Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia and particularly his desire to remain independent of Moscow². The existence of these discrete — and sometimes competing — influences within the movement has led some scholars to focus on internal dynamics, politics, and conflicts among members. Jovan Čavoški, for example, has examined the rivalry between Yugoslavia and Cuba within the NAM, as Tito and his successors sought to preserve the movement’s non-aligned character against Cuban efforts to draw it into a closer relationship with the Soviet Union³. A smaller but growing literature looks at Latin American countries and regional politics as they played out with regard to the NAM. These scholars have examined the domestic political considerations and external realities surrounding power asymmetries with the United States that have shaped Latin American leaders’ approach to Third Worldism and the NAM⁴.

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¹Jürgen Dinkel. **The Non-Aligned Movement: Genesis, Organization and Politics (1927-1992)**, translated by Alex Skinner (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019); Jovan Čavoški. **Non-Aligned Movement Summits: A History** (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022); Nataša Mišković, Harald Fischer-Tiné and Nada Boškovska, eds., **The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War: Delhi - Bandung - Belgrade** (London: Routledge, 2014); Cindy Ewing, “The Colombo Powers: crafting diplomacy in the Third World and launching Afro-Asia at Bandung,” **Cold War History**, 19:1, p.1-19, 2019.

²Jovan Čavoški, “On the Road to Belgrade: Yugoslavia, Third World Neutrals, and the Evolution of Global Non-Alignment, 1954-1961,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 18:4 (Fall 2016), p. 79-97; Rinna Kullaa, **Non-Alignment and its Origins in Cold War Europe: Yugoslavia, Finland, and the Soviet Challenge** (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012). An older but still valuable work on Yugoslavia and the NAM is Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

³Јован Чавошки, “Ком се привољети блоку: југословенско-кубанско ривалство у Покрету несврстаних и глобални Хладни рат крајем 1970-их,” *Токови Историје* 2/2023, p. 301–331.

⁴Vanni Pettinà, “Global Horizons: Mexico, the Third World, and the Non-Aligned Movement at the Time of the 1961 Belgrade Conference,” **The International History Review**, 38:4, p. 741-764; Michelle Getchell (Paranzino), “Cuba, the USSR, and the Non-Aligned Movement: Negotiating Non-Alignment,” in Thomas C. Field, Jr., Stella Krepp, and Vanni Pettinà, eds., **Latin America and the Global Cold War** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020), p. 148-173; Germán Alburquerque, “América Latina en el Movimiento de Países No Alineados: un asunto de autonomía y soberanía, 1961-1990,” **Estudios Ibero-Americanos**, 46:3 (set.-dez. 2020), p. 1-16; Germán Alburquerque and Claudio Coloma, “Cuba y La Unión Soviética en el Movimiento de Países No Alineados,” **Universum**, 33:2, 15-33, 2018; Germán Alburquerque, “Cuba en el Movimiento de Países No Alineados: el camino al liderazgo. Causas y motivaciones, 1961-

Another strain of scholarship has focused on the initial US reaction to Bandung, and the evolution of US attitudes toward non-alignment and Afro-Asian solidarity as both of these influences developed within the movement⁵. Robert Rakove has shown that although the Eisenhower administration was not especially friendly to the concept of non-alignment, after John F. Kennedy came to power, the White House adopted a cautiously optimistic attitude, with some policymakers spying an opportunity to cozy up to the more moderate members of the movement in an attempt to balance or weaken more radical anti-American tendencies. Kennedy was personally interested in the fate of the decolonizing world and pursued greater engagement with the non-aligned states; his successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, attempted to continue this approach but the war in Vietnam irreparably damaged the US image in the Third World⁶.

Literature on pan-Americanism and inter-American relations tends to focus on earlier periods, though important works on the Organization of American States have appeared in recent years⁷. Max Paul Friedman has shown that, contrary to official and scholarly portrayals of Washington's "triumph" in obtaining a resolution condemning international communism at the 1954 OAS meeting in Caracas, conference proceedings in fact revealed Latin American diplomatic resistance to the United States⁸. Much of this resistance came from Argentina, and the reiteration within the Caracas Declaration of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, adopted in Bogotá in 1948, can be viewed as a US concession to Buenos Aires and to other Latin American governments intent on ensuring that anticommunism would not be considered a justification for violating the principle of non-intervention⁹. Tanya Harmer has demonstrated the extent to which "the Cuban question"

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1983," *Caravelle: Cahiers du monde hispanique et luso-brésilien*, 109, p.1-13, 2017; Germán Alburquerque and Diego Hernández, "Cuba, ¿un obstáculo a la participación latinoamericana en el Movimiento de Países No Alineados? (1961-1984)," *Autoctonía: Revista de Ciencias Sociales e Historia*, vol. III, No. 1 (Enero-Junio), p. 54-67, 2019.

⁵ Jason Parker, "Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference, and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era," *Diplomatic History*, 30:5 (Nov. 2006), p. 867-892; Eric Gettig, "Trouble Ahead in Afro-Asia': The United States, the Second Bandung Conference, and the Struggle for the Third World, 1964-1965," *Diplomatic History*, 39:1 (jan. 2015), p. 126-156.

⁶ Robert B. Rakove, *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Non-Aligned World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁷ See, for example, O. Carlos Stoetzer, *The Organization of American States* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993); David Sheinin, ed., *Beyond the Ideal: Pan-Americanism in Inter-American Affairs* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2000); Carolyn M. Shaw, *Cooperation, Conflict, and Consensus in the Organization of American States* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Juan Pablo Scarfi, "In the Name of the Americas: The Pan-American Redefinition of the Monroe Doctrine and the Emerging Language of American International Law in the Western Hemisphere, 1898-1933," *Diplomatic History*, 40:2 (April 2016), 189-218; Juan Pablo Scarfi and David M.K. Sheinin, *The New Pan-Americanism and the Structuring of Inter-American Relations* (London: Routledge, 2022).

⁸ Max Paul Friedman, "Fracas in Caracas: Latin American Diplomatic Resistance to United States Intervention in Guatemala in 1954," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 21:4, p. 669-689, 2010.

⁹ Leandro Ariel Morgenfeld, "El inicio de la Guerra Fría y el sistema interamericano: Argentina frente a Estados Unidos en la Conferencia de Caracas (1954)," *Contemporánea: historia y problemas del siglo XX*, 1:1, p. 75-97, 2010.

complicated hemispheric politics, revealing a significant degree of consensus among Latin American states about the incompatibility of Marxism-Leninism with the inter-American system¹⁰.

Despite a widespread recognition of Washington's ham-handed regional diplomacy, to date there has been no direct linkage of its effects on the willingness of Latin American and Caribbean governments to pursue an identification with the Third World and membership in the Non-Aligned Movement. This article makes an initial attempt to connect the Organization of American States with the Non-Aligned Movement, hypothesizing that the trajectories of the two organizations were linked, with rising disenchantment towards US hemispheric policies leading to greater identification and involvement with the non-aligned world. The ouster of Cuba from the OAS escalated outreach to the NAM as an opportune venue to cultivate the support and friendship of decolonizing states in Africa and Asia.

Of course, there were other reasons for Latin American and Caribbean states to increase contacts with the countries of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, and economic cooperation and trade perhaps rank highest among them. As Felipe Loureiro has shown, after Costa e Silva became president of Brazil, the country's foreign policy turned away from a close identification with the United States and towards a strengthening of relations with members of the Third World¹¹. According to Loureiro, disputes over the soluble coffee trade played a key role in undermining the value of the special relationship with the United States, demonstrating how Latin American elites "could rapidly turn against Washington when key economic interests were at stake, mobilizing a nationalist and anti-imperial rhetoric on behalf of the world's dispossessed"¹². Economic development was top priority for many Latin American leaders, especially after the disappointing implementation of the Alliance for Progress, Kennedy's major economic initiative in the region, which was sometimes portrayed as a "Marshall Plan" for Latin America but fell far short of that vaunted aid program¹³. Additionally, as Agustin Cosovschi has argued, nationalist governments in Latin America at times pursued more robust relations with the non-aligned countries as a "gambit to increase their margins of negotiation" with Washington, but were ultimately unable to "fully emancipate themselves from Washington's control"¹⁴.

¹⁰ Tanya Harmer, "The 'Cuban Question' and the Cold War in Latin America, 1959-1964," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 21:3 (Summer 2019), p. 114-151.

¹¹ Felipe Loureiro, "Insoluble Dispute: The U.S.-Brazilian Soluble Coffee Trade and Brazil's Third Worldism," *Diplomatic History*, 45:1 (jan. 2021), p. 132-161.

¹² Loureiro, "Insoluble Dispute," 161.

¹³ Jeffrey F. Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007); Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

¹⁴ Agustin Cosovschi, "From Santiago to Mexico: The Yugoslav Mission in Latin America during the Cold War and the Limits of Non-Alignment," in Paul Stubbs, ed., *Socialist Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement: Social, Cultural, Political, and Economic Imaginaries* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press), p. 297, 2023.

As Stella Krepp has shown, Latin American agency and initiative were paramount in the creation of the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development in 1964, and Latin American scholars and officials shaped international debates over development economics in crucial ways¹⁵. During the drafting of the United Nations charter, several Latin American delegates expressed a desire to maintain the independence and freedom of action of the inter-American system, which was concurrently reconfigured as the Organization of American States¹⁶. The 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, more commonly known as the Rio Treaty, established a framework of collective security that US officials viewed as preventing extra-hemispheric aggression. For the United States, the desire to exclude European imperialism from the western hemisphere dated back to the issuance of the Monroe Doctrine, but during the Cold War, US fears centered on the influence of the Soviet Union and Soviet-style communism. For the majority of Latin American states, the non-intervention principle was the cornerstone of the system, and the purpose of the regional organization was to provide for the collective security of all members and the peaceful resolution of hemispheric disputes¹⁷. The divergence in US and Latin American views of the OAS led to increased Latin American engagement with the non-aligned world, with the United Nations serving as a key venue of contact.

45 This article does not claim to decisively prove that Latin American disenchantment with the OAS was the primary motivating factor underlying the decisions of leaders to seek a greater association with the NAM. The source base of this article is insufficient to support a thesis; much more research in the state and foreign policy archives of the Latin American states involved in the NAM would be necessary for this purpose. What this article attempts to do is sketch out a future potential research agenda connecting inter-American relations with the Third World. Primary source documents from the NAM, triangulated alongside archival documents from the former Soviet Union and contextualized in the secondary scholarship on the movement, provide the foundation for this sketch. Russian-language archival documents reveal the extent to which Moscow sought to capitalize on Latin American opposition to US foreign policy, demonstrating that the Soviets viewed the OAS as subordinate to Washington and embraced the NAM as an appropriate venue for Latin American leaders seeking greater independence. The Cubans shared these views, and they sought to expand the Latin American presence in the NAM without tipping the balance of power toward the more moderate influences within the movement. Cuban radicalism complicated relations among non-aligned member-states and contributed to Havana's isolation in the western hemisphere.

¹⁵ Stella Krepp, "Fighting an Illiberal World Order: The Latin American Road to UNCTAD, 1948-1964," *Humanity* (Spring 2022), p. 86-103.

¹⁶ Stephen Schlesinger, *Act of Creation: The Founding of the United Nations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press), p. 175-192, 2003.

¹⁷ Jerome Slater, *A Revaluation of Collective Security: The OAS in Action* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1965).

Paradoxically, Cuba's reintegration into the inter-American system occurred in parallel with the most divisive period of Cuban leadership in the NAM.

2 The OAS, NAM, and the Cuban Revolution

As the Cold War in the western hemisphere intensified, US fears of Soviet encroachment underwrote efforts to use the OAS as a tool of political control. After the coming to power of Fidel Castro, the Cuban revolutionaries pursued an alliance with the Soviet Union and communist Europe while simultaneously reaching out to the decolonizing states of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East¹⁸. Ernesto "Che" Guevara embarked on an international tour in the summer of 1959, demonstrating Cuban interest in engaging with the countries of the Third World. Although Guevara's diplomacy was not always adroit (for instance, he criticized the Prime Minister of Indonesia, Sukarno, for being a landowner, and officials in Yugoslavia reportedly did not appreciate his "beatnik" appearance), the trip was successful in promoting Havana's new identification with the Third World, and in opening talks with Soviet officials away from the watchful eyes of wary US officials¹⁹. Paradoxically, this outreach effort to states that would become founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement was used to express interest in opening relations with the Soviet Union²⁰. As the Cuban-Soviet alliance developed, it solidified the view among US officials that the regime in Havana was incompatible with the inter-American system, and the Organization of American States voted to suspend Cuban membership. This intensified Cuba's outreach to the non-aligned world, facilitating an ability to multilateralize its bilateral conflict with Washington and gain the political and economic support necessary for reducing its dependence on the United States. Cuba's expulsion from the OAS also strengthened Castro's case for resolving hemispheric conflicts under the auspices of the United Nations, with the Soviet Union serving as Cuba's great-power sponsor in the Security Council.

Even as the alliance with the Soviet Union accelerated, Cuba's participation in the foundational meeting of the non-aligned countries helped to establish its Third World identity and credentials. In June 1961, the Cairo preparatory committee worked intensively on preparations for the upcoming summit of non-aligned states in Belgrade. Yugoslavia and Egypt decided to invite Cuba, Brazil, Chile, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Mexico; the Cubans advocated extending invitations to Ecuador and Bolivia, both of which did ultimately send observers to Belgrade. This outreach to Latin America was aimed partly at balancing the desire of the Indonesians to turn the conference into a

¹⁸ Piero Gleijeses, "Cuba's First Venture in Africa: Algeria, 1961-1965," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 28:1 (Feb. 1996), p.159-195; Jonathan C. Brown, *Cuba's Revolutionary World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.

¹⁹ Simon Reid-Henry, *Fidel and Che: A Revolutionary Friendship* (New York: Walker Publishing Company, 2009), p. 203-209.

²⁰ Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Grove Press), p.425-434, 1997.

second meeting of Afro-Asian solidarity and reflected two of the different influences that would shape the organization²¹.

Although the Brazilians had sent an observer to the Cairo preparatory committee, they were unsure about making a commitment to non-alignment at this stage. As Jim Hershberg has shown, this reluctance was in part due to expectations that the role Brazil would play at the conference was minimal and therefore not reflective of the country's great-power ambitions and status. But it also reflected US pressure on Brazil and other invited Latin American states to forgo attendance. In the US view, the signatories to the Rio Treaty had chosen a side in the Cold War and were therefore not non-aligned. Internal regime change in Brazil complicated matters, creating confusion about the legitimacy of the government and throwing the credentials of the Brazilian delegation to Belgrade into question²². On the other hand, the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico enthusiastically requested to attend as observers, citing the struggle against US colonialism and concerns about the recent construction of intercontinental ballistic missile sites on Puerto Rican territory²³. At this stage of the movement, however, the delegations came mainly from established governments and not representatives of national liberation groups.

The guidelines for membership in the movement were established in Cairo and included adherence to an independent policy based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, refusal to host foreign military bases, and support for national independence movements. If the country in question had signed a military pact or agreed to host foreign military bases, these agreements should not have been made "in the context of great power politics"²⁴. If these criteria were strictly applied, neither Cuba nor any of the Latin American countries that had signed the Rio Treaty would have been eligible for membership. However, it was generally understood that the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay was a violation of Cuban sovereignty; Castro and his comrades made no secret of their desire that it be evacuated. As for the burgeoning friendship and alliance between Havana and Moscow, most members of the movement accepted Cuba's claims to membership despite the existence of military agreements concluded in the context of great power politics. The Cuban revolutionaries justified their alliance with the Soviets by reference to the survival of the Cuban revolution; without a great-power patron, the Cubans could not have prevented US-sponsored regime change. Indeed, the April 1961 CIA-backed invasion at Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) led Castro to formally declare the Cuban revolution

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²¹ Rinna Kullaa and Michelle Getchell (Paranzino), "Endeavors to Make Global Connections: Latin American Contacts and Strategies with Mediterranean Non-Alignment in the Early Cold War," *Südosteuropäische Hefte*, 4:2, p. 27-28, 2015.

²² James G. Hershberg, "'High-Spirited Confusion': Brazil, the 1961 Belgrade Non-Aligned Conference, and the Limits of an 'Independent' Foreign Policy during the High Cold War," *Cold War History*, 7:3 (Aug. 2007), p.373-388.

²³ Kullaa and Getchell, "Endeavors to Make Global Connections," 28.

²⁴ Mannaraswamighala S. Rajan, **Nonalignment and Nonaligned Movement**: Retrospect and Prospect (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House), p. 8, 1990.

Marxist-Leninist, and convinced the Soviets that the United States would simply not accept the existence of a communist revolution in the western hemisphere²⁵.

At the founding NAM summit in Belgrade, Cuba was the only Latin American country to attend as a permanent member; Brazil, Bolivia, and Ecuador sent observers. However, the confusion created by the overthrow of Quadros in Brazil led Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticós to challenge the legitimacy of the Brazilian observer's credentials, creating hostility between Brazil and Cuba²⁶. This was not an auspicious beginning to Cuba's strategic opening to the non-aligned world. From the outset, the Cubans sought to use the movement to widen contacts with decolonizing states and conscript them as allies in Havana's bilateral dispute with Washington. This was reflected in the Belgrade Declaration, which condemned the US naval base at Guantanamo as a violation of Cuban sovereignty and affirmed Cuba's right to "freely choose" its own political and economic arrangements²⁷. The Soviets were optimistic about the outcome of the conference, and Nikita Khrushchev sent a letter to the Cuban president praising the movement and suggesting affinity with Moscow by observing that "the views of the Soviet government on the current international situation coincide" with those of the countries represented in Belgrade²⁸. At the 22nd Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in October, Khrushchev applauded the "revolutionary struggle" of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, condemning the "remnants" of the colonial system and particularly the US base at Guantanamo²⁹.

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The next NAM summit took place in 1964 in Cairo, and the expansion of Latin American and Caribbean representation reflected a desire to increase contacts with members of the non-aligned and Afro-Asian worlds. The distinct tendencies of the movement toward non-alignment on the one hand and Afro-Asian solidarity on the other was reflected in the "conceptual rift" over whether the meeting should be more of a "second Belgrade" or a "second Bandung"³⁰. The greatly expanded presence of representatives from Latin America and the Anglophone Caribbean helped to tip the balance toward non-alignment; Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Jamaica, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela all sent observers to Cairo. The 1962 missile crisis had convinced many leaders in the western hemisphere both that the Soviet-supported regime in Cuba posed a greater

²⁵ Michelle Getchell (Paranzino), **The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Cold War: A Short History with Documents** (Indianapolis: Hackett), 51-70, 2018.

²⁶ Hershberg, "High Spirited Confusion," p. 383.

²⁷ "Declaration of the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, September 1961," in *Main Documents Relating to Conferences of Non-Aligned Countries: From Belgrade, 1961 to Georgetown, 1972 (Georgetown, Guyana: Ministry of Foreign Affairs)*, p. 8- 11, 1972.

²⁸ Letter to Cuban President Dorticós from Khrushchev, September 16, 1961, Fond 104, Opis' 16, Papka 8, Delo 9, List 40, Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation (AVPRF).

²⁹ Nikita Khrushchev, "Report of the Central Committee to the XXII Congress of the CPSU, October 17, 1961," in **Diversity in International Communism: A Documentary Record, 1961-1963**, ed. Alexander Dallin (New York: Columbia University Press), p. 10, 1963.

³⁰ Jovan Čavoški, **Non-Aligned Movement Summits: A History** (London: Bloomsbury Academic), p.71 -77, 2022.

security threat than heretofore imagined, and that outreach to the non-aligned world was warranted due to the continued domination of the Cold War superpower struggle in US-Latin American relations³¹. The final declaration of the Cairo summit reflected the growing influence of Latin America and the Caribbean, as it condemned all “manifestations of colonialism and neo-colonialism in Latin America” and urged the United States to “negotiate the evacuation” of Guantanamo³².

And yet the Cubans were ambivalent about the newfound interest of Latin America in the NAM. As Germán Alburquerque and Diego Hernández have shown, the OAS suspension of Cuba radicalized Havana’s position, and this was reflected in Cuban opposition to inviting any Latin American state that had voted in favor of the OAS resolution or had otherwise broken diplomatic relations with Havana. The Cubans especially opposed the extension of an invitation to Venezuela, characterizing its government under Raúl Leoni as a “running dog of US imperialism”³³. The antipathy of the Cubans to the Latin American governments that had voted to expel Havana from the OAS was apparent in attempts to prevent their participation in the NAM. Yet many of these states were also beginning to express interest in the movement, setting up a fundamental tension among Latin American participants in the NAM. This tension would continue to undermine Latin American unity and prevent the emergence of regional “bloc” politics within the movement well into the 1970s and even the early 1980s.

3 The 1965 US Invasion of the Dominican Republic & the Tricontinental

The 1965 US invasion of the Dominican Republic for the ostensible purpose of preventing the establishment of another Cuban-type regime in the Caribbean accelerated Latin American interest in non-alignment, radicalizing both the Marxist left and the anti-communist right. Washington’s attempt to use the Organization of American States to retroactively legalize the invasion and multilateralize the occupation forces disillusioned many Latin American leaders and publics, undermining trust in the regional organization to peaceably resolve disputes involving the United States³⁴. Many felt that Washington had perverted the fundamental purpose of the OAS by using it to pursue unilateral security interests framed in terms that many Latin Americans found paternalistic if not downright reactionary.

At the same time, the crisis revealed an emerging fault line within hemispheric opinion about the threat of transnational Marxism-Leninism. The rise of the National Security Doctrine, which

³¹ For more on the regional response to the crisis, see Renata Keller, “The Latin American Missile Crisis,” **Diplomatic History**, 39:2, p. 195-222, 2015.

³² “Programme for Peace and International Cooperation,” Cairo, October 1964, in **Main Documents Relating to Conferences of Non-Aligned Countries**, p. 21-28.

³³ Alburquerque and Hernández, “Cuba, ¿un obstáculo?”, p. 59.

³⁴ Michelle Paranzino, “The USSR, Cuba, and the UN in the 1965 Dominican Crisis,” **Diplomatic History**, 49:1 (jan. 2025), p. 52-79.

substituted “ideological borders” for traditional geographic boundaries, reflected an obsession with the “internal enemy”³⁵. Francisco Leal has shown that the doctrine served to justify a number of right-wing military coups in the Southern Cone, beginning with the overthrow of João Goulart in Brazil in 1964³⁶. The successor government of Castelo Branco endorsed US threat perceptions and sent a contingent to participate in the Inter-American Peace Force. Indeed, the Brazilians were even more intent on obliterating the constitutionalist forces who sought the return of Juan Bosch to serve out the remainder of his term in office³⁷. The Brazilians were thus at the forefront of hemispheric efforts to eliminate the perceived threat of transnational Marxism-Leninism³⁸.

Meanwhile, the Soviets and Cubans were at the forefront of efforts to censure the US invasion and occupation of the Dominican Republic. Castro denounced the Inter-American Peace Force as a smokescreen for US military intervention, and at the request of the Cubans, the Soviets requested an emergency convocation of the UN Security Council³⁹. During the Security Council debates, the Soviets introduced a draft resolution condemning the invasion as a “gross violation” of the UN Charter and demanding the immediate withdrawal of US troops⁴⁰. Bolivia and Uruguay occupied rotating seats in the Security Council and endorsed the view that the US invasion had violated both the UN and OAS charters proscribing intervention in the internal affairs of member-states⁴¹. Yet both governments supported OAS efforts to peacefully resolve the crisis, with Uruguay promoting a larger role for the UN in cooperation with the OAS. The formal creation of the Inter-American Peace Force was subject to sharp criticism from the Cubans and Soviets, with Moscow’s representative in the Security Council denouncing it as a “smokescreen” for US unilateralism and characterizing it as evidence of a new global policy of aggression visible elsewhere, in places like Indochina and Congo⁴².

³⁵ Soviet diplomats remarked on the Brazilian concept of “ideological borders”: Otdel Latinoamerikanskikh stran Ministerstvo Inostrannykh Del SSSR, list 267-271, delo 9, papka 10, opis’ 22, fond 76, AVPRF. On the substitution of external enemies for internal enemies, see Francisco Leal Buitrago, “La doctrina de seguridad nacional: materialización de la guerra fría en América del Sur,” *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 15 (Junio 2003), p. 74-87).

³⁶ Leal, “La doctrina de seguridad nacional,” 81.

³⁷ Bosch was the first democratically elected president in the Dominican Republic after the assassination of Rafael Trujillo; he was overthrown mere months into his term, after his implementation of a constitution protecting civil rights and liberties and establishing civilian control over the armed forces had upset the military’s political right wing. For more, see Piero Gleijeses, *La Esperanza Desgarrada: La Rebelión Dominicana de 1965 y la Invasión Norteamericana* (Santo Domingo: Editorial Búho, 2011).

³⁸ Tanya Harmer, “Brazil’s Cold War in the Southern Cone, 1970-1975,” *Cold War History*, 12:4 (nov. 2012), p. 659-681.

³⁹ Speech by Fidel Castro, May 1, 1965, in *La Revolución Dominicana de Abril Vista por Cuba* (Santo Domingo, DR: Editora de la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, 1974), 179.

⁴⁰ Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution, UN Security Council S/6328, May 4, 1965, S-0867-0001: Peacekeeping Operations Files of the Secretary-General: U Thant: Dominican Republic, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UNARMS).

⁴¹ **Note on the Dominican Republic**, May 17, 1965, p. 21, Items in Peacekeeping Operations - Dominican Republic - background notes on the Dominican Republic, S-0867-0001, UNARMS.

⁴² **Statement of the Soviet Government**, UN Security Council, S/6411, June 3, 1965, S-0867-0001: Peacekeeping Operations Files of the Secretary-General: U Thant: Dominican Republic, UNARMS.

The US strategy for preventing what many US officials viewed as the unwarranted intrusion of the United Nations into hemispheric affairs was to convince the Security Council that the Organization of American States was competent to produce a negotiated settlement and restore peace in Santo Domingo. Yet US attempts to overlay a veneer of Latin American initiative on the surface of blatant unilateralism created a crisis of the inter-American system and undermined the perceived legitimacy of the OAS. Prior to the invasion, the members of the OAS had planned to revisit its charter and strengthen the provisions for collective security, but US attempts to use the organization to assume greater control over the internal politics of the Dominican Republic shook hemispheric confidence in the OAS, weakening its ability to effectively resolve multilateral disputes involving Washington⁴³. Ultimately, the OAS adopted significant reforms that can be seen as an attempt to rein in US influence; for instance, the Inter-American Committee on Peaceful Settlement was created to “keep vigilance over the maintenance of friendly relations among the Member States” and to “effectively assist them in the peaceful settlement of their disputes”⁴⁴. The other major thrust of OAS reforms aimed at economic and social progress, seeking the “intensification of inter-American cooperation in order to accelerate the economic and social development of Latin America”⁴⁵. This reflected the fundamental divergence in Latin American and US views of the inter-American system, with the former prioritizing economic development and the latter focused on the threat of extra-hemispheric aggression, broadly defined to include any hint of communist ideological influence.

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The Soviets were able to capitalize on the international backlash against the US invasion and occupation of the Dominican Republic. In conversations with other Latin American diplomats and policymakers, Soviet officials drew attention to the role they had played in the Security Council. Anastas Mikoyan, at that time head of the Supreme Soviet, discussed the affair with the Chilean ambassador to the USSR, applauding Santiago’s opposition to the US intervention and boasting of Moscow’s role in defending the non-intervention principle and condemning US aggression. Mikoyan also spoke of the generous support that the Soviets proffered to their Cuban ally, which came with no political strings attached: “the Soviet Union renders all types of assistance to Cuba, but without interfering in its internal affairs”⁴⁶. The Soviets positively assessed their leadership in opposing the US occupation of the Dominican Republic, especially “actions in the Security Council” that had “hindered the United States” and “facilitated worldwide condemnation of US intervention”⁴⁷. The

⁴³ **Agenda of the Second Special Inter-American Conference**, February 26, 1965, OEA/Ser.E/XIII.1, OAS Official Records, General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, Columbus Memorial Library, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁴ **The Organization of American States: What it is and How it Works** (Washington, DC: Pan American Union, General Secretariat, Organization of American States, 1968), vii.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴⁶ **Zapis’ besedy predsedatelja Prezidiuma Verhovnogo Soveta SSSR** A.I. Mikojana s poslom Chili v SSSR Maksimo Pacheko Gomes, 12 ijunja 1965 g., F. 139, O. 20, P.4, D. 6, Ll. 2-3, AVPRF.

⁴⁷ **Otdel Latinoamerikanskih stran Ministerstvo Inostrannyh Del SSSR**, 30 dekabnja 1965, F. 86, O. 10, P. 1, D. 1, L. 68, AVPRF.

US invasion and occupation of the Dominican Republic accelerated the radicalization of the communist left as much as it did the anti-communist right.

The First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, known more commonly as the Tricontinental, convened in Havana in January 1966, reflecting Cuban aspirations to link the Third World and the socialist bloc⁴⁸. The Cubans viewed themselves as the embodiment of the “two great contemporary currents of the World Revolution” — the Soviet-led socialist revolution and the “parallel current of the revolution for national liberation”⁴⁹. Unsurprisingly, the Cubans dominated the conference proceedings, condemning the Organization of American States as a pawn of US imperialism and christening it the “Yankee Ministry of Colonies”⁵⁰. The conference issued a declaration criticizing the OAS and denying that it had any “juridical or moral authority whatsoever to represent the Latin American continent”⁵¹. Castro’s view was that any Latin American government that voluntarily adhered to the membership requirements of the OAS was by definition a puppet of US imperialism. The Tricontinental also condemned the Inter-American Peace Force as the “armed counter-revolution of Yankee imperialism,” which was merely “disguised as Latin American” through the “participation of the Latin American puppet troops”⁵². Internal Soviet Foreign Ministry reports adopted the language of the Cubans about the OAS and Inter-American Peace Force, noting Washington’s attempt to use them as a “tool in the struggle against the national liberation movement in Latin America”⁵³.

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The Maoist *Movimiento Popular Dominicano* and the fidelista *Movimiento Revolucionario 14th de junio* attended the Tricontinental, even though before the 1965 US invasion, the Cubans had not identified the Dominican Republic as a viable candidate for armed revolution⁵⁴. Although the full list of attendees was never published, a US government report indicated that twenty-seven Latin American delegations were present in Havana⁵⁵. The conference resolutions adopted at the

⁴⁸ For more on the Tricontinental, see Mark Atwood Lawrence and R. Joseph Parrott, eds., **The Tricontinental Revolution: Third World Radicalism and the Cold War** (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

⁴⁹ Introduction, First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Havana, Cuba: General Secretariat of OSPAAAL, 1966).

⁵⁰ “Antecedents and Objectives of the Movement of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America,” in **First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America**, 10.

⁵¹ “Resolution on the OAS,” in **First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America**, p. 71-72.

⁵² “Resolution Condemning the So-Called Inter-American Peace Force and the Governments that Support It,” in **First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America**, p. 69-70.

⁵³ **Briefing on US Aggressive Actions in Relation to Cuba**, USA Department of Soviet Foreign Ministry, August 23, 1966, Fond 104, Opis’ 21, Papka 17, Delo 14, List 16, AVPRF.

⁵⁴ In 1964, the Cubans convened a meeting of Latin American communist parties in Havana, where it was decided to support the armed struggle in Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, and Venezuela. See Jacques Lévesque, **The USSR and the Cuban Revolution: Soviet Ideological and Strategical Perspectives** (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1978), 103.

⁵⁵ “The Tricontinental Conference of African, Asian, and Latin American Peoples (A Staff Report),” Available at: <https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/tricon/tricon1.htm>.

Tricontinental reflect its radical aims. Characterizing Yankee imperialism as the “implacable enemy of all peoples of the world,” the conference also strongly condemned US economic sanctions against Cuba and proclaimed “solidarity with the armed struggle of the peoples of Venezuela, Guatemala, Peru, and Colombia”⁵⁶. Reflecting the Cuban view of Puerto Rico as a blatant example of US neo-colonialism, in the aftermath of the conference, twenty-six Latin American communist parties agreed to establish national committees of solidarity with “Free Puerto Rico” in their countries⁵⁷.

The Tricontinental represented the peak of revolutionary Cuba’s ambitions to spearhead the Third World revolution; Ernesto “Che” Guevara, who was not present in Havana for the conference, later sent a message urging the creation of “two, three, many Vietnams” to overextend the United States and induce the collapse of the US empire⁵⁸. Ultimately, however, a series of setbacks, including the overthrow of leftist-progressive governments like those of Arturo Umberto Illia in Argentina and Salvador Allende in Chile, combined with the defeat of national liberation movements like Guevara’s nascent *foco* in Bolivia, resulting in a reduction of Cuban support for armed groups and a rapprochement with Moscow that was most visible in Castro’s begrudging support for the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia to crush the Prague Spring. Though Castro continued to advocate the armed struggle, he was more discerning in the provision of aid, and he softened his rhetoric about the inevitability of violence⁵⁹. Cuban support for Soviet foreign policy was also evident in the Non-Aligned Movement, especially in the 1970s.

4 The 1970s: A Decade of Transformation

A series of international developments combined to render the 1970s a decade of enormous change. The advent of Nixon and Kissinger’s “triangular diplomacy,” which sought normalization of relations with China and an easing of tensions with the Soviets, reverberated around the world, reshuffling policy priorities and alliances⁶⁰. Even as Nixon and Kissinger pursued good relations with their former enemies in the communist world, they strenuously opposed the Chilean government under Salvador Allende — the first Marxist-Leninist elected head of state in Latin America — and implemented destructive economic policies they hoped would encourage regime change⁶¹. Allende

⁵⁶ “The Tricontinental,”. Available at: <https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/tricon/tricon5.htm>.

⁵⁷ “The Tricontinental,”. Available at: <https://www.latinamericanstudies.org/tricon/tricon8.htm>.

⁵⁸ Ernesto Che Guevara, *Message to the Tricontinental* (Havana, Cuba: Executive Secretariat of the Organization for Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, 1967); Ernesto Che Guevara, *Congo Diary: Episodes of the Revolutionary War in the Congo* (Melbourne, Australia: Ocean Press, 2011).

⁵⁹ *Soviet embassy in Havana*, press review, November 21, 1967, F. 104, O. 22, P. 18, D. 9, L. 30, AVPRF.

⁶⁰ See, for instance, Daniel J. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Jussi M. Hanhimäki, *The Rise and Fall of Détente: American Foreign Policy and the Transformation of the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2013).

⁶¹ See Jonathan Haslam, *The Nixon Administration and the Death of Allende’s Chile: A Case of Assisted Suicide* (London and New York: Verso, 2005); Kristian Gustafson, *Hostile Intent: US Covert Operations in Chile, 1964-1974*

brought Chile into a greater identification with the Third World and used his influence to help reintegrate Castro's Cuba back into hemispheric relations. Chile formally joined the Non-Aligned Movement in September 1971 and was immediately treated as an important member, partly given the Cuban embrace of "tricontinentalism," which incorporated Latin America into the Afro-Asian solidarity movement and viewed the three regions as united in a shared struggle against US neo-imperialism, and partly due to Chile's political and economic significance in the western hemisphere⁶². After the violent coup that provoked Allende to take his own life, the Cubans ensured that the successor regime of General Augusto Pinochet would not be invited to future NAM meetings⁶³. Yet Pinochet continued to strategically deploy a Third World orientation in a fruitless attempt to break out of the isolation imposed by one of the most successful global human rights campaigns in modern history⁶⁴.

