



**Statement
by Amb. Altai Efendiev,
Secretary General of the Organization for Democracy & Economic
Development – GUAM
during the 18th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement**

26 October 2019, Baku

Mr. Chairman,
Honorable Heads of Delegations,
Excellences,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my singular honor and privilege to address the 18th Summit of the NAM in Baku on behalf of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development-GUAM - a regional initiative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

At the outset I would like to express our gratitude to the incoming NAM Chairmanship, the Republic of Azerbaijan, for the invitation, excellent organization of the event and genuine hospitality.

I would like also to wish success to the XVIII NAM Summit, which set an important agenda for the Organization. We fully agree and support the suggested theme of the Summit - *“NAM Baku Summit: Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate response to the challenges of the contemporary world”* and consider it timely and relevant. Indeed, it is reflective of the concerns growing over the crumbling system of international relations. We all are witnessing a dangerous trend of escalating tensions across the globe, a flagrant violation of international law, ignorance of the norms and principles that have been at the foundation of peaceful coexistence.

Regretfully, existing system of international relations is unable and incapable to adequately address these challenges. It is obvious that in such a complicated and aggravating international environment, countries, in particular, smaller and those in transition, remain to be extremely vulnerable and highly exposed to all kinds of security threats and risks. This is, in particular pertinent, to the member states of the organization that I represent.

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,



The initiative of GUAM was conceived in 1997 by four newly independent countries to jointly address security challenges, emanating from escalating conflicts, proliferation of arms, drugs and crime that posed serious threats to national and regional security and stability.

In 2006 the initiative has evolved into a full-fledged international organization with the Headquarters and International Secretariat based in Kyiv, Ukraine. Since its inception the Organizations' activities have been aimed at fostering security and stability in the Black Sea – Caspian Sea region by promoting democracy, regional cooperation and sustainable development.

Currently our countries, amongst ongoing activities in a wide spectrum of areas of cooperation, are embarked on the implementation of two flagship initiatives, - development of GUAM Transport Corridor and the establishment of Free Trade Area among the GUAM member states (MS). We believe that the implementation of these initiatives will further enhance a pivotal role of the region in the emerging international connectivity architecture, since important transportation, energy and telecommunication infrastructure, crisscrossing the region, is connecting East with West and South with North. All this underpins crucial role of the region for international peace, security and development and its role in achieving 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,

Whilst underlining the importance of the GUAM area for international cooperation, peace and security, I would like also to draw your kind attention to the challenges we confront, most serious of which are imposed on our MS military conflicts.

It is widely acknowledged that military conflicts on the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine are among most protracted and dangerous in Europe. Sovereignty and territorial integrity of our MS has been grossly violated in flagrant breach of international law.

The existing conflicts not only impede our efforts to ensure regional cooperation and sustainable development. They further undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our MS, as well as pose serious threats to regional and international peace, security and stability.

These conflicts have affected the lives of millions of people in the region, which are in need of protection, assistance and support, whether being forcefully displaced,



unable to return to their places of residence or residing in conflict-affected territories.

Regardless of the numerous Resolutions of the UN SC in recognition and support of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of GUAM MS with respective demands, all the efforts, undertaken so far by the international community for the settlement of conflicts on the territories of GUAM MS, have not delivered satisfactory results and are not instilling optimism in foreseeable future. Quite opposite, what we are witnessing is the attempts for the conservation of these conflicts. As was underlined in the statement of the incoming NAM Chairman, H.E. I. Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, - double standards are being applied with regard to the implementation of the UN SC Resolutions, - some are implemented within days, while others are being disregarded for decades.

This does not add to the trust and confidence in the UN and the existing system of international relations, as a whole. Quite opposite, such kind of treatment incites and encourages further violence and suffering of people. It is, in particular, well manifested in our region: impunity for violations invited further blatant violations in greater magnitude, scale and sophistication. To get out of this vicious circle we need to restore the dominance of the rule of law, as well as the trust in international organizations for acting strictly in the frame of law and in accordance with the decisions of their own.

GUAM member states strongly believe that the resolution of the conflicts on their territories should be reached exclusively on the basis of the norms and principles of international law, with due respect to sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of the states. This is a prerequisite for lasting peace, stability and development in the region.

We, in GUAM, spare no efforts in mobilizing the support of the international community for the restoration of territorial integrity of the GUAM member states, de-occupation of the temporarily occupied territories, as well as safeguarding the fundamental rights of IDPs and refugees to safe and dignified return to their places of residence.

And we believe that the United Nations yet remains as an indispensable forum for addressing ever-complex challenges we are confronting. Therefore, availing myself of this opportunity and using high tribune of the NAM Summit, I would like to appeal to the UN NAM constituency through your esteemed delegations, to render your valuable and necessary support to the joint initiative of GUAM MS and to co-sponsor the draft Resolution titled "*Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development*" at the UN General Assembly.



Mr. Chairman,

As was forcefully stressed by the delegations here at the Summit, there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. Therefore, resolving armed conflicts should be a principled prerequisite for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the context of abovesaid, we fully support the priorities of the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, based on the Bandung Principles. We strongly believe that 10 Principles of Bandung are still valid, relevant and should remain at the foundation of the system of international relations.

We hope very much that the conflict resolution will be in the focus of the NAM Chairmanship, given the utmost urgency of the issue. We also praise the focus of the Chairmanship on youth, and their inclusion in the NAM process. We would also suggest engagement in the process of regional organizations as important stakeholders, to enhance the synergy of efforts of all actors.

Mr. Chairman,

Acknowledging the prominent role of the Republic of Azerbaijan as the champion of international peace, dialogue and understanding, allow me also to express confidence that the NAM Baku Summit and the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan will contribute to the consolidation of the member states around the founding principles of the NAM, thus strengthening the role, place and relevance of the Organization to the cause of promoting and reinforcing international peace and security.

It is a vitally important mission in the ever evolving, challenging and increasingly unpredictable world. NAM as the largest amalgamation of nations in the UN with shared political vision, can play decisive role to that end.

Finally, using this opportunity, once again I would like to sincerely congratulate the Republic of Azerbaijan on the assumption of the NAM Chairmanship, to wish every success in steering the Organization towards its goals and objectives, and to assure you that the ODED-GUAM, as a regional platform promoting peace, security, cooperation and sustainable development, will be your reliable partner on that path.

I thank you for kind attention.