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October 5, 1978

Chinese Government Delegation Leader's Statement at 8th Session of Sino-Vietnamese Negotiations

Citation:

"Chinese Government Delