

## Three Concepts of Internationalism in the Global South:

### Solidarism, Pluralism, and Developmentalism

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*Throughout modern history, internationalism has been one of the most powerful forces that drives global political changes. While existing research focuses exceptionally on liberal internationalism, studies devoted to internationalism beyond its liberal and Western forms remain relatively scant. Building on a conception that perceives internationalism as a form of human practices, this article explores the evolution of the concept of internationalism in the Global South through a series of political practices from the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and the 1955 Asian-African Conference in Bandung to the proposal of the New International Economic Order in 1974 and the BRICS's contestation over NATO's Libyan intervention in 2011. It is argued that the normative core of internationalism in the Global South is constituted of three major components – pluralism, solidarism, and developmentalism, each in its particular form. Taken together, it envisions an international order rooted in the solidarity of the post-colonial peoples based on their shared colonial past, underpinned by a pluralistic outlook of political life, and places emphasis on redistributive justice in structuring the international economic order. Though some argue that with the rise of the BRICS countries, there will be a revival of Global South internationalism, this article concludes that this is not likely to happen at present.*

**Keywords:** *internationalism; Global South; solidarism; pluralism; developmentalism*

#### Introduction

Throughout modern history, internationalism has been one of the most potent forces driving global political changes. From the establishment of the League of Nations to the global anti-colonial movements and the program known as the 'liberal internationalism 2.0' (Ikenberry, 2009) instituted by the United States to provide order to the post-1945 international system, different forms of internationalism have emanated many prominent political practices which have significantly shaped the internation-

al order. However, international relations (IR) scholars have not studied the varieties of internationalism equally. Among all its variants, liberal internationalism has been most extensively studied over the past few decades, focusing generally on two themes. The first theme concerns the liberal internationalist project in the interwar period, with scholars discussing the political thoughts of leading internationalist figures such as Alfred Zimmern (Morefield, 2005), Gilbert Murray (Wilson, 2011; Morefield, 2005), and Leonard Woolf (Wilson, 2015). Others have also

argued that it was the liberal internationalist ideal of building lasting peace and preventing warfare through the establishment of a 'world government' and the promotion of cross-national understanding that had driven scholars to search for international theory and give birth to IR as an academic discipline (Long & Schmidt, 2005; Stöckmann, 2022).

The second theme revolves around the liberal hegemony of the US and its project of 'liberal internationalism 2.0'. After the Cold War, there were extensive debates about the predicament facing liberal internationalism resulting from its discontent with political reality and other political forces such as nationalism (Hoffmann, 1995), the nature and future of American liberal internationalism (Ikenberry, 2009, 2020), how liberal internationalism has informed political practices including peacebuilding (Paris, 1997) and sanctions (Hurd, 2005) especially in and through the working of international organizations, and whether the liberal internationalist compact had come to an end as the domestic political consensus on US foreign policy demised (Kupchan & Trubowitz, 2007).

While the research on these two themes has produced many insights into internationalism in its liberal forms, it has had little to say about the strands of internationalism that emerged from the non-liberal political environment and practiced beyond the Western world. The exceptional focus on liberal internationalism has created a myth that supposes internationalism is a value exclusive to Western foreign policy and liberal statecraft (Moore, 2018).

In recent years, nevertheless, internationalism beyond its liberal and Western forms has attracted increasing scholarly attention. For instance, Weber and Winanti (2016) examined the emergence of the 'solidarist internationalism' project at the Bandung Conference and how this project informed the particular understandings of 'modernization' and 'development' in the Global South. Moore (2018) traced the evolution of the concept of internationalism and the changing foreign policy practices in the Global South. In a solicited article, Dirik et al. (2023) discussed multiple forms of internationalism in the non-Western world, ranging from Pan-African and Early Soviet to Islamic Socialist and Kurdish. They noted that each form has its own revolutionary view of international order, instigating grassroots social movements and making non-Western internationalism remarkably different from its Western counterpart. Still, despite the growing scholarly attention, literature devoted to studying internationalism beyond its liberal and Western forms remains relatively scant.

This article seeks to contribute to the scholarly debate on internationalism in the Global South by exploring its concept and history. Through conceptualizing internationalism as a form of human practice, this article traces the evolution of the concept of internationalism in the Global South through a series of political practices starting from the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 and the Asian-African Conference in Bandung (The Bandung Conference) in 1955 to the proposal of the New International Economic Order

(NIEO) in 1974 and the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) contestation over NATO's intervention in Libya in 2011. This article argues that the normative core of internationalism in the Global South is constituted of three main components: pluralism, solidarism, and developmentalism, each in its particular form. Taken together, the internationalism that emerged in the Global South articulated a post-colonial vision of international order underpinned by the solidarity and shared identity of the peoples in the Global South based on their shared experiences of colonialism and anti-colonial struggles, centered around the affirmation that every nation is entitled to build its domestic political, economic, and social institutions by its conception of 'good life' without external interference, and emphasizes redistributive justice and the need for eliminating the colonial legacies embedded in the modern international (economic) order as a prerequisite for the post-colonial nations to pursue development and modernization.

