The study of nonalignment as a foreign policy feature of a majority of the Third World countries has increasingly attracted scholarly attention in recent times. Especially during the last two decades, significant contributions have been made to highlight the various dimensions of the concept; both in its normative and practical orientation. However, most of the studies have focussed primarily on global concerns and activities of the nonaligned countries viz. East-West struggle, anti-imperialism, nuclear disarmament etc. Conversely, less attention has been paid to the examination of the responses of the nonaligned countries towards regional disputes and conflicts, and to the discovery of distinctive patterns in these responses.

This was hardly surprising as nonalignment emerged as essentially a response to the problems of the world order in general and it was this global outlook which has been the pre-eminent impulse behind the growth of the nonaligned movement. However, the phenomenal rise in the tensions and conflicts within the Third World arena has of late brought a severe strain on the nonaligned group of countries. In the
absence of a well-defined approach towards such conflicts, as falling outside the pale of East-West struggle, these countries have often found themselves in a predicament. In many such instances, they were blamed for not conforming to the international norms which they had set for themselves while proclaiming nonalignment as their foreign-policy principle *par-préférence*.

Is there any distinct nonaligned norm of behaviour which may be applied to assess their response towards regional conflicts? To what extent are they able to exercise their policy resolve to judge such issues on their merit especially in the context of their proclaimed commitment to the values of freedom and justice? Whether the nonaligned solidarity has been invoked when a fellow nonaligned is confronted with aggression. And what are the main systemic constraints which impinge on their foreign policy? Evidently, these queries ultimately relate to the vital issue whether nonalignment has left a distinguishing mark on the actual foreign policy behaviour of the countries pursuing it—especially when it comes to non-global problems. Obviously, it requires comprehensive studies both at the conceptual and empirical level to arrive at a verdict—a task which the present work does not offer to undertake.

However, an attempt is made here to examine these and
allied questions, to the extent it has been possible, with the help of three conflict-studies involving a premier nonaligned country-India. It tries to answer why the nonaligned reacted in the manner they did towards India's major international engagements and whether there may be some general explanations to account for their behaviour. It amplifies the diplomatic expectations which India had from the nonaligned countries and to what extent they were fulfilled.

Admittedly, the present enquiry, with such a wide scope as this, may not yield precise formulations and in certain instances is bound to be both simplified and generalised. Moreover, the historico-specific context of the three conflict-studies undertaken here does not permit to seek valid generalizations about an overall nonaligned approach towards regional conflicts. Nevertheless, it proposes to discern some of the broad trends which have marked the potentiality and performance of the nonaligned in this regard. For instance, it tries to recapitulate the salient features of the Colombo mediation vis-a-vis the Sino-Indian dispute to highlight the peace-making role of the nonaligned countries.

The present study is divided into six chapters. In the first chapter, an effort has been made to bring out the
distinctive features of nonalignment both as a foreign policy orientation and as an international movement. Against this perspective, it tries to focus on the nonaligned approach towards regional conflicts, especially their peace-making role and the temper of nonaligned solidarity. Thus it attempts to evolve a context to analyse the nonaligned response towards India's major international conflicts.

The second and third chapters examine the nonaligned response towards Sino-Indian conflict 1962. The second chapter traces the diplomatic reactions which were generated in the nonaligned world and tries to explain the constraints which led to the nonaligned dilemma in this conflict. The third chapter is devoted to the examination of the intent and content of the Colombo mediation which for the first time revealed the nonaligned ability to defuse a regional dispute.

The fourth and fifth chapters deal with the two major engagements India had with Pakistan respectively in 1965 and 1971. The fourth chapter expatiates on the diplomatic struggle over Kashmir on Afro-Asian and the nonaligned forums and how the nonaligned countries responded to the various issues involved in the Indo-Pak conflict 1965. The fifth chapter relates to the crisis of Bangladesh and the
subsequent Indo-Pak conflict of December 1971. Drawing mainly on the United Nations debates, it tries to highlight the nonaligned apathy towards the issues of human rights and self-determination which were inherent in this conflict.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, an effort has been made to identify and explain the convergence and divergence in the overall pattern of nonaligned behaviour which have emerged out of the previous discussion and to consider what general formulations there may be of the major findings of the present work.

The study has drawn heavily on a variety of sources—ranging from the various official documents of the nonaligned countries and their conferences, the United Nations documents, White Papers brought out by the government of India, Pakistan and China, proceedings of the Parliamentary Debates of India, Sri Lanka and other relevant documents. Periodicals, Press Digests, Magazines and Journals of different countries helped considerably in completing the work. A number of leading newspapers of India, Sri Lanka, and various other nonaligned countries were also consulted. The study has greatly benefitted from the works of many scholars, memoirs of statesmen, and every care has been taken to acknowledge them.

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