

# Why the Western media are angry at Tehran NAM summit

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*The 16<sup>th</sup> summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Tehran was unquestionably a diplomatic triumph for Iran, and the Western politicians know this very well. Perhaps it's in this context that the frustration and annoyance of the Western state-run mainstream media at the Tehran summit can be explained.*

During the one-week meetings of the experts, foreign ministers and heads of state and government of the NAM member states, several high-ranking delegations from 120 countries in the five continents traveled to Tehran to take part in what is seen to be the most important diplomatic gathering of the world after the UN General Assembly.

This gigantic international gathering which was unprecedented in Iran's political history took place while the United States, Israel and their European allies have been going through fire and water for a long time to push Iran toward isolation and portray a horrific, distorted image of Iran as a threat to global peace and security. However, it seems that the non-aligned nations cared little about the Western-Israeli media hype about Iran as hundreds of delegations from around the world came to Iran to attend the 16<sup>th</sup> NAM summit and also hold talks with Iranian officials and use the opportunity to urge for the expansion of bilateral ties with the Islamic Republic.

However, the mainstream media's coverage of the important diplomatic event in Iran reflected the depth of the Western powers' fury and disappointment at the successful summit in Tehran and Iran's being featured as a defining role-player in the international developments. A quick glance at the articles, commentaries and interviews published on the Western news agencies and newspapers will give us an insight of how much the United States and its allies are exasperated at the NAM summit and most importantly, the fact that it was hosted by their popular villain, Iran.

In an article published on August 30, the Guardian correspondent questioned Iran's giving importance to the NAM summit, insolently ridiculing Iranians' hospitality and their reception of the high-ranking guests: "[t]o watch Iranian state television, you'd think the country was hosting the Olympics. Rolling television coverage included reporters at the airport covering the landing of diplomats as if they were top athletes and ongoing interviews with delegates being asked to comment on the hospitality of Iranians and their impressions of Tehran."

Censoring all parts of the Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi's opening speech to the NAM

leaders, the British paper Guardian selectively published those parts in which he had blamed the Syrian government for the eruption of violence in the country, calling his remarks “disturbing” for the Iranian leaders.

In an editorial published on Guardian one day earlier, the British paper called Iran a “bankrupt” country whose objective for hosting the summit is “to prove a point: sanctions-racked it may be, but isolated it is not.”

Such stringent verbal attacks on Iran have been pervasively seen in the Western mainstream media during the past months, especially since the Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad started to send letters of invitation to the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement. The agitprop campaign intensified during the days of the summit and now is at its peak as some 30 world leaders have gathered in Tehran to discuss the most important global developments.

The New York Times which has long been at daggers drawn with Iran has declared a total war on the Non-Aligned Movement and Iran.

In an article published on August 28, the hawkish American author Thomas L. Friedman who is ostensibly infuriated with the fact such a high-ranking politician as the Egyptian President has attended the summit, firstly asks that to whom the members of this movement are non-aligned.

He then continues, “[i]s Morsi nonaligned in that choice? Is he nonaligned when it comes to choosing between democracies and dictatorships — especially the Iranian one that is so complicit in crushing the Syrian rebellion as well? And by the way, why is Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary General, lending his hand to this Iranian whitewashing festival? What a betrayal of Iranian democrat.”

In a fanatically-written article published on the Emirati newspaper The Nation, the author, Afshin Molavi, who is an Iranian citizen working with neo-conservative organizations in the U.S. calls the whole Non-Aligned Movement “useless”, saying that “the visit of a few diplomats from Asia, Africa and Latin America will do nothing for the Iranian father who must hold two jobs just to make ends meet – caught between a choking sanctions regime, [and] an economy raven by corruption and mismanagement.”

Other American media also embraced the summit hypocritically, extraordinarily aggrandizing some of Ban Ki-moon’s remarks that Iran should improve its human rights record: “U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had signaled he would not shy away from criticism of Iran during his visit to the Nonaligned Movement gathering in Tehran, but the sharp comments appeared to catch Iranian officials off guard just hours after his arrival,” wrote Huffington Post in an August 29 article.

NPR’s correspondent called Iran an “often isolated” nation that has been selected to host the huge summit. “Countries that are part of the Nonaligned Movement have mostly cut back economic ties with Iran in order to remain on better terms with Washington,” it quoted a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace fellow who has tried to downplay the significance of the NAM summit and convince the readers that Iran cannot gain reputation as an international leader through hosting the summit.

There are hundreds of other such examples which attest to the duplicitous, deceitful

approach of the Western media toward the Non-Aligned Movement summit in Tehran. In a concerted and communal effort aimed at undermining the importance of this remarkable international event, many of them attacked and even insulted Iran, resorted to making prejudiced and lopsided statements about Iran's position in the international community and turned a blind eye to the successful hosting of the summit by Iran and the important remarks made by the NAM leaders who have called Iran an important and crucial role-player in regional and international affairs.

The animosity of the Western media with Iran is nothing new. Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 which deposed the U.S.-installed monarch Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, they started their campaign of misinformation and black propaganda against Iran. The NAM summit gave them an opportunity to renew their attacks on Iran; however, this time it was quite evident that they had become increasingly angry and incensed that politicians from 120 countries of the world decided to come to Tehran and affirm or strengthen their ties with Iran while the media wing of the superpowers has been sparing no effort to show Iran an isolated, friendless country.

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