The contribution of this article is three-fold. Firstly, as Halliday (1988) pointed out, internationalism always involves specific normative assertions about international life – that particular ways of organizing the international connections and interactions between people, governments, and other actors are considered excellent and desirable. Such normative assertions create an international interest beyond that of individual nations and thereby rationalize and legitimize internationalist politics. Unraveling the normative complexities of internationalism is vital in

understanding why actors engage in internationalist politics, what they are after, and on what grounds they try to justify their cause. This could advance our understanding of the norms and values underlying the foreign policies and statecraft of the rising powers in the Global South and answer the critical question about what kind of international order they are trying to build at present. Secondly, as Acharya and Buzan (2019) argued, the IR discipline's conceptual, theoretical, and methodological paradigms derive predominantly from Western intellectual traditions and experiences. In a world increasingly characterized by deep pluralism, knowledge production within the discipline must be more reflective of the Global South's history, ideas, and practices. Examining the ideas and practices associated with non-Western internationalism represents an entry point for pushing the discipline toward Global IR. Finally, by taking a practice-oriented methodological approach, this article reveals a new method for studying internationalism. As the next section will show, such an approach would complement the shortcomings of studying internationalism as intellectual history or as political value embedded in the foreign policies of certain states, thereby expanding the toolkit for IR scholars in studying complex and conceptually confusing phenomena like internationalism.

This article is organized into five parts. The first part provides a conceptual analysis of internationalism and explains how conceptualizing internationalism as human practice would aid the analysis of internationalism in the Global South. The

second, third, and fourth parts each discuss a particular normative component of the Global South internationalism and examine how it was articulated from the political practices in the Global South. The final part sketches the BRICS's contestation over NATO's Libyan intervention in 2011 and suggests that although this event displayed some of its normative characteristics, they did not mark the revival of internationalism in the Global South.

This article interchangeably uses the terms the 'Global South' and the 'Third World.' While well aware that these terms were coined in different contexts to denote different meanings, for this article's purpose, it would be futile to engage in the lengthy debate about the differences between them. The term 'Third World' was first coined by Alfred Sauvy in 1952 to denote the group of countries that remained outside of the confrontation between the Western and the Soviet blocs, which was later given political significance concerning these countries' shared experience of colonialism and their developing economies. 'Global South' gained popularity after the Cold War and is more encompassing in its meaning. As Haug et al. (2021) noted, in academic and political discourses, 'Global South' generally has three understandings: the poor or socio-economically marginalized parts of the world, the formerly colonized countries, and the resistant forces against neoliberal capitalism or other global hegemonic powers. Following Moore (2018), this article also discusses a group of countries whose foreign policies derive considerably from post-colonial lega-

cies and the quest for developmental justice, which both terms can create. Nevertheless, it is worth clarifying that Russia is not included in the 'Third World' because of its past as an imperial power in the Tsarist period and as a hegemonic power in the Soviet period. As the final section will show, though today the BRICS as a whole embody some of the political legacies of the Third World project in their foreign policies, it would not be evident to assume the BRICS countries all derive their foreign policies from post-colonial legacies and the quest for justice in international economic relations.

### **Understanding Internationalism**

As pervasive and remarkable as internationalism has been in political practices and discourses, the concept of internationalism has only sometimes remained clear and consistent throughout history. As Halliday (1988) pointed out, internationalism has too often been associated with several ideas, but none of them constitutes the core meaning. Halliday (1988) identified three broad themes that disparate forms of internationalism share: firstly, there is an objective process of 'the internationalization of the world' that has been taking place in reality, bringing distant human communities into ever-closer connections; Secondly, there is a corresponding political process in which international and transnational collaborations between governments, NGOs, and individuals increase; Thirdly, there is a normative assertion that these processes are good because they promote the interests of human community at large.

Halliday's conception provides a viable entry point for mapping the conceptual structure of internationalism. Firstly, internationalism emerges through a materialist process in which the interconnectedness of human beings worldwide is tremendously increased. This process arguably started in the Age of Exploration in the fifteenth century. However, it was greatly accelerated during the nineteenth century when industrialization and the global expansion of the capitalist market not only created strong incentives for people from different backgrounds to engage in extensive political, commercial, and cultural exchanges but also enabled them to do so through modern means of transportation and communication such as railways, steamships, telegraphs, telephones, and mail services. Sluga (2013) argued that this objective process 'provided the infrastructure and motivation for the international institutions and associations devoted to all internationalized political, economic, religious, and humanitarian issues proliferating across the world.' Therefore, the materialist process of the 'internationalization of the world' laid the foundation for the emergence of internationalism. Without inter-human interactions across different cultural backgrounds, people would not develop any idea about life beyond their primordial communities or sense of the 'international.'

