CONCLUSION

After the First World War, economic and financial losses made the victorious nations continue with and even strengthen their hold over their respective colonial possessions, while the Soviet Revolution of 1917, the founding of the League of Nations in 1919, the rise of nationalism in Asia and Africa inspired the people in the dependencies to strive for political independence.

After the Second World War, the Cold War and conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union divided the states into two blocs. Further, wars in Indo-China, Vietnam and Korea, revolt in Hungary, three-power attack on Egypt and Soviet massive assistance to Syria made the people of developing countries think of maintaining their neutrality, integrity, independence and self-determination.

The dependent states began to search for the means for getting rid of their colonial masters and for ending exploitation of their natural resources. On the one hand, colonialism was at its height, and, on the other, students from the colonies educated in Europe, brought in new ideas and identified the causes of their poverty, hunger, ignorance and backwardness with their slavery. They started struggles for liberation, while the colonial powers suppressed their freedom movements. Thus the idea of neutrality and non-alignment took root among developing countries in the 1950s and they embraced the objectives of international peace and peaceful co-existence.

Nehru, Tito, Nasser, Sukarno, U Nu and Nkrumah emerged as the leaders of the Non-aligned Movement, which was based on the objectives of peace, security and progress, which, according to them, could be achieved only through helping the newly independent countries or those struggling for independence so that they could raise their voice in the United Nations. Thus, the policy of Non-alignment became synonymous with independence.

The Non-aligned countries formed a group in the United Nations, supported by peace-loving countries. The colonial powers saw this movement as threat to their colonial possessions as freedom movements
were gaining momentum there. The newly independent nations, not willing to be involved in the Cold War, sought a better alternative in the Non-aligned Movement.

The meeting convened by Nehru in 1949, in New Delhi, to condemn the Dutch occupation of Indonesia which was attended by eighteen countries, formation of an Afro-Asian group in the United Nations in 1950, which contributed to the ending of the war in Korea in 1953, the India-China Joint Agreement, known as Panchsheel (1954), the Geneva Conference (1954), the Bandung Conference (1955) and the Brioni meeting (1956) led to the holding of the first Summit Conference of the Non-aligned Movement at Belgrade in 1961.

The agenda of the Belgrade conference included exchange of views on the international situation, an assessment of problems being faced by the dependent nations and finding ways and means for establishing international peace and security, which was possible only through respect for the rights of nations to self-determination and supporting struggles against imperialism for liquidation of colonialism. It was the primary goal of the Conference to end the differences between the independent, newly independent and dependent countries which were emerging due to claims of one country over the territory of the neighbouring country supported by the colonial powers. Therefore, the Conference emphasised "respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states; non-interference and non-intervention in internal affairs of states". The Conference aimed at establishing international equality and fraternity and opposed racial discrimination and apartheid. It also considered the dangerous consequences of arm race and demanded complete disarmament, banning of nuclear tests and liquidation of foreign military bases in the colonies, which hampered their progress towards independence. Thus, the Conference proclaimed "peaceful co-existence among States with different political and social systems", which was in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations. It decided to support the United Nations through cooperation in the implementation of its resolutions. The Belgrade Conference put the Non-aligned Movement on an international footing and above-mentioned objectives always remained before it at all its future conferences. The question arises
as to how far the Non-aligned Movement has been successful in the matter of speeding up the process of decolonization.

The idea of neutrality, which emerged in the 1950s, gained momentum in the 1960s and since then it has witnessed a steady growth in the popularity of the concept of Non-alignment, the acceleration of the movements of the people of newly liberated countries in support of decolonization of dependent nations and a series of victories of national liberation struggles against imperialism in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific, Atlantic, Mediterranean and Indian Ocean islands. There are still a few territories which are struggling for independence. However, the impact of the Non-aligned Movement on decolonization has been so impressive that the Colonial Powers have been compelled to accede to its demands due to the pressure of the world opinion.

A clear idea of the extent to which decolonization has taken place after the first Conference of Non-aligned countries at Belgrade in 1961 and the growth in the membership of the Movement may be had from the figures given in the following paragraphs.

In the Far East and Australasia, of the 18 nations, 14 had achieved their independence before September, 1961, and 4 (Bangladesh, Brunei, Maldives and Singapore) did so between 1964 and 1985, and 16 of these nations joined the Non-aligned Movement. None of the countries of the region is any more a colony.

In the Middle East and North Africa, of the 22 countries, 13 had become independent before September, 1961, and 8 (Algeria, Bahrain, Malta, Oman, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (Aden), Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Yemen Arab Republic (Sana'a) achieved freedom between 1961 and 1971. And as many as 21, out of 22 of these states of the region, have joined the Non-aligned Movement between 1961 and 1979.

In Africa, of the 45 dependent countries, 20 had become independent before September, 1961, and 22 (Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda,
Rio Muni, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) achieved their freedom between 1961 and 1978, and 42 joined the Non-aligned Movement between 1961 and 1979. Western Sahara is claimed by Morocco and Mauritania, Namibia is illegally occupied by South Africa and is struggling for independence. There are freedom movements in South Africa also for its liberation from White domination.

In Latin America, of the 22 countries, 18 states were sovereign before September, 1961, and all the four Latin American colonies (Belize, Guyana, Nicaragua and Surinam) became independent between 1966 and 1981. Of the 22 states, 11 became members of the Non-aligned Movement between 1961 and 1983.

