# **Amplifying & Consolidating Cooperation for Shared Affluence for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the G-77+China in a Rapidly Changing World[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**UGANDA COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS (UCFR)**

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# **Introduction**

In January 2024, Uganda will host the Nineteenth (19th) Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Heads of State and Government. NAM is a group of 120 United Nations (UN)-member States that has historically positioned itself outside great power rivalries. The Summit is scheduled for 15 to 20 January 2024, in Kampala. From 21st to 23rd January, 2024, Uganda will host the Third South Summit the Group 77 and China (G-77+China), Uganda will, subsequently, assume chairmanship of the NAM for three years (2024–2027) and G-77+China for one year (2024-2025). In preparation for the forthcoming NAM and G-77+China summits in Uganda, the Uganda Council on Foreign Relations (UCFR) organised a series of Public Dialogues to create awareness about NAM and G-77+China, generate critical views about the importance of Uganda’s hosting and chairing NAM and G-77+China, and underline the strategic engagements that should inform the activities of NAM and G-77+China during the 2024–2027 period. This is a critical time for Uganda and Africa. Every opportunity needs to be fully utilised, and Uganda’s and Africa’s foreign-policy interests aligned with those of NAM and G-77+China members. From 2024 onward, Uganda has the opportunity to guide the strategic foreign policy direction of 120 NAM members and 134 G-77+China members, giving her the critical task of leading the pursuit of the shared multilateral needs and interests of more than two-thirds of the world’s population.

Accordingly, on 14th November 2023, the Council together with the Nordic Africa Institute, held a Roundtable Dialogue on “**Deepened Cooperation for Shared Affluence: Prospects for Uganda’s Upcoming chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement**”. Uganda’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Amb. Adonia Ayebare, presented opening remarks. He joined by panel of eminent intellectuals – Prof Adebayo Adebajo (University of Pretoria), Dr. Sabastian Rwengabo (UCFR), Prof Samar al-Bulushi (University of California), and Amb James Mugume (UCFR). The Dialogue highlighted the key issues facing the NAM; its potential role in promoting multilateralism; the opportunities and constraints Uganda will face hosting the NAM; and what Uganda can prioritise in its role as NAM host and subsequently chair. Again, on Monday 20th November 2023, the Council hosted Dr. PLO Lumumba, a renowned Kenyan professor, lawyer, and public intellectual. Lumumba presented a keynote address under the theme: **‘Opportunities and Challenges of Cooperation for Shared Affluence for the NAM in a Rapidly-Changing World.**’ A discussion by Jacqueline Nakaiza and Feta Simon followed this presentation. Thereafter, a question-and-answer session followed. Ms. Maria Odido gave brief concluding remarks.

The NAM member countries focus their efforts on political, diplomatic, and international-security imperatives of global governance. They pursue the reform of the UN, especially the UN Security Council, and other policymaking and security institutions and relations. The G-77+China, on the other hand, is rooted in struggles for fair and equitable international trade, and operates under the auspices of the UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development). This explains the emphasis of the G-77+China on economic development, sociocultural exchanges, infrastructure development, non-traditional security threats (like climate change, migration, pandemics and other hazards), and technology and skills exchanges and co-enrichment. But these institutions are not mutually exclusive – member countries of both are also members of the UN and other regional (e.g. ASEAN, AU) and international institutions; and economic development is intricately entwined with politics (domestic, regional and global). Moreover, western powers tend to use economics as a political weapon – via sanctions, selective provision of development support, giving development support to their ideological allies, coercive lobbying for their companies, and involvement in economic and trade wars (as seen between China and USA, and between NATO and Russia).

The convergence of NAM and G-77+China in Uganda underscores the country’s skyrocketing diplomatic standing; the global recognition of its role in promoting multilateralism and shared global interests; the potential for aligning NAM and G-77+China with Uganda’s steadfast role in promoting regional and global security; and the importance of utilising these dual spaces for engagement on the key issues now afflicting the world. Building on the recently-held dialogues, research, and analysis, the UNCFR emphasizes the key issues that should animate President Yoweri K.T. Museveni’s addresses to these two bodies and subsequently Uganda’s role in these two spaces going forward. It also underscores the UCFR’s potential role in these spaces.