Secondly, internationalism manifests through a series of political projects that appeal to the interests beyond individual nation-states and seek to organize or govern the increasingly internationalized world in specific ways. Liberal internationalist projects,

such as the working of international organizations, the rule of international law, and the promotion of free trade, have been extensively studied by scholars interested in regime theory and have been widely considered an effective means to achieve peace and prosperity. However, the political significance of internationalism goes deeper. As Halliday (2009) later elaborated, the political process of internationalism involves the transformation of political identities and responsibilities in the sense that internationalism envisions a shared community of humankind and informs political practices based on the common interest of humankind. Goldmann (1994) pointed out that internationalism derives from an outward-looking, universalist form of political opinion. We can observe the existence and influence of internationalist politics through the practices emanated by such political opinion.

Finally, internationalism is centered around specific normative visions about international life. The normative spectrum of internationalism concerns the 'right,' 'good,' or 'desirable' way of organizing the increasingly internationalized world, with cosmopolitanism lying on the one side of the spectrum and communitarianism on the other (Lawler, 2005; Dunne & MacDonald, 2013). The central question is about the place of nation-states in an internationalized world. As internationalism brings about shifts in the sense of belonging and political identity, it opens up the possibility of transcending the national community to define actors' identities in a broader social milieu. Cosmopolitans, therefore, argue that since we are all

human beings, we are bound by some shared moral values rooted in humanity. States, for cosmopolitans, are only an intermediary form of political community and will be replaced by new forms of political community that function better in upholding the cosmopolitan principles (see Linklater & Suganami, 2006; Dunne & MacDonald, 2013). Communitarians, on the other hand, are skeptical about the cosmopolitan visions. As political realists, communitarians consider the territorial state as the primary community in defining human beings' political identities, which is unreplaceable by any other forms of communities, at least shortly. As Miller (1999) argued, '[Republican citizenship] represents the best way in which people of diverse beliefs and styles of life can live together under laws and institutions which they can endorse as legitimate.' In his critique of cosmopolitan citizenship, he noted multiple political, legal, and ethical constraints that would make the transformation from national to cosmopolitan citizenship not only unrealizable but also undesirable. As its name suggests, communitarians emphasize the role of the politically bounded communities, i.e., territorial states, in supplying and embodying moral values in international life.

Within this normative spectrum, internationalism is expected to occupy the middle ground. As Goldmann (1994) pointed out, the value of internationalism lies in its potential to ameliorate the stability of the international system without necessarily replacing the system of states with a world authority. The coercive and accommodative powers of internationalism through the law,

organization, exchange, and communication, according to Goldmann (1994), would not only prevent incompatibility of interest between states but also bring people closer. This form of 'classical' internationalism is found in the foreign policies of the Scandinavian countries, which are more prone to cosmopolitan values, multilateralism, the rule of law, and the primacy of the United Nations in world politics (Pratt, 1989; Lawler, 2005). Central to classical internationalism is the conception of the 'Good State' – states who are committed to other-regarding moral purposes and robust internationalist foreign policies (Lawler, 2005). Internationalism in such a conception is uncontestedly statist – it does not seek to transcend the state. Instead, it prescribes a particular role to the state and envisions a particular kind of state in its project, i.e., liberal democracies.

Taken together, internationalism can be understood as a particular form of political practice appealing to the interests beyond nation-states, emerging from specific objective backgrounds, and embedded with certain normative orientations about international life. How, then, can we operationalize such a conception to explore the role of internationalism in world politics? How can we articulate the normative content of internationalism amidst the pervasive internationalist political projects? Existing research in the IR discipline generally studies internationalism from two methodological approaches. The first is tracing the intellectual history of internationalist thoughts, from earlier figures like Emanuel Kant (e.g., Bartelson, 1995) to more recent thinkers like Gil-

bert Murray (e.g., Wilson, 2011). The second examines the internationalist foreign policies of states sharing liberal political values (e.g., Ikenberry, 2009, 2020; Pratt, 1989).

Both, however, exhibit some shortcomings. Internationalist thoughts undoubtedly reflect the objective processes in a given historical period and usually carry certain moral or ethical judgments about international life that play essential roles in informing internationalist projects. However, they have only been applied in political reality with interpretation and, on many occasions, distortion, which may lead to disarray between political thought and practice (see Desch, 2007). The second approach often overlooks the complexity and multiplicity of internationalist movements. Historically, non-state actors have played prominent roles in different internationalist projects, from the multiple national League of Nations societies during the interwar period (see McCarthy, 2011) to the various nongovernmental organizations that carry forward liberal ideas globally in the contemporary period (see Iriye, 2002). This is more telling when examining internationalism in the Global South since most Third World actors began to engage in internationalist projects as anti-colonial, nongovernmental, national liberation parties, organizations, and associations. As Colás (2002) demonstrated, most social movements embody certain kinds of universal political agency. They are inevitably internationalized, whereas a focus on states' foreign policies would overlook this critical dimension. Therefore, neither tracing the intellectual history nor evaluating the for-

eign policies of leading internationalist states would give a complete picture of internationalism.