The fact that the military dictatorships of the Southern Cone maintained some appeal to non-aligned countries, even while waging war against the transnational Marxist left, highlights the deep ideological and political divisions within the Third World. These divisions weakened the ability of the Third World to act in a unified manner in the face of opposition from both the United States and the Soviet Union. This was most evident in the fate of the New International Economic Order, an ambitious political project that sought to completely restructure global economic relations in favor of the development and sovereignty of postcolonial states⁶⁵. The project fell victim in large part to the hostility of the Cold War superpowers but also to the continued primacy of national interests, which cut against cooperation and coordination among smaller states. At the same time, the participation and even leadership of Latin America in organizations like the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Group of 77 reflected the desire of Latin American leaders to break away from their countries' economic dependence on the United States and diversify their economies and trade relations. Indeed, Latin America and Latin Americans were now at the center of multilateral economic development projects and programs⁶⁶.

(Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2007); Tanya Harmer, **Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

⁶² José Miguel Insulza, "Chile's Route to Non-Alignment, 1945-1973," in Carlos Fortin, Jorge Heine, and Carlos Ominami, eds., **Latin American Foreign Policies in the New World Order: The Active Non-Alignment Option** (London and New York: Anthem Press, 2023), p. 217-229.

⁶³ Alburquerque and Hernández, "Cuba, ¿un obstáculo?" 63.

⁶⁴ Alburquerque, "América Latina en el Movimiento," 10; Patrick William Kelly, **Sovereign Emergencies: Latin America and the Making of Global Human Rights Politics** (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Michelle D. Paranzino, "From Détente to Revolution: Soviet Solidarity with Chile after Allende, 1973-79," **International History Review**, 44:1 (2022), p. 161-181.

⁶⁵ See Nils Gilman, "The New International Economic Order: A Reintroduction," **Humanity** 6:1 (Spring 2015), 1-16; Johanna Bockman, "Socialist Globalization against Capitalist Neocolonialism: The Economic Ideas behind the New International Economic Order," **Humanity**, 6:1 (Spring 2015), p. 109-128.

⁶⁶ See, for instance, Christy Thornton, **Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy** (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021); Stella Krepp, "Fighting an Illiberal World Order: The Latin American

The influence of Latin America and the Caribbean also led to the decision of the Non-Aligned Movement to hold preparations for a ministerial meeting in Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, in February 1972. In his opening speech, Guyanese Prime Minister Forbes Burnham articulated the need to transcend the economic subjugation of the superpowers through greater control over national resources, which would empower the Third World to stop “being pawns” and “falling prey to the blandishments of our enemies masquerading as friends”⁶⁷. Cuban leadership continued to divide the movement, however, especially after the 1973 NAM summit in Algiers, where the Cubans put forward the “natural ally” thesis declaring the shared goals and ambitions of the socialist bloc and Third World.⁶⁸ Influential members of the movement, including Algeria, India, Tanzania, and Yugoslavia rejected the natural ally thesis in favor of “equidistance” between both Cold War superpowers; many non-aligned leaders similarly subscribed to the Chinese theory of the “two imperialisms,” which emphasized the moral equivalency of Washington and Moscow. During the era of détente, when it appeared to many that the Soviets prioritized relations with the capitalist West over solidarity and support for the international proletariat, the theory of the “two imperialisms” gained traction. Indeed, Che Guevara had earlier advanced a similar view, arguing at the 1964 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva that the socialist bloc was part of the developed world, and as such, was obligated to provide better terms of aid and trade to Third World countries or be exposed as an exploitative power no different from the United States⁶⁹.

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The de-prioritization of ideology in foreign relations between the Cold War superpowers, as reflected in the pursuit of détente, also characterized the approach of Latin American governments that simultaneously pursued relations with the USSR and the non-aligned countries, even while at times repressing the domestic political left. This period witnessed a depoliticization of the Third World identity in Latin America and a corresponding willingness of leaders of differing political views and backgrounds to seek affiliation with the NAM. Germán Alburquerque has shown that Peru’s entrance into the NAM in 1973 was the natural result of foreign policy changes implemented under the left-wing military junta of Juan Velasco Alvarado and reflected a “new paradigm” that oriented some Latin American countries away from the United States and toward the Third World⁷⁰. In 1975, during a non-aligned foreign ministers conference in Lima, Velasco Alvarado was overthrown in a coup after delivering a speech at the conference’s opening on August 25. General Francisco Morales Bermúdez, who succeeded Velasco in office, then delivered closing remarks when the conference ended on August

Road to UNCTAD, 1948-1964,” *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, 13:1 (Spring 2022), p. 86-103.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Čavoški, *Non-Aligned Movement Summits*, 137.

⁶⁸ Alburquerque and Coloma, “*Cuba y la Unión Soviética en el Movimiento*,” p. 20-21.

⁶⁹ “Discurso en la Conferencia de Naciones Unidas sobre Comercio y Desarrollo,” March 25, 1964, in Ernesto Che Guevara, *Escritos y Discursos* vol. 9 (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1985), p. 256.

⁷⁰ Germán Alburquerque, “No Alineamiento, Tercermundismo y Seguridad en Perú: La Política Exterior del Gobierno de Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-1980),” *América Latina Hoy*, 75 (2017), p.149-166.

30⁷¹. This episode demonstrated a degree of continuity in associating with the NAM and identifying with the Third World against the backdrop of dramatic domestic political developments.

Jonathan Brown has shown how Omar Torrijos skillfully managed his contacts with leaders of both the non-aligned world and Latin America to bolster international support for the renegotiation of the 1903 Panama Canal treaty, something that Washington fiercely resisted. It took an extended and creative public relations campaign to eventually convince Congress to accept the treaty negotiated with the Jimmy Carter administration. Although Torrijos considered Fidel Castro a friend and ally, he did not seek to replicate the experience of the Cuban Revolution, nor did he support the effort to draw the non-aligned countries into a closer relationship with the USSR⁷². He thus represented exactly the type of moderating influence that Tito and others had desired since 1961 to balance the radical tendencies of the Cubans.

Castro became chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1979, and the sixth summit convened in Havana in September. He sharply criticized the Chinese as “new allies” of US imperialism and accused Beijing and Washington of inventing “the repugnant intrigue” that Cuba was transforming the NAM into an “instrument of Soviet policy”⁷³. The Havana Declaration noted with “particular satisfaction” the “expansion of nonalignment in Latin America and the Caribbean” and “profound satisfaction” the first summit located in Latin America⁷⁴. Twenty-one countries of the western hemisphere were represented at the Havana summit: Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago as members, with Belize accorded special status, and Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, St. Lucia, Uruguay, and Venezuela as observers.

The Havana summit yielded mixed results, however, as the Soviet invasion of non-aligned Afghanistan destroyed the “natural ally” thesis and intensified opposition to Cuban leadership of the movement⁷⁵. Furthermore, Torrijos instructed the Panamanian delegate to include a paragraph in his written statement praising US President Carter for renegotiating the canal treaty⁷⁶. This positive treatment of the US in the NAM conflicted with the fervent wishes of Castro, who had cautiously

⁷¹ Jürgen Dinkel, **The Non-Aligned Movement: Genesis, Organization, and Politics, 1927-1992** (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 91.