In the Caribbean region, of the 20 islands, 11 states (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Dominica and Haiti, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, St. Kitts-Nevis (St. Christopher-Nevis) and Trinidad and Tobago) became independent between 1961 and 1982. Of the 11 states, 6 became members of the Non-aligned Movement between 1970 and 1983. Nine nations (Guadeloupe and Martinique under France; Anguila, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, and Turks and Caicos under Britain; and US Virgin Islands under the United States) are either struggling for liberation or have gained self-governing or autonomous status.

In the Pacific region, of the 33 states, 20 states (American Samoa, Banaba (Ocean Islands), Caroline, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati (Gilbert), Marshalls, Northern Mariana Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Hebrides (Vanuatu), Niue Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Society Islands (Tahiti), Solomon, Tonga, Tuvalu and Western Samoa) achieved independence between 1962 and 1986. Of the remaining 13 islands, 4 (Eastern Island under Chile; Timor under Indonesia; Tokelau under New Zealand; and Torres Strait under Australia) are struggling for independence, and 2 nations, Hawaii and Irian Jaya, have become provinces of the United States and Indonesia respectively and 7 nations (External Territories of Australia, France and the United States; Federated States of Micronesia and Guam under the United States; Norfolk Islands under Australia; and Pitcairn under
Britain) are still colonies. Of the 33 nations, only one (Vanuatu) has become member of the Non-aligned Movement.

In the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, of the 10 colonies, Madagascar had achieved independence in 1960. Of the remaining, 4 states (Comoros, Mauritius, Mayotte and Seychelles) became independent between 1968 and 1976, and 4 joined the Non-aligned Movement between 1973 and 1986. Of the remaining 5 territories, 4 (Christian Islands, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Falkland, and St. Helena under Britain) are colonies, and Reunion is a non-sovereign state of France.

Thus, out of 168 territories of the whole world under study, 66 countries had become independent before September, 1961, and 102 were dependent nations. All the 102 countries achieved independence and became members of the Non-aligned Movement between 1961 and 1986.

The above findings reveal the rapid growth of membership of the Non-aligned Movement from 25 in the first Summit (1961) to 104 in the eighth Summit (1986), including the PLO, which represents the people of Palestine, and SWAPO, which represents the people of Namibia. Further, number of observer and guest countries and organizations, which participated in NAM conferences and meetings, had also continued to grow from 3 in 1961 to 23 states and large number of UN organizations and political parties.

The movement of non-alignment gave a new orientation to international relations. The criteria for non-alignment were defined during the preparations for the 1961 Belgrade Conference and were further spelled out in Cairo in 1964. According to these criteria, in order to qualify as non-aligned, a country must (a) conduct an independent policy in conformity with the principles of active and peaceful co-existence; (b) support the struggles for nations liberation; (c) not join any multilateral military alliances created for the purpose of furthering great power rivalries; (d) not belong to bilateral military alliances with the great powers; and (e) not allow foreign military bases to be established on its national territory. These criteria drew a demarcation line between the non-aligned
countries and the followers of the creed of bloc politics. The dependent nations were attracted and inspired by these principles. They cooperated with the Non-aligned Movement and became independent.

A view on the political developments in all the colonies in the world makes it clear that certain countries which had earlier joined the military-political alliances were moving towards the policy of non-alignment because they saw in this policy a way to strengthen their own position and to protect their interests. Further, the newly independent nations found an umbrella under the Non-aligned Movement. Thus, most of the developing countries have joined the Movement and the increasing number of its members has proved the effectiveness of NAM principles regarding decolonization.

The decolonization process ignited by the Non-aligned Movement had cautioned the Colonial Powers and they were forced by national liberation movements in the colonies to "go back". The Colonial Powers were not easily subdued and an international programme was needed. NAM was the only hope for the colonial people. Therefore, Non-aligned Movement sought settlement of the major international problems supporting the national demands, such as, those of Palestine, Namibia and others. They openly condemned the colonialist policy. Further, at the same time, they realised the necessity of settling their bilateral problems in another place and at another time. They, time and again, appealed to the great powers to refrain from following their selfish expansionist policies. Now, NAM members are mostly those which have been decolonized since the Second World War. They have gained majority in the United Nations and are able to assert their own views and objectives regarding freedom struggles in various international forums. NAM has expressed readiness to cooperate and carry on constructive dialogue with all those who are willing to establish a new system of international political relations.

NAM serves the purpose of decolonization in two ways: one passing resolutions against colonialism and, thus, levelling the world opinion in its favour blocking the colonialists' interests, and second in the United Nations and other international bodies, in which NAM countries are in majority. Since NAM has become a vital
force against the colonialists' designs, the Colonial Powers have been threatening to harm the United Nations. It was the NAM group, which anyhow has maintained the balance, on the one hand, and has been supporting decolonization in the world, on the other, maintaining international peace and peaceful co-existence.

From the foregoing account of the role played by the Non-aligned Movement in bringing about decolonization, it may be concluded that it inspired the people of former colonies to fight for their emancipation: it lent moral and political support to such struggles through its resolutions and declarations. The Non-aligned Movement also extended indirect assistance to struggles against colonialism through the part played by its member nations in the United Nations and other international forums, and by urging upon them to render material support to these struggles. It may, therefore, be stated that the Non-aligned Movement has been able to contribute substantially to the process of the eradication of colonialism in spite of the handicaps from which it suffers, viz. the fact that it has no agency to be in a position to enforce its resolutions, that many of its member nations have close ties with one super power or the other and that many of them are involved in mutual disputes over one issue or another.

However, in spite of these limitations, the Non-aligned Movement has emerged as a potent force which has contributed and is likely to contribute to the process of decolonization.