This article takes a methodological standpoint which views internationalism as an inter-subjective process of human practice. According to Adler and Pouliot (2011), practices are socially meaningful patterns of competent performances in which the background knowledge and discourse about the material world are embodied, acted out, and reified. Practices differ from 'behaviors' or 'actions' in that through practice, actors not only engage in the material world in a patterned manner but also try to make sense of the material world, generating intersubjective social meanings about the material world. Through practices, actors exercise material agencies informed by an organic combination of instrumental rationality and normative judgments to shape the material and social structures in the social field, through which new knowledge is reproduced and internalized by the actors to inform subsequent practices (Pouliot & Mérand, 2013). A practice-oriented approach weaves together the material and ideational, and agential and structural dimensions of the social phenomenon to focus on how social meanings are produced and reproduced as actors meet each other, speak to each other, and do things that would affect each other (Adler & Pouliot, 2011).

As Clavin (2011) put it succinctly, 'Internationalism represents the value of the practice it defines.' By taking a practice-oriented approach, this article shifts its focus away from analyzing the purely ideational,

intellectual history of internationalism or the state-centered internationalist foreign policy to generate knowledge about internationalism by concentrating on the occasions and events that bring actors into the interaction to formulate internationalist agendas and trying to articulate the ideational principles and normative visions that inform their interaction and are produced and reproduced through their interaction. This article investigates what the actors think by examining what they do in practice. Empirically, this article examines a series of international conferences and gatherings that are prominent in the unfolding of the Third World and later the Global South projects, from the drafting of the UDHR and the Bandung Conference to the UN Conference on Trade and Development and the UN Security Council meetings in 2011. As Heffernan et al. (2022) noted, 'It was through periodic conferences that internationalism was formalized as both an arena of governance and a scale of investigation.' This article draws on relevant materials including official documents, speeches, statements, conventions, conference proceedings, and secondary historical works to discern the normative visions expressed in these materials.

### **Solidarist Internationalism, Decolonisation, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

For the West, internationalism emerged as a natural outcome of the liberal idea of an international community, which was not only ideologically predominant but

also objectively coming into being at the turn of the twentieth century. As previously noted, the vastly increased political, economic, cultural, and social connections between the Western people and the rest of the world have enabled them to forge closer transnational relationships than ever. They had fuelled their imaginations of the realization of an international community in which human beings are unprecedentedly interconnected (Sluga, 2013). As the US Secretary of State Robert Lansing commented in 1919, the nineteenth century belonged to nationality, while the twentieth century would be driven by internationality (cited in Sluga, 2013).

We should not, of course, lose sight of the essence of such interconnection and what it meant to the people in the rest of the world – that such interconnection was based on colonial expansion and imperial hierarchies. While the internationalization of the world meant a good thing for the West as it brought power, prestige, material benefits, and commercial opportunities, it meant sustained alien exploitation and subjugation for the colonial peoples. The League of Nations Mandate System provides a vivid example. Envisioned by liberal internationalists as an institutional means to guide the 'backward' civilizations towards self-rule, the system sustained imperial exploitation in the colonies. The underlying logic of the system, though being argued by many as firstly articulating the idea that colonial empires are no longer a legitimate political form (Mayall, 1990; Pedersen, 2015), was still based on the 'Standard of Civilisation,' according to which the colo-



nial peoples are regarded as 'backward' and need to be 'civilized' by the West.<sup>1</sup> Liberal internationalism, as Mazower (2012) noted, was not the 'antithesis to the empire but its civilizer.'

Internationalism emerged in the Global South as a reactionary force against this colonial setting. This was made explicit at the beginning of the anti-colonial movement by the League against Imperialism Conference in 1927, a name deliberately chosen to denounce the League of Nations for maintaining the colonial empires through the Mandate System (Prashad, 2007). The conference gathered roughly 200 delegates representing 134 anti-colonial organizations across three continents, many of whom became enormously influential later in anti-colonial struggles, such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Sukarno (Prashad, 2007). For these anti-colonialists, the conference became a venue for them to share experiences of colonial domination, forge personal relationships, and seek common ground in their visions of a post-colonial international order. Though briefly disrupted by the Second World War, the global anti-colonial movement flourished as a transnational phenomenon in the first half of the twentieth century through more of such conferences, mass demonstrations, and labor movements (Prashad, 2007).

In the aftermath of the Second World War, one of the major tasks facing the international community was to define the normative basis upon which the new inter-

national order could be constructed. The core objective of the anti-colonial forces, of course, was to fight for sovereign equality and non-interference. To achieve this objective, internationalists in the Global South tactically utilized liberal internationalist norms. This occurred in the drafting process of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, in which some newly independent Third World nations were invited to participate, particularly India, which played a leading role in this endeavor as one of the most potent post-colonial states at the moment (Basu-Mellish, 2023). The goal was to integrate the right to self-determination for the colonial peoples into the whole liberal package of 'basic human rights,' including the freedoms of opinion, expression, religion, and peaceful assembly. The post-colonial states argued that the right to self-determination constitutes a prerequisite for the satisfaction of civil and political rights. As the idea of universal human rights is widely accepted, especially in the Western world, the gross, inhuman colonial conducts that violently exploited colonial peoples and denied them of their inherent political, economic, social, and cultural rights, therefore, became a weapon for the post-colonialists to expose the hypocrisy of colonial administration and the illegitimacy of imperial rule.

Reus-Smit (2013) observed that the post-colonial states' claims in negotiating the UDHR were more liberal than those of Western states. Not only had the Indian del-

<sup>1</sup> For the 'Standard of Civilisation,' see the famous articulation by Scottish jurist James Lorimer (1883). He argued that humanity could be classified into three kinds of civility: civilized (the West), barbarous (old historical states like Turkey, Persia, China, Siam, and Japan), and savage (Africa). This conception, to a great extent, legitimized European colonialism.

egation proposed to establish robust enforcement mechanisms to ensure the implementation of human rights laws (Bhagavan, 2010), but the post-colonial states had also managed to block the Soviet Union's attempt to replace civil and political rights with social and economic rights as the focus of the UDHR (Reus-Smit, 2013). On the one hand, the radically liberal position adopted by the post-colonial states was a strategic choice. Since many colonial nations had not achieved independence in the immediate postwar years, the post-colonial states needed such a strategy to cultivate prestige and attract support, which they certainly achieved in the 1950s (Basu-Mellish, 2023). On the other hand, this position had to do with the leadership of India, especially the normative vision of Nehru, who envisioned India's independence as an internationalist project that would inspire and facilitate the solidarity of the global anti-colonial forces (Bhagavan, 2010). This was most explicitly manifested in Nehru's 'Towards a World Community' speech at the UN in 1956. He spoke of how the UN came to mark the emergence of a world community, or 'One World,' in which international order is underpinned by a 'conscience of the world'. He also reminded the diplomats to adhere to the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and think about world opinion when making decisions (cited in Bhagavan, 2010). On its appearance, Nehru seemed to appeal to a form of cosmopolitan, utopianist thought commonly associated with liberalist ideology. Nevertheless, if we bring his words into the context, it would be easy to tell that Nehru spoke in favor of the post-colonial

nations, who had been systemically excluded from participating in international affairs equally. Using the predominant liberal discourse, Nehru offered a powerful argument championing the logic that if we accept the conception of universal human rights and the UN Charter, then the rights of the colonial peoples should be equally protected, and they should also be included in the 'world community.'

Therefore, at the very beginning, internationalism in the Global South was envisioned as a cosmopolitan project, appealing to a form of international solidarity for the independence of the colonial nations. Though the post-colonial states' struggle for institutionalizing the right to self-determination through the UDHR proved to be unsuccessful, the way this struggle unfolded – drawing on the liberal normative language as enshrined in the UN Charter and later the UDHR to argue for post-colonial struggles, was carried forward in subsequent efforts from Bandung to the UN General Assembly Resolution 1514. However, these events following the UDHR also articulated another core feature of Third World internationalism: its pluralism. As Basu-Mellish (2023) noted, as an increasing number of colonial nations achieved independence, the problem of cultural and ideological diversity soon became a significant issue. A strong normative consensus must be reached to retain the solidarity of the post-colonial nations while allowing them to pursue their diversified cultural and ideological courses. This normative consensus is based on sovereign equality and non-interference principles, most systematic-

ly articulated in the Bandung Conference.

### **Pluralist Internationalism and the Bandung Conference**

As an assembly of post-colonial nations, the participants of the Bandung Conference were well aware of the importance of maintaining the solidarity of the post-colonial world. They were, however, alarmed by the presence of the Communist regimes at the conference, most notably, the People's Republic of China (PRC). As previously noted, universal human rights provided the normative basis for the post-colonial independence struggles. Many post-colonial states, therefore, viewed the protection of human rights and individual freedom as inseparably linked to their sovereign independence. They denounced the Communist regimes for their totalitarianism and suppression of individual freedom (Burke, 2010).

Furthermore, the founding of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe was perceived by many as a new form of imperialism instituted by the Soviet Union, which, according to the Libyan representative Mohammed Bey Muntassar, not only exhibited 'all the disadvantages of classical colonialism,' but also sought to impose 'intellectual slavery' upon the newly independent nations (quoted in Burke, 2010). The Communists' atheistic attitude also raised concerns from those nations in which religion played an important role, like Iran and Thailand (Burke, 2010). The Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai was compelled to act in this grim situation. In his speech, Zhou (1955) reiterated the 'Five Principles (Panchsheel)' initially adopted to

resolve the Sino-India territorial disputes, including mutual respect for a state's territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference, equality and mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence, and proclaimed that China was ready to engage in diplomatic relations with the Afro-Asian nations on these principles.

Zhou's endeavor was supported by two leading figures of the post-colonial world – Nehru and Sukarno. Risking fracturing the conference, it was Nehru and Sukarno who decided to invite the PRC instead of Taiwan because of the former's long-standing anti-colonial position, which Nehru and Sukarno considered to be the binding force that united the whole Conference (Prashad, 2007). Zhou's charismatic diplomacy during the conference and his promise of peaceful coexistence and not exporting Communism reassured those delegates who remained suspicious of China and made it possible for the conference to proceed. As *The Times* (1955) reported: 'It was he [Zhou Enlai], rather than Mr. Nehru, who became the focal point of the conference [...] His assurances to Thailand were his guarantee of non-interference in Laos. His liberal agreement with Indonesia over the future position of Chinese settlers, his friendliness to Japan, and his insistence that the "peaceful coexistence" that he promised was, like the now widely publicized principles for its achievement, which he originally inserted in the Sino-Indian Treaty over Tibet [...] all these made a profound impression even upon the representatives of countries which have the most cause to fear the advance of Communism.'

Nehru maintained a solid personal relationship with Zhou and introduced him to the conference delegates. He had already signed off the 'Five Principles' in his dealing with China and promoted the idea of peaceful coexistence in practices, such as handling India's bilateral relationship with Yugoslavia. In his joint statement with President Tito, it was claimed that 'All hope for the advance of the peoples of the world, and even for the survival of the civilization, rendered their acceptance [of the Five Principles] not merely as an alternative but imperative' (The Manchester Guardian, 1954). In Sukarno's opening remarks, he also emphasized that the conference must be guided by the logic of 'live and let live' to achieve 'unity in diversity' (quoted in Devetak et al., 2016).

The endorsement and commitment of Nehru and Sukarno facilitated the inclusion of the 'Five Principles' into the Final Communiqué of the Conference, adding a pluralist connotation to the post-colonial internationalist project. This pluralist position recognizes that the cultural, ideological, and ethical diversities among the post-colonial nations are not a problem that must be addressed but a fact to be recognized and respected. It envisioned a post-colonial international order in which nations who had achieved independence were entitled to establish their domestic institutions and develop their own cultural, religious, and ethical principles or their conception of 'how to live the good life' (Devetak et al., 2016; Basu-Mellish, 2023). Sovereignty, in this conception, is a guarantor of a way of life, and the adherence to which could preclude

external interference and preserve the legacies of self-determination.

Pluralism and solidarism are often seen as two contradictory normative orientations of international order (see Bull, 1977). The former emphasizes a communitarian view to accommodate and preserve the diversified conceptions of the 'good life' to ensure order and stability of the international system. In contrast, the latter champions a cosmopolitan impulse to unify the international system with one conception of the 'good life' in pursuit of universal justice (Buzan, 2014). However, we see an organic fusion of the two in the internationalist project of the Global South, with solidarism in the right to self-determination providing the basis for pluralistic development and pluralism in peaceful coexistence, adding an insurance for maintaining post-colonial solidarity. The kind of internationalism articulated in Bandung has often been portrayed in the Western world as revolutionary, seeking to alter the modern international order radically. However, upon scrutinizing the normative basis of post-colonial internationalism, it is not difficult to see that it is a reformist one rather than revolutionary: the post-colonial nations claimed that they deserve to enjoy what the Western states had been enjoying for decades, i.e., sovereign equality and non-interference, which undoubtedly conforms to the principles of the UN Charter and the Westphalian model of states-system (Devetak et al., 2016).

The Bandung Conference was a significant moment in world politics, with enduring but mixed legacies. On the one hand,

the pluralist vision based on the solidarity of the post-colonial world, as articulated in the conference, laid the normative basis for decolonization as a global political project, which was later ratified and institutionalized through the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution 1514, i.e., The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, with the language of which significantly mirroring the Final Communiqué (Basu-Mellish, 2023). The pluralist vision had another significant impact – it changed the international outlook of many post-colonial nations through the principle of peaceful coexistence. Before Bandung, many post-colonial states entered collective security arrangements with the West, including the Bagdad Pact (1955) and the South-east Asia Treaty Organisation (1954). As the idea of peaceful coexistence entrenched, they soon realized that such arrangements would not ensure their security but would constrain their freedom by dragging them into the Cold War confrontation. Chief was the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser, who was seen as pro-West before Bandung but radically changed his foreign policy afterward (Acharya, 2016). The idea of peaceful coexistence attracted many supporters in the post-colonial world, as it allowed them to escape from the confrontational atmosphere of the Cold War. This sentiment was soon formalized into a concrete political project, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

On the other hand, the ‘Bandung Spirit’ did not flourish as expected in the decades after the conference. Umar (2019) identified several reasons, including the domestic po-

litical changes in many states in the Global South in the 1960s, the post-colonial world’s shift of focus from independence to development, and the escalation of the US-Soviet Union confrontation, which had dragged many Third World states into it. Among them, the focus shift from independence to development is arguably the most relevant, adding another normative component to internationalism in the Global South.

### **Developmentalist Internationalism and the New International Economic Order**

As more colonial nations achieved independence, they soon realized the persistence of the colonial elements in the international economic order, which had seriously constrained their pursuit of a ‘good life.’ As Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah (1965) noted, many post-colonial nations, upon independence, still faced the problem of neo-colonialism – the former imperial powers were still able to direct the policies of these post-colonial states through economic and monetary means, like monopolistic export of goods, the control over foreign exchange, and the imposition of a banking system managed by the former imperial powers. Neo-colonialism operates by creating states incapable of independent development and relying on their old economic and financial links with the former imperial powers. In such cases, foreign capital becomes a tool to continuously exploit the post-colonial nations rather than a means to facilitate their development, and the worst part is, according to Nkrumah (1965), that the imperial powers do not need to justify their conduct

except for stating that this is how things are done in the global market.