⁷² Jonathan Brown, **The Weak and the Powerful: Omar Torrijos, Panama, and the Non-Aligned Movement in the World** (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2024), p.233-235.

⁷³ Castro’s Opening Speech to the 6th Summit of Non-Aligned Countries, September 3, 1979, Castro Speech Database. Available at: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1979/19790903.html>.

⁷⁴ “Havana Declaration,” September 3-7, 1979, in **Summit Declarations of Non-Aligned Movement, 1961-2009** (Kathmandu, Nepal: Institute of Foreign Affairs, 2011), p.118-119.

⁷⁵ Jovan Čavoški has concluded that “the Cuban approval of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan...did more to harm Castro’s potential bid” for leadership than any other factor: “Yugoslavia’s Experience with the Non-Aligned Movement: Reconciling Formal Participation and Non-Bloc Policies,” in **On the Fault Lines of European and World Politics: Yugoslavia between Alliances and Neutrality/Non-Alignment**, Srđan Mičić and Jovan Čavoški, eds. (Belgrade: Institute for Recent History of Serbia,, p.199, 2022.

⁷⁶ Brown, **The Weak and the Powerful**, 234.

pursued better relations with the United States until talks broke down partly as a result of the Carter administration's opposition to the Cuban military presence in Africa.⁷⁷ Despite the failure of the Cubans to push the NAM closer to the Soviet Union – and the divisive effect on the movement of the attempt to do so – Havana continued to view itself as the “soul” of the progressive group within the NAM⁷⁸.

At the same time as the actions of the Cubans served to heighten tensions within the NAM, the Organization of American States was undergoing significant restructuring. While much more research on this period needs to be done, it can be hypothesized that some of the reforms seeking to strengthen the regional peacekeeping function of the organization were a response to the heavy hand of Washington in the 1960s. Moreover, some revisions of the OAS charter aimed at a “united effort to ensure social justice,” while others sought greater regional economic integration and development.⁷⁹ The new paradigm of Latin American relations in the 1970s – the shift away from dependence on Washington and toward greater regional and Third World integration – was also reflected in the decision of many OAS member-states to reestablish diplomatic relations with Havana and to moderate the economic sanctions implemented in the prior decade.⁸⁰ As the 1970s drew to a close, the emerging and interconnected crises in Central America and the Southern Cone demonstrated both the potential and limits of reliance on both the OAS as a venue for conflict resolution and the NAM as a venue of Third World solidarity.

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5 Wars in the Malvinas/Falklands and Central America

Indicative of Latin American efforts to use the Non-Aligned Movement to cultivate support for policy goals that cut against the interests of great powers, Argentina sought to bolster its claims to sovereignty over the Falklands/Malvinas islands. Juan Perón had articulated a “third way” in foreign policy in the 1950s, even before the creation of the NAM, but during his second presidency in the early 1970s, he made the decision to formally join the movement as part of a foreign policy “orientation towards the East,” which also involved the signing of economic aid and trade deals with the Soviet Union and countries of communist Europe.⁸¹ Argentina had attended earlier NAM meetings as an observer, and had put forward its claim to sovereignty over the Malvinas at the 1964 Cairo summit⁸².

⁷⁷ For more on US-Cuban relations, see William M. LeoGrande and Peter Kornbluh, **Back Channel to Cuba: The Hidden History of Negotiations Between Washington and Havana** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2015).

⁷⁸ Quoted in Alburquerque, “Cuba en el Movimiento,” 9.

⁷⁹ Stotzer, **The Organization of American States**, p. 149-153.

⁸⁰ See Isabel Jaramillo Edwards, “Initiatives for Cooperative Regional Security: Reintegrating Cuba into Regional Projects,” in Joseph S. Tulchin and Ralph H. Espach, eds., **Security in the Caribbean Basin: The Challenge of Regional Cooperation** (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 151-158; Carlos Oliva Campos and Gary Prevost, “Cuba and Integration Processes in Latin America and the Caribbean,” **Oxford Research Encyclopedia**, 2019, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1516>.

⁸¹ Jorge Taiana, “Argentina and the Third Position,” **Latin American Foreign Policies in the New World Order**, 234.

⁸² Alburquerque, “América Latina en el Movimiento,” 6.

After British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher decided to militarily contest the Argentine occupation of the islands, the junta sought political backing within the Non-Aligned Movement for its jurisdictional claims, at the same time appealing to the United States to enforce the Monroe Doctrine and the Rio Treaty against the United Kingdom. The conflict pitted two of the foundational principles of the postwar system — self-determination and anti-colonialism — against one another, as the British presence in the South Atlantic embodied one of the remaining vestiges of colonialism in the world, yet most islanders identified as British and desired to remain under British rule. The Anglophone countries of the Caribbean supported the principle of self-determination, whereas Latin American states and publics backed Argentine claims of sovereignty over the islands. The clash between self-determination and anti-colonialism diminished support for Buenos Aires in the Non-Aligned Movement; although the NAM strongly reaffirmed the righteousness of Argentine claims, some members were wary of legitimizing the capture of territory through the use of force⁸³.

The Soviet Union firmly backed Argentina's claims, fiercely condemning British imperialist aggression and providing political support to Buenos Aires in the United Nations. Moscow had long maintained solid diplomatic and economic relations with Argentina, and was dependent at this time on its grain exports, as the Carter administration had enacted a wheat embargo in retaliation for the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan⁸⁴. Despite the fact that the Argentine junta was a member of Operation Condor, a covert security apparatus comprised of the Southern Cone's military dictatorships, and deeply involved in what it viewed as a "third world war" against the forces of the transnational Marxist left, the Soviet Union supported Buenos Aires, even stationing the surveillance vessel *Primorye* off the coast of Ascension Island for the duration of the conflict, most likely to gather and share intelligence with the Argentines⁸⁵. In many ways, the Falklands/Malvinas war was a turning point in hemispheric relations, dealing a serious blow to the credibility of US policy based on the Monroe Doctrine and the Rio Treaty.

At the same time, the Sandinista government in Managua was seeking support for its struggle to protect the Nicaraguan revolution against the counterrevolutionary forces (*contras*) trained, equipped, and funded by the Reagan administration. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), named in honor of Augusto César Sandino, leader of the Nicaraguan rebellion against the

⁸³ Michelle Paranzino, "Anti-Colonialism versus Self-Determination: International Alliance Dynamics in the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas War," *International Journal of Military History and Historiography*, 43:1, p. 108-136, 2023.

⁸⁴ See Aldo César Vacs, **Discreet Partners: Argentina and the USSR since 1917** (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984); Aldo César Vacs, "From Hostility to Partnership: The New Character of Argentine-Soviet Relations," in **Soviet-Latin American Relations in the 1980s**, Augusto Varas, ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, p. 182-85, 1987.

⁸⁵ Lawrence Freedman, **The Official History of the Falklands Campaign**, Vol. II: War and Diplomacy (London: Routledge, 2005), 65. On Operation Condor, see J. Patrice McSherry, **Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America** (London: Roman & Littlefield, 2005); John Dinges, **The Condor Years: How Pinochet and His Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents** (New York: The New Press, 2012); and Peter Kornbluh, **The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability** (New York: The New Press, 2003).