# **President Yoweri K.T. Museveni’s Speeches to NAM & G-77.**

Uganda’s policy stance in its leadership role in these two bodies provides an immense obligation to galvanise these Global South resources, opportunities, and aspirations into tangible outcomes. Uganda needs to prepare to leverage growing south-south trade, other forms of interdependence, and self-reliance innovations (such as AfCFTA), to lay emphasis on the following issues (Table 1): strengthening non-aligned member countries’ diplomatic and economic relationships now and in the future; cooperaiton to resolve global-level, regional, subregional, conflicts and engaging “Big Powers” involved in such conflicts; consolidating China-South, India-South, and South-South cooperation; strengthening NAM-BRICs and G77-BRICS cooperation; addressing Climate Change threats; strengthening global efforts against transnational terrorism, radicalisation and pandemics; strengthening technology, capital, technical, and foreign-direct investment transfers to the Global South; and prioritising socioeconomic, techno-scientific, and infrastructure development of the Global South.

**Table 1: Key Issues to Consider during Uganda’s Chairmanship**

| **Issue** | **Elements** | **Institutional Locus** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Dialogue over confrontation
 | * *Many conflicts escalate to confrontation when dialogue might resolve them. Even the Russia-Ukraine & Israel-Palestine conflicts, as well as NATO’s attack on Libya (2011) might have been resolved without recourse to war.*
 | NAM |
| 1. Establishing various types of partnerships over alliance
 | * *Contrary to hegemonic security formations, such as NATO or Warsaw Pact, the world needs multiple security partnerships that act as counterweights against domination of particular countries or regions. This is why there is now a stalemate in the UN Security Council*
 | NAM |
| 1. Resistance against western bullying & imposition of leaders on developing countries
 | * *NAM & G-77+China group of countries should strengthen their institutional cushions against unjustified western bullying and interference in domestic affairs of member states*
 | NAM |
| 1. Lasting peace in Asia (especially over the South and East China Seas)
 | * *Critical Asian states, particularly those with territorial and maritime disputes with* [*China*](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/896323/pdf) *(over the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Scarborough Shoal, – Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam) and other parts of the* [*South*](https://doi.org/10.1080/00908320.2022.2034555) *and east China* [*Seas*](https://www.un.org/en/ga/69/meetings/gadebate/27sep/vietnam.shtml)*, need careful treading to avoid confrontation.*
* *More than US$ 3 Trillion worth of global trade, and one-third of global maritime trade (shipping), passes via the South China Sea. Regionally, the “ASEAN+China” modality can prove a realistic multilateral arrangement toward resolving these conflicts.*
* *Claims over Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) between Japan & China can be settled amicably via bilateral establishment of common EEZs/FTZs.*
 | NAM |
| 1. Anti-imperialism and positioning against unipolar hegemony
 | * *Present-day global turbulence can best be overcome by positioning the greatest numbers of the world’s countries and peoples against Euro-American hegemony which was poised to limit the expressions of other regions*
 | Both NAM & G-77+China |
| 1. Just and equitable use of the sanctions regime
 | * *Political, security, and economic sanctions, while part of the grammar of international politics, ought to be applies with sufficient empirical basis, after sufficient investigation, and with backing of majority of UN General Assembly members states – instead of being unilaterally imposed or coercing UN member states to simply sign off unjustified sanctions*
 | Both NAM & G-77+China |
| 1. India's growing reliability in Global South vs. pro-west stance
 | * *As India’s economic and political standing in the world increases, it needs to play a more constructive role in Global South affairs.*
* *Avoiding pro-Western positions on critical issues affecting the Global South is the starting point for retaining her historical role as a member of the post-colonial global-south order that is ready to play a crucial part in the multidimensional transformation of the NAM and G-77+China group of countries.*
 | Both NAM & G-77+China |
| 1. China's membership in global south institutions
 | * *Like India, China plays an historic role in NAM and G77+China. This deliberate promotion of south-south cooperation should be institutionalised, consolidated, and cushioned against any opportunistic developments both within and outside China*
 | Both NAM & G-77+China |
| 1. Building a shared future
 | * *The declining diplomatic, security, and economic relationships within Europe signal to the need to construct a shared future for the Global South. This entails deepening south-south trade, south-south technology transfers, south-south co-investment, and south-south development financing*
* *The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), for instance, with its accompanying Pan-African* Payment and Settlement System ([*PAPSS*](https://papss.com/))*, alongside the India-South Africa, Russia-Brazil, and other non-dollar trade & payment systems, signal the importance and potential of reversing present-day constraints of foreign exchange in international trade. Supporting direct exchange systems cn have lasting benefits for NAM & G77+China economies.*
 | Both NAM & G-77+China |
| 1. Africa’s unity and common struggle against western [or any other] Hegemony
 | * *Since the* [*realisation*](https://www.jstor.org/stable/3518810) *that Africa needs her own solutions to her own problems, the continent’s institutional infrastructure has evolved. Building on experiences of intra-African reforms (amidst* [*difficulties*](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-10971-3_13)*), both the NAM and G-77+China need to* [*maintain legitimacy and credibility*](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14747731.2023.2275819) *against western states and international organisations that are determined to prove that these Global-South institutions cannot drive an alternative global-governance agenda.*
 |  |

From Table 1, many issues could animate Uganda’s leadership of both NAM and G-77+China. The issues may differ depending on the institutional mandate and strategic direction of ether NAM or G-77+China. But the imperatives of global-south self-reliance, economic and political counterweight to western domination (in all its facets), the importance of building lasting global-south peace, and shared development futures, cannot be overstressed.