Against this background, the post-colonial nations' call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) unfolded. The political project of NIEO represented the culmination of a series of political events following the Bandung Conference. While the Asian and Arabian voices dominated Bandung, the call for the NIEO stemmed from Latin America, more specifically, the famous theory of the Argentine economist Raul Prebisch, which revealed that the trade relationship between primary producers and manufacturers would worsen gradually without regulation. This theory has had a significant influence on the development agenda of the Third World, as it broadly characterizes the economic relationship between Third World countries (primary producers who supply raw materials) and the West (manufacturers) (Gilman, 2015). An incentive, therefore, emerged in the Global South to study the possible regulation of the international economic order, which led to the creation of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964 with Prebisch as its first secretary-general and attracted more than one hundred developing countries to attend. In its second session, 77 of them formed the G-77. The binding force that united the G-77 was the kind of post-colonial solidarism articulated in Bandung and was reinforced by the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) raising of oil prices in 1973, which demonstrated that the developing countries could shape global trade (Gilman, 2015). In its

subsequent meetings, the G-77 at the UNCTAD studied the various aspects of reforming the international economic order, which eventually led to the proposal of the NIEO at the Sixth Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 1974, with specific measures, including nationalizing natural resources, fixing the international price-setting system, removing political conditions for foreign aid, re-structuring debts, and regulating the activities of transnational corporations.

In many aspects, the NIEO crystallized and carried forward the development agenda outlined in the Bandung Final Communiqué. As Weber (2016) noted, development was discussed in Bandung as a meta-narrative, setting the general direction for international cooperation among post-colonial states in all aspects related to development. While adhering to the principles outlined in Bandung, the NIEO made the agenda more specific and operable in its economic and financial aspects. The normative orientation of the NIEO was characterized by a fusion of solidarism and pluralism, aligning with the 'spirit of Bandung.' On the one hand, it called for redistributive justice in the name of the post-colonial peoples whose rights and capacity for development had been. It was continuously deprived and constrained by the international economic order's embedded colonial structure (see Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the Declaration, 1974). On the other hand, the NIEO firmly held that economic cooperation must be carried out based on mutual respect, sovereign equality, and non-interference. Remarkably, the NIEO acknowledged that all states, irrespective of

their political and economic systems, are entitled to participate in and benefit from international economic cooperation (see Articles 4(a) to 4(e) of the Declaration, 1974).

Above all, the NIEO introduced a kind of developmentalism into the normative package of internationalism in the Global South. By fusing post-colonial solidarist and pluralist ideas to reform the international economic structure, the NIEO envisioned a post-colonial international (economic) order in which states are the principal actors in facilitating development and exercising strong and even absolute control over resources, capital, trade, and technology. In this view, ‘development’ essentially means ‘national development’ and conforms to the general idea of modernization (Weber, 2016; Weber & Winanti, 2016). The rhetoric was framed as the post-colonial nations must ‘catch up’ with the West. As Nehru often said, ‘What Europe did in a hundred or a hundred and fifty years, we must do in ten or fifteen years’ (quoted in Chakrabarty, 2005). Therefore, this form of developmental internationalism’s goal was to live a modern, Western life with advanced industrialization, urbanization, social welfare, infrastructure, education, medication, etc. To do this, the West must remedy its past faults through redistributive justice and make the international economic order more equal to the Global South. This rhetoric of principled persuasion generated broad support for the NIEO in the Global South (Fioretos, 2020).

### **The Revival of Internationalism in the Global South? The BRICS and the Libyan Intervention**

As Prashad (2012) noted, the NIEO marked the highest point of the Third World project. While this observation acknowledges the significance of the NIEO, it also means that after the NIEO, the Third World project gradually headed toward a decline. In the 1980s, major Western countries introduced a series of reforms to their national and international economic structures partly in response to the NIEO and to address the internal deficiencies in the post-war economic model following the collapse of the Bretton Wood System. Rather than following the developing countries’ call for regulation, the West, guided by the neoliberal economic theory, promoted further liberalization and privatization in the global market, leading to rapid economic growth in the 1980s and making the NIEO no longer desirable for developing countries. By the late 1980s, it had become clear that the Third World project was in jeopardy, so the NAM instituted a commission to study the political and economic difficulties facing the NAM countries. The Commission (1990) reported that both external and internal pressures had damaged the Third World project, as neoliberal globalization seriously undermined the political force of the Third World for the NIEO and the kind of leadership that was used to be found in Nehru, Sukarno, and Nasser vanished. Following the decline of the Third World project, internationalism in the Global South fell silent.