1927-1933 US occupation, had triumphed with broad-based support from major population groups and a combination of urban strikes, protests, and guerrilla warfare. This paralleled the victory of the Cuban revolution, as did the foreign policy the Sandinista government pursued after coming to power. For the Sandinistas, international political support and economic aid, particularly from the Western European countries, and military assistance from the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc were essential in their struggle to consolidate power⁸⁶.

US officials sought to create the conditions for regime change through military support for the *contras* and the application of pressure on the members of the Organization of American States to isolate Nicaragua. Sandinista officials complained to the Soviets of US hypocrisy; even as US diplomats pressured the OAS to condemn Nicaraguan purchases of Soviet bloc weaponry, the Reagan administration approved the entry of weapons and ships from the United Kingdom, an extra-hemispheric power, into the South Atlantic. Nicaraguan Defense Minister Humberto Ortega cited the Rio Treaty committing signatories to provide military assistance to any member threatened by extra-hemispheric aggression⁸⁷. The Nicaraguans and their Soviet bloc counterparts expressed solidarity with Argentina in its anti-colonial war for the Malvinas, casting blame upon the “capitalist, imperialist forces” for having “deepened the crisis of the inter-American system”⁸⁸. Ironically, the Argentines had provided training and support to the *contras* even before Reagan came to power, viewing the Carter administration as having abandoned US leadership of the anticommunist struggle, largely as the result of a human rights-centered foreign policy that cut off weapons shipments to the region’s most repressive dictators⁸⁹.

The intransigence of the Reagan administration in seeking preconditions for negotiations that were unacceptable to the Sandinista leadership prompted concerned Latin American leaders to create alternate venues for peaceful resolution of the conflict. Past US manipulation of the OAS had ruled out its use as a meaningful peacekeeping forum for disputes involving the United States. Washington played no role in the Contadora group, which brought together Panama, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela for the purpose of resolving the conflict, nor did it participate in the subsequent Esquipulas process, which produced the Central American Peace Accords signed by the presidents of Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Indeed, the Reagan administration refused to

⁸⁶ See Eline van Ommen, **Nicaragua Must Survive: Sandinista Revolutionary Diplomacy in the Global Cold War** (Oakland: University of California Press, 2023); Mateo Jarquín, *The Sandinista Revolution: A Global Latin American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2024).

⁸⁷ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE), Mexico, Departamento de Concentraciones (DC), Topográfico III-3548-1 (2a. parte), Expediente III/510(728.5)82/1, “**Nicaragua: Sandinistas Desmienten Acusaciones**,” 18 November 1982, Acervo Genaro Estrada (AGE).

⁸⁸ **SRE, DC, Top. III3548-1** (2a. parte), Exp. III/510(728.5)82/1, Embajada de Mexico en Checoslovaquia, 6 December 1982, AGE.

⁸⁹ See William Michael Schmidli, *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere: Human Rights and US Cold War Policy toward Argentina* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013); and Ariel Armony, **Argentina, the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade in Central America, 1977-1984** (Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1997).

recognize the Sandinistas' legitimacy to represent Nicaragua in the regional negotiations. The Organization of American States would only play a significant role in the eventual implementation of the Central American peace accords after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union had effectively removed Washington's primary security concern in the western hemisphere⁹⁰.

6 Conclusion

Though there were numerous reasons for Latin American and Caribbean countries to pursue greater involvement and identification with the Third World during the Cold War, enough evidence exists to hypothesize that the militarization of US security, and especially US attempts to multilateralize its foreign policy through the Organization of American States, undermined the perceived legitimacy of the regional body in the eyes of many Latin American leaders and publics. This led to a greater reliance on the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement to achieve political objectives that conflicted with US perceived security needs and economic interests. In many respects, Cuba and Nicaragua were the outliers, because they both relied on Soviet bloc support, particularly economic aid and weapons shipments, to protect their revolutions against repeated US efforts toward regime change. The non-aligned world thus largely accepted the two Latin American states even as they continued to sign military aid agreements with the Soviets contrary to the formal criteria for membership in the movement. This can be seen as a tacit acknowledgement that the strategy of non-alignment was essential to the survival of both the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions.

The experience of other non-communist — and even anti-communist — Latin American states like Argentina and Panama was mixed. Neither regime faced the prospect of overthrow by the United States and thus entrance into the non-aligned movement was not an existential concern. Both governments, however, sought to cultivate international political support to achieve specific objectives that conflicted with the perceived interests of the United States. As Washington supported its British ally in the reconquest of the Falklands and South Sandwich Islands, Argentina turned to the United Nations and NAM to back up its claims. Torrijos similarly courted non-aligned public opinion, successfully bringing NAM on board with his goal of restoring the canal to Panamanian sovereignty. In some cases, expectations for non-aligned support did not live up to reality, as divisions within the movement and the primacy of national interests continued to take priority over international anti-imperialist solidarity. Yet the numerous attempts to engage the movement reveal the extent to which Latin American governments could strategically deploy both western US-aligned and Third World non-aligned affinities and identifications in pursuit of their goals and interests.

⁹⁰ Marc W. Chernick, "Las Dimensiones Internacionales de los Conflictos Internos en América Latina: de la Guerra Fría (a la Paz Negociada en Centroamérica) a la Guerra Antinarcótica," **Colombia Internacional**, 41, p.1-35, 1998.

A Organização dos Estados Americanos e o Movimento dos Países Não-Alinhados na Guerra Fria

RESUMO: Este artigo examina as trajetórias interligadas do Movimento dos Países Não Alinhados (MPNA) e da Organização dos Estados Americanos (OEA) durante a Guerra Fria, partindo da hipótese de que a crescente desilusão com o domínio dos EUA na OEA foi um dos fatores que impulsionaram o crescimento da adesão latino-americana ao MPNA. O artigo faz uma tentativa inicial de analisar as histórias de cada organização em paralelo, ao mesmo tempo em que reconhece a existência de outros aspectos fundamentais do interesse latino-americano no não alinhamento e na associação com o projeto político do "Terceiro Mundo". Não obstante, a politização da OEA para atingir os objetivos da política externa dos EUA na América Latina é apresentada como uma das influências menos estudadas que moldaram o desenvolvimento do MPNA.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Organização dos Estados Americanos; Movimento dos Países Não Alinhados; Guerra Fria; América Latina; Política externa dos EUA.

La Organización de los Estados Americanos y el Movimiento de Países No Alineados en la Guerra Fría

RESUMEN: Este artículo examina las trayectorias interrelacionadas del Movimiento de Países No Alineados (MNOAL) y la Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA) durante la Guerra Fría, planteando la hipótesis de que la creciente desilusión con el dominio estadounidense de la OEA fue uno de los factores que impulsaron el crecimiento de la membresía latinoamericana en el MNOAL. El artículo intenta inicialmente analizar las historias de cada organización en conjunto, al tiempo que reconoce la existencia de otros aspectos fundamentales del interés latinoamericano en el no alineamiento y la asociación con el proyecto político del "Tercer Mundo". No obstante, la politización de la OEA para lograr los objetivos de la política exterior estadounidense en América Latina se presenta como una de las influencias menos estudiadas que moldearon el desarrollo del MNOAL.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Organización de los Estados Americanos; Movimiento de Países No Alineados; Guerra Fría; América Latina; Política exterior estadounidense.