1. **Key Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Issues**

### ***Non-Aligned Relationships with Global Powers Now and in the Future***

The world is becoming increasingly divided. Cold-War-like divisions have resurfaced and are gnawing at the marrow of non-aligned engagement with Great Powers, especially for the developing world. In 1955, under the leadership of India’s Jawaharlal Nehru, Zhou Enlai of China, Koesno Sosrodihardjo Surkano of Indonesia, and Josip Tito of Yugoslavia, the non-aligned leaders met at the Bundang Conference and laid down the major principles that would guide Non-Alignment. Unfortunately, during that formation of NAM, Ghana’s Kwame Nkurumah was present but African Countries that now constitute the biggest membership of NAM were still under colonial rule. We have since overcome the fangs and claws of colonial subterfuge, and one of the major objectives of NAM was to pursue decolonisation of African countries, promote mutual cooperation and non-alignment. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU – now African Union, AU) pursued similar objectives regarding decolonisation and non-alignment in a world threatened by nuclear war. We thought we had progressed, but Great Power rivalries are back. While the whole world is increasingly becoming a space for Great Power competition, three regions in the world are most susceptible to divisive struggles for support and alignment from NAM and G-77 members going forward.

The first region is the north-western Asian Axis (in a region some called “Middle East” for reasons lacking historical and geographical basis). This region has three intricate issues that gnaw at the marrow of strategic peace and security: first, the conflict between Israel and Palestine, which recently progressed dangerously to all-out war, continues to divide the world. Some call for a single geopolitical space called Israel, in which Israelites (both Jews and non-Jews) dominate over Palestinian Arabs (both Muslim and non-Muslim) who would want to have their own independent state. Others call for a Two-State Solution, in which both Israel and Palestine can co-exist peacefully. Uganda has historically supported a Two-State Solution, and we believe one of the explanations for the endless conflicts in that part of the world (besides the emergence of radical and extremist elements) is the failure of both Israel and her regional neighbours to accept and effectively work toward achieving the Two-State Solution.

The second region in the world, where Great Power struggles for support from NAM and G-77 members are likely to grow, is eastern Asia. Besides conflicts between China and her maritime neighbours in the South China Sea, there is the contentious issue of Taiwan. As the United States of America (USA) seeks to mobilise the western world, including members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), to ally against China over Taiwan, China also seeks allies in Asia and beyond over the Taiwan issue. The conflict over Taiwan is a potentially dangerous development. The western powers observe every development in the region, and eastern powers are also watching. Both sides would mobilise and counter-mobilise over Taiwan in the case the conflict unfolded to armed confrontation – which would really be unnecessary because Taiwan has been a Chinese territory since time immemorial – and the Guomindang or the Nationalist Party of China (NPC), now ruling Taiwan since 1949, were once rulers in China. While the Communist Party of China (CPC) overthrew the NPC during the armed revolution of the 1940s, there is no justified reason why the two Chinese brotherly parties need Americans, Europeans, Africans, to resolve their differences. Africans and other peoples of the Global South are yet to fully understand what strange irreconcilable differences prevent the Chinese in mainland PRC and the Chinese in Taiwan, because these are really brothers and sisters, from amicably resolving their differences – on their own. The more these Chinese brethren render themselves susceptible to external influences the more they risk plunging the whole of Asia into a devastating armed confrontation between Great Powers. The decisions of these Chinese elites, in both Taipei and Peking, put the lives of millions, and their recent development achievements, at inestimable risk. The NAM and G-77+China have the daunting task of engaging these brethren to avoid escalating their conflicts.

The final sub-region of Great Power contestation is Europe. The failure of NATO to coexist peacefully with the Russian Federation means that peace in Europe is precarious at the least, cold peace at best. Russia has historically expressed concerns about NATO and EU expansion into its sphere of influence. Surely, the USA would not allow a competing power – whether China, Russia or an emergent power within the Western hemisphere (let Canada arm and try) – to encroach on its sphere of influence within an independent foreign policy and strategic stance. Of course this is selfish thinking; Great Powers can coexist and share development benefits without threatening each other, but the western world has evolved and operated on the realist principle of relative gains, that “When I gain, She loses; when I lose, she gains.” The geopolitical context of eastern Europe involving NATO expansion and extension imposes a unique strategic-security dynamic upon Russia and her European neighbours which renders former members of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) strategically endangered countries. Neither NATO nor Russia would want these countries to fully ally with either side. One wonders whether Russia would have attacked Europe if NATO had been dissolved soon after the dissolution of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (Warsaw Pact) in 1991. Nothing shows that it would have been the case. Why, then did NATO remain – and instead keep on expanding after 1991? What were the implications of this expansion? Answers to these questions can help us understand the 2008 Russia-Georgia war; the 2011 attack on Libya; the 2014 crisis in Ukraine; and the post-2022 Russian “Special Military Operation” in Ukraine that has affected the whole world today.

The NAM and G-77+China have a daunting task, a critical responsibility, to reverse these divisive developments. These geopolitical crises now threaten to tear asunder the United Nations (UN) system, specifically the legitimacy and functionality of the UN Security Council. This is why Africa and the G-77+China have steadfastly pursued the reform of the UN.

### ***Reforming the UN: Cooperation to Resolve Raging Conflicts at Globally***

Resolving the growing and diversifying conflicts at a global stage, in both the aforementioned regions and elsewhere, requires reforming the multilateral infrastructure that has governed the world since the end of the imperial wars of 1914-1945. Since many of the NAM members are also members of the G-77+China grouping, both groups have the means to articulate and promote their collective development interests, enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international issues within the UN system, promote South-South cooperation for development, and engage Great Powers and military alliances to prioritise diplomatic resolution of current conflicts. Allowing conflicts to intensity and spread beyond their regional confines portends to a worse global crisis than is currently imaginable.

Reforming the UN Security Council requires going beyond “the illusion of representatives.” the September 2005 World Summit only agree to disagree on the issue of Security Council reform, when one reads paragraph 153 of the World Summit Outcome Document of 16 September 2005 ([A/RES/60/1](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_60_1.pdf)). Consensus about reforming the Security Council exists. Disagreement among different groups of UN member States prevails due to the enlargement and category of membership, the working methods, regional representation, and the attitude of the five permanent members (because changing the structure of the Security Council ultimately requires a unanimous decision of these Great-Five States).

To become more effective, legitimate, credible, representative, democratic, transparent, flexible, neutral, and accountable, as the UN’s critical executive organ, the Security Council cannot but must embrace reforms. Fortunately, the NAM and G-77+ China provide the opportunity to address themselves to the Five Permanent Members’ llimited political enthusiasm for UNSC reform, the impasse in the UN General Assembly, contradicting proposals on substantive UN Security Council reforms, and the growing realisation that even UNSC Permanent members have been responsible for elusive peace in the post-1945 world. How does the world generally, and the UNSC in particular, make sense of the 2011 attack on Libya, the war in Syria, the devastation in Palestine, and the war in Ukraine?

To address ourselves to these challenges, the NAM and G-77+China need to think deeply about adopting a criterion for legitimacy of permanent UNSC membership; changing the structure of permanent UNSC membership; abolition of the veto right/power (which can be linked to the gridlock in response to the wars in Syria and Ukraine); introducing the method of qualified majority voting; and increasing the influence of G-77+China and NAM Member States on the Council’s decisions as a means to increasing its legitimacy in the face of shifting global power dynamics and growing turbulence in world affairs. Achieving these milestones requires deepened South-South cooperation.

### ***Maintaining Security in Asia and beyond***

All regions of the world need security. We all need to remain calm, secure, and safe. But certain world regions are too sensitive to degenerate into insecurity. It is in our collective interest to maintain dialogue over confrontation, to pursue lasting peace in Asia (especially over the South and East China Seas), and to avoid confrontation between foreign powers and powers within our regions. Asia, for instance, has the world’s largest economy and population – and a largescale armed confrontation in the continent would have levels of human devastation unimaginable in human conscience. Critical Asian states, particularly those with territorial and maritime disputes with [China](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/896323/pdf) (over the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Scarborough Shoal, etc – such as Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam) and other parts of the [South](https://doi.org/10.1080/00908320.2022.2034555) and east China [Seas](https://www.un.org/en/ga/69/meetings/gadebate/27sep/vietnam.shtml) (e.g. Japan), as well as those with territorial disputes (e.g. India and China, India and Pakistan, etc) need careful treading to avoid confrontation.

While it may make realpolitik sense for external powers to divide Asian states and turn them against each other, the losses accruing from confrontation far outweigh any imaginable gains from territorial, maritime, or even ideological wars. For example, more than US$ 3 Trillion worth of global trade, and one-third of global maritime trade (shipping), passes via the South China Sea. Why, then, would anyone want war in such a maritime region? Regionally, there have been many initiatives to resolve some of these disputes, but the “ASEAN+China” modality can prove a realistic multilateral arrangement toward resolving these conflicts compared to an arrangement involving extra-Asian powers with divided allegiances in Asia and selfish interest in these disputes.

### ***Strengthening Global Efforts Against Transnational Threats Of Terrorism, Radicalisation & Pandemics***

Growing disquiet about unjustified global domination has partly contributed to threats ofg terrorism, radicalism, and extremism, some of which have become instruments of groups without transformative agendas in their countries or regions. Very few are the countries, today, which have not suffered directly from some impact of these related vices.

The NAM and G-77+China spaces are but an opportunity for continuous exchanges, lesson sharing, and practice improvements, about these issues. Uganda is willing and ready to share with any other country our experience of counterterrorism, counter-radicalisation, and anti-extremist efforts, both domestically and regionally, and how we have worked with the rest of the world to address these vices. Since these vices are not limited to the global east or west, but have become collective threats, it would be a mistake to assume that we can cooperate on these issues and then diverge on other issues. That would be short-termism – because the causes and drivers of terrorism, radicalism, and extremism, are related to global security, global prosperity, global ideology, global technology, global culture, and global governance.

The NAM and G+77 have the overarching obligation to intensify global, UN-level, debates about prosperity, culture and identity, technology, and governance. We may disagree on some ideational, sociocultural, and ideological priorities – but we can always agree to “Live and Let Live.” No one has the duty to impose their culture, values, norms, and beliefs upon another – but people with diverse beliefs, values, norms, and identities can coexist peacefully and in an interdependent relationship. Until this is understood and applied across global relationships we remain at the verge of cultural and identity conflicts on a global scale. Even it at some point some cultural convergence obtains, we need not impose it – English may have been imposed upon other peoples, but the reproduction of cultural colonialism can only threaten more of us regardless of where we live, the ideas we espouse, and the citizenship we claim.

## **Key G-77+China Issues**

## ***South-South Cooperation (China-Global-South, NAM-BRICs, G77-BRICS).***

The northern hemisphere is, fortunately, more allied and enjoys greater cooperation than the Global South. The Euro-American landscape, for instance, is characterised by strong and growing exchanges in economic, technological, research and development (R&), political, security, socio-cultural, and ideational affairs. The Global South, however, has yet to build on the Bandung Spirit and the non-aligned conception of global politics to construct alternative channels of engagement, exchange, and sharing of opportunities. In political affairs, south-south cooperation is way behind [academic](https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/books/9789210058575/read) and [research](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark%3A/48223/pf0000245825) institutions – there is cooperation between the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA, founded in 1973), and the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO, or ***Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales*,** founded in 1967), for instance. Organized political and diplomatic engagements between Africa and Latin America need to be strengthened. Cooperation between Africa and Asia needs revamping despite growing exchanges between Africa and China, Africa and India, Africa and other countries (like Turkey, Iran, South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, etc). Much more and deeper cooperation can be obtained – in economic affairs (investments, trade, technological and technical exchanges, joint investments, and development R&D), education, culture, and politics.

Some observers have [asserted that](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/foresightafrica2022_chapter6.pdf) “While trade relations between Africa and Asia have burgeoned, they remain lopsided; Africa is primarily a source of raw commodities, Asia an exporter of finished products. This result speaks to the relative development and diversification experience of the two regions over the last 60 years.” But we can share this prosperity: Japan is not becoming poorer because South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Brunei, have developed; or because Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam are growing rapidly. Instead, Japan, which relatively developed faster than her Asian neighbours during the 20th century, is getting greater purchasing power and market for her products within the region, more enhanced exchanges, increased co-learning and co-design with closer neighbours, and growing regional/Asian power in the world of which Japan is a part. There is the second benefit of closer regional ties: “*Africa does not have to reinvent the development wheel in learning from Asia’s experience. That more than 1 billion people have been lifted worldwide out of extreme poverty since 1990s is largely due to developments in East Asia—and in China in particular*”. Imagine what an economic powerhouse Asia would be, if India, China, Japan, and ASEAN member countries resolved their political differences amicably and built impenetrable ties of cooperation, interdependence and shared prosperity. These countries may have historical quarrels – but Britain has historical quarrels with countries from every continent on earth due to colonial exploitation: but are these regions not working well with Britain? Together, we place our inglorious past where it belongs and work toward a shared glorious future – and nothing prevents historical enemies, like Japan and China, or China and England which fought over Hong Kong, from transcending these historical animosities for common progress.

Afro-Chinese relations have been formalised over the years, through the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). India, USA and Europe have followed suit – recently we had an Africa-USA Leaders’ Summit in December 2022, which followed the sixth African Union (AU)-European Union (EU) summit of February 2022. China’s Premier Zhou Enlai outlined the [eight principles](http://www.china.org.cn/government/whitepaper/2011-04/21/content_22411843.htm) of China's foreign economic assistance and cooperation in1964, which need to inform China’s engagement with her Asian neighbours (e.g. via China-ASEAN cooperation), we well as African Latin American friends (via the China-CELAC Forum and more). while the NAM and G-77+China provide an opportunity for Africa, Asia, and Latin America to meet and discuss issues of common interest, there is no reason why we should not have regular Africa-Latin America Summit, Africa-Asia Summit, as well as technical and social exchanges. If anyone reasons that Africa should remain relatively poorer, does the Asian, American, or European manufacturer hope to continue expanding his or her market to Africa of the poor? Has the quality of life of an average European or American declined just because one billion Asians have got out of poverty over the past 40 years? These and more similar realities underscore the need for enhanced and deepened South-South Cooperation.

Current structures, such as BRICS, should not only be supported and consolidated but they too should facilitate and drive more south-south cooperation. We are not seeing BRICS as an alternative to the Washington Consensus – though some Euro-American observers want to view it that way – but as part of the global metamorphosis that transcends imperial imperatives of rule that have animated the Caucasian-dominated world over the past 500 years. When we talk of strengthening multidimensional cooperation and exchanges between NAM and G-77+China members, we are talking about expanding horizons of social, economic, and political learning and sharing, with globally-enriching consequences for the quality of governance on a global scale. World affairs that control 8 billion people cannot be decided and determined by world elites in regions where less than 10% of the world’s population live – when they tried to do so, they plunged the world into two devastating imperial wars, and when they were exhausted by these wars, they crafted a global governance infrastructure, in the form of the UN system and Bretton Woods Consensus, whose effectiveness in keeping the world peaceful, equitable, and with shared prosperity have remained questionable.

### ***Efforts against imperialism and hegemony***

Standing firm against external divisive interests is not a game of the weak. Years of hegemonic impositions and historical experiences of the same have proven that hegemony fuels imperial tendencies, leading to subjugation of other peoples and regions by global or regional poles. Those who have been involved in the business of global economic and trade diplomacy, international financing and struggles to establish a more equitable global development financing architecture, attest to the sensitivities of some of these issues. Therefore, changing the narrative as defined by the west is the cornerstone to both NAM and G-77+China summits.

There has been reliance on western media, which has not only been misleading but has also deliberately orchestrated and engineered hostility that has been deepening the understanding deficit in the global south. Many world development issues are judged from western lenses, rendering them biased and inappropriate for non-western worlds. Taking lessons from fast growing economies, such as China, Singapore, South Korea, Qatar, and many of the fastest growing economies in Africa today, is it important not to shy away from alternative policy, media, and academic narratives. Today’s world has two different parts; two different narratives; and two different worldviews about almost everything – from pandemic controls to sexuality, from development financing to identity and nationality, from geopolitics to domestic political governance. One narrative has been presented by western countries, led by the USA and her European ‘allies’. This narrative is security-centred, military-dominated, and talks of conflicts, confrontation, and imposition. The alternative worldview, pursued by mainly Africa and to a great extent China, lays emphasis on humanness – Ubuntu. It focuses on connectivity, cooperation, inclusiveness, and the “Be and Let Be” philosophy.

This alternative narrative has, definitely, come at the cost for most south-south countries and institutions. Global south actors are being set against each other and many have played to the gallery of the west and danced to the tune of the declining US-dominated world order. The focus should be clear: always win-win cooperation of all member countries. Nothing, other than selfishness and narrowscopic greed, prevents the West from working with the East to develop the South, and vice-versa – and nothing shows that when the Global South develops the global north would suffer. In fact, the rest of the world would overcome the challenges of migration and other human-development deficits of our time. Pragmatic cooperation should be the focus of G-77+China. The tendencies of being set against each other is the last thing we can engage into in this 21st century – and the G-77+China proves this standpoint

### ***Addressing Climate Change Threats***

An important element of the need to work together to prevent human catastrophe is the need to address the dauting issue of climate change. Most NAM and G-77+China member states have contributed dismally to the causes of climate change, specifically greenhouse gas emissions. These two fora provide an opportunity to engage powers that are responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, and resulting global warming and its accompanying climate change.

China, for instance, has the obligation to humanity, to play a leading role in the development of technologies that reduce human dependence on fossil fuels. China can also engage fellow global powers – the UK, EU-member countries and institutions, the USA, Canada and the increasingly powerful Asian economies – to invest adequately in these alternatives. Green development, which countries like South Korea have been championing, seems to be the way to go. A challenge arises when these proposals seek to prevent developing-south countries from exploiting their fossil-fuel resources without providing affordable alternatives. If anything, Global South economies deserve adequate compensation – in the form of human capital development, technology transfers, infrastructure development and foreign direct investment – to avoid adding salt to the injury of global warming by avoiding pollutant developments.

To have a collective voice on these issues, the NAM and G-77+China need to strongly engage the global north about these compensatory requirements, needs, and obligations. It is possibly cheaper for developed economies to provide green energy (hydroelectric, solar, nuclear, etc), infrastructure, green and sustainable housing, and develop human capacity of the world’s poorest 3 billion people than it is to fight another world war over the world’s sensitive strategic regions. The more we avoid these strategic imperatives the more seeds of radical and extremist behaviours we plant around the world.

### ***Strengthening Technology, Capital, Technical, and Foreign-Direct Investment Transfers to the Global South***

The interrelated problems of climate change, global inequalities, exploitative relations and the ideals of shared human dignity and prosperity (I have heard that under the Sustainable Development Goals – or Agenda 2030 – the UNDP has come up with an idea called “Leaving No-One Behind”, LNOB), are here with us. Developed societies produce and have more than they can consume, while developing societies cannot eke a decent living in the midst of global plenty. Why? Because we have been inattentive to the imperatives of technology, capital, technical, and foreign-direct investment (FDI) transfers to the Global South.

All members of the NAM and G-77+China understand, from experience and research, that countries which developed after 1945 did so because of technology and capital transfers, foreign-direct investment (FDI), and human capital development. Other facilitating factors – such as access to regional and global trade opportunities (as opposed to trade protectionism), partnerships between indigenous and foreign investors, conducive investment climate – were important to the degree that technology, capital, human skills, and investment, were available.

It is important for NAM and G-77+China to prioritise technology, capital, technical, and foreign-direct investment (FDI) transfers to the Global South. For some regions, such as Asia, this is easier – Singapore, South Korea, Japan, can easily transfer their technologies to Cambodia, Laos, Myamar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and other countries. In Africa, there is no technological powerhouse capable of intra-Africa technology transfers – hence the need to work with Asian technological powerhouses (like Singapore, Japan, Brunei, South Korea, and increasingly Chinese and Indian sub-continents) to achieve requisite and effective levels of technology and capital transfers, human capital development, and FDI. Fortunately, our Global North partners are willing to share in this regard.

Where there is global-north hesitancy, such as among private-sector investors which have limited knowledge and understanding of the investment potentials in regions like Africa, or governance practitioners who seek to ideologically confuse investment and technology, we need to engage them to equip our people with technological competencies that match Industry 4.0 and Industry X, invest in Africa with the most modern of technologies, and facilitate deeper Asia-Africa-Latin America exchanges. They can soon realise they there are inestimable gains for them as well. Therefore, engagements about technology, capital, technical, and foreign-direct investment (FDI) transfers to the Global South, should become part of our everyday work.

Consistent with this notion, the prioritisation of socioeconomic, techno-scientific, and infrastructure development of the Global South cannot be overemphasized. Traditionally, development results from political choices which inform the [institutional infrastructure](https://www.usaid.gov/fallsemester/usaid-101/book-club/why-nations-fail#:~:text=Synopsis%3A,institutions%20that%20underlie%20economic%20success.) that a society establishes and in turn thrives on to develop. Developmental institutions are no longer reducible to domestic governance but stretch to regional and global institutions – as laid out about the UN systems, Bretton Woods institutions, intercontinental institutional formations (e.g. FOCAC, Afro-American Summit, Afro-Indian Summit, ASEAN +# etc) and regional institutions like EU, AU, and ASEAN. Intercontinental, intra-continental, and cross-continental transfers of technology, capital, technical competencies, and foreign-direct investment (FDI) will remain critical for the socioeconomic progress of NAM and G-77+China economies and an integral part of the development pursuits of our time.

# **Conclusion**: UCFR’s Role in NAM, G-77+China, UN, and African Regional Fora

Uganda’s chairmanship of both NAM and G-77+China imposes serious responsibility to galvanise global-south efforts, leverage existing cooperation (in trade, investment, R&D and other exchanges), and building on previous member-country efforts to make a mark in the lives and histories of both institutions. The processes through which these important ideas have been generated highlight the UCFR’s role in generating and sharing knowledge about Uganda’s foreign policy interests and processes. The Council seeks an opportunity to play a constructive role in NAM, G-77+China, and other regional and international institutions in which Uganda is playing a part. Building on its convening power, a wide range of membership consisting of experienced practitioners and passionate intellectuals, the UCFR offers an important link-node between the world of research and the world of foreign policy practice.

***Observing NAM Summit as part of the Ugandan Team***: The UCFR seeks an opportunity to be present at the NAM summit, during and after the 2024-2027 periods. While the NAM has no formal secretariat and structure, and achieving observer status may present difficulties of member-country approval, during the period that Uganda chairs the NAM the Council can play a constructive role in the preparations for NAM as part of Uganda’s technical team. Granting the UCFR this presence provides a key opportunity to make this noble contribution.

***Observing G-77+China Summit as part of the Ugandan Team***: The UCFR seeks an opportunity to join Uganda’s technical team in preparations for and participation in, the G-77+China summit proceedings. This global forum, under the auspices of UNCTAD, is crucial for Uganda and the world in several respects. In particular, the G77 has an institutional structure. There are G77 Chapters with Liaison offices in Geneva (at the UNCTAD), Nairobi (at the UNEP), Paris (at UNESCO offices), and Rome (FAO/IFAD offices). The Vienna (UNIDO), and the (G-24)/Washington, D.C. (IMF and World Bank) chapters are responsible for industrial development and international monetary affairs. These Chapters provide various entry-points for the UCFR to contribute in ways that enable Uganda’s reach to these spaces.

Given participation access UCFR can identify and assign key experts to understand the key issues discussed during the G-77+China summit (and other meetings). These experts can then report to the bigger Council, and additional work done to develop policy briefs and other knowledge-sharing opportunities for Uganda’s diplomatic and decision-making actors. The opportunity also lays the foundation for deeper understanding of the areas in which Uganda’s diplomatic community, foreign-policy-making structures (e.g. MOFA, Parliament and the presidency), and Uganda’s foreign lobbyists, can bank on the UCFR’s research ad advocacy to find research products that can inform evidence-based choices.

***Observer Status in EAC, AU & UN***: The UCFR’s participation in NAM and G-77+China summits may lay the foundation for its plans to secure accreditation for Observer Status in the EAC, AU, and UN. The African Union (AU), and its constituent Regional Economic Communities (REC), is Africa’s integral structure for governance and development. It provides the entry-point for the operationalisation of NAM decisions and realisation of the dream of deepened south-south cooperation. Institutions like the AfCFTA and the PAPSS highlight the evolving changes in this regard – and the UCFR needs a presence in these spaces in order to inform its meaningful contribution to Uganda’s and Africa’s foreign policymaking process.

In addition to the need to make these institutions more effective in the management of African affairs, there is limited independent observation of what these institutions do in order to provide with Government of Uganda with objective opinions on how to more meaningfully engage in these institutions. Most AU organs, such as the Peace and Security Council and its constituent African Standby Force (ASF, operationalised in eastern Africa as the Eastern African Standby Force, [EASF](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-49348-6_11)); the AU Commission; Financial Institutions; and the Economic, Social & Cultural Council; require independent observers who advise member countries on how to effectively engage and utilise these institutional channels to attract opportunities for their member countries. Uganda lacks an independent observer at the AU level in this regard. The same applies to the EAC, an unique AU REC whose [Treaty](https://www.eacj.org/?page_id=33) (and accompanying protocols) is binding to Partner States that ratify it. Uganda needs an independent observer in both the AU and EAC. The UCFR can ably play this role.

In the evolving world of multipolarity and uncertainty about global governance rules (including the efficacy of UN institutions), Uganda needs more than diplomatic presence; it requires the ability to sieve through the voluminous work of the UN, the various and multifaceted stakeholders the country needs to deal with, and the critical-actor analysis that will enable the country to determine and work with those stakeholders that are critical for our economic-diplomacy priorities and development aspirations. ***D***espite diplomatic presence at/in the UN, Uganda also needs an actor who can advise government on UN-level engagements with the rest of the world. While this observer needs to work closely with Uganda’s diplomats at the UN system, the observer needs to be independent and provide objective ideas and opinions that inform the country’s adaptive engagement in a rapidly-changing world. The UCFR is aware that securing observer status can be daunting. The requirements may be hard to meet. But a journey of a thousand miles begins with a step. NAM and G-77+China may be that first step.

1. Briefing to the President of the Republic of Uganda, HE YKT Museveni, in preparation for Uganda’s hosting and chair of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 at the United Nations (G-77@UN).

\*\* Comments, Questions, Queries & Elaborations about this briefing can be channeled for clarification to the following UCFR members: James Mugume (Amb.), Sabastian Rwengabo (PhD), Chris Karuhanga, Francis Katana (Amb.), & Leonard Imanishimwe. Jacqueline Nakayiza (PhD) made technical contribution to this Briefing, having been a Panelist at the recent Council Dialogue on NAM. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)