Over the past decade, many discussions have been about the revival of internationalism in the Global South following the economic success of major developing countries like China, India, South Africa, and Brazil. It has been argued that with their growing economic and political influence over global affairs, they would be increasingly willing and able to represent the interests of the Global South in the liberal international order led by the US. One of the often-cited cases has been the BRICS's contestation over NATO's intervention in the Libyan civil war in 2011 (see Amar, 2012; Brockmeier et al., 2016; Moore, 2018). Though with formal authorization from the Security Council through its Resolution 1973 and the normative justification offered by the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), NATO's military campaign, which eventually overthrew the Qaddafi regime, triggered widespread international discontent, as it not only resulted in excessive killing and prolonged warfare but was also questioned for exceeding the mandate and deliberately ignoring political mediations (Kuperman, 2013). In the Security Council, the BRICS advanced strong pluralist arguments centered around sovereignty and non-intervention. The Chinese representative, for instance, repeatedly stressed the importance of respecting the 'sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Libya' and that 'the internal affairs and fate of Libya must be left up to the Libyan people to decide' (UNSC, 2011a).

Above all, the BRICS (except Russia) were bound together by their post-colonial legacies. The way NATO's intervention in

Libya unfolded – the outside European powers intervened to facilitate regime change by military means in the name of human rights – evoked their painful memories of colonialism. They were reminded of the 2009 statement of Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, the President of the UN General Assembly's 63rd Session: "Recent and painful memories related to the legacy of colonialism give developing countries strong reasons to fear that laudable motives can end up being misused, once more, to justify arbitrary and selective interventions against the weakest states" (UNGA, 2009). As the Indian Ambassador to the UN, Hardeep Singh Puri noted: "Only aspect of the resolution of interest to them (Western powers) was the use of all necessary means to bomb the hell out of Libya" (India Post, 2012). He reportedly told a colleague that Brockmann was right and that the BRICS now saw that protecting civilians meant regime change (Prashad, 2016). The collective colonial trauma ignited an upsurge in anti-colonial mentality and solidarity in the Global South (Nuruzzaman, 2022). When the domestic armed conflict in Syria escalated, the BRICS together blocked the Western powers' attempts for intervention. In the Security Council, the Syrian representative, backed by the BRICS, accused the Western powers with a strong argument: "Through such conduct, they undermine international legitimacy and seek to lead the entire world into a new colonial era and military adventures in various places that are bound and doomed to fail. Those very States led the whole world into two world wars that claimed millions of lives on our planet. With



their colonial behavior, their enslavement, and their attitude, they caused the untold suffering of hundreds of millions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.’ (UNSC 2011b)

While it is true that the BRICS, through and after their involvement in the Libyan-Syrian episodes, have gained momentous power and prestige, they have also become increasingly active and assertive in using such power and prestige to influence world politics (Amar, 2012). Nevertheless, it may be too soon to tell whether the rise of the BRICS would revive Global South internationalism. On the one hand, after Libya, there has seldom been any international event that could mobilize high levels of post-colonial morale and solidarity as pervasive and remarkable as those that took place between the 1950s and the 1970s. The pluralist values have been deeply entrenched that the middle and small powers in the Global South, who used to follow the lead of major Third World powers to push forward decolonization, now increasingly tend to pursue their interests rather than commit themselves to any ‘noble cause.’ On the other hand, the BRICS itself is encountering problems. Russia’s ‘special military operation’ in Ukraine has undoubtedly undermined the values of sovereignty and non-intervention that the BRICS has been upholding. Finessing amongst the BRICS, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, and the Commonwealth, India has been increasingly pursuing a strategy of ‘multi-alignment’ instead of non-alignment (Mohan, 2022). In contrast, China has its vision of international order, as implied by its Belt and Road Initiative. In some ways, internationalism in the

Global South represents a zeitgeist particular to the historical context in which it emerged. Though its legacies endure to form a constitutive part of the social structure of international order and inform the political practices of many countries, it would be difficult to imagine its rebirth with its normative core intact, when the ‘leading players’ are pursuing their own visions and the normative picture of Global South internationalism as a whole is largely characterized by fragmentation.

### **Conclusion**

This article has studied the evolution of internationalism in the Global South from three normative standpoints: solidarism, pluralism, and developmentalism. In articulating each of these normative components, this article has demonstrated that they derived from the post-colonial internationalist practices in the Third World, from the drafting of the UDHR to the Bandung Conference and the proposal of the NIEO. In each of these episodes, internationalism emerged in response to a particular objective problem facing the Third World countries. The Third World leaders, as well as civil societies, engaged in extensive interactions and cooperation through conferences and social movements, and in each episode, articulated a new normative component to the Third World project, from the simple idea of anti-imperialism to post-colonial solidarism, to which was added pluralism to preserve the solidarity and the developmentalism which exhibited both solidaristic and pluralist features. These normative components make the Global South internationalism qualitatively

different from its Western counterparts, as it is rooted in the unique post-colonial experiences and practices of the Global South nations and has its own conceptions of order, justice, development, modernization, and the 'good life.'

Following the rise of the BRICS over the past few decades, some argue that internationalism will be revived in the Global South based on observing its emerging role in the Libyan-Syrian episodes. However, upon scrutinizing the process, it could be argued that the BRICS' collective responses were stimulated by the collective colonial memory and the strategic incentive of upholding the values of sovereignty and non-incentive rather than marking the rise of a systemic global social phenomenon. Whether this will happen shortly still waits to be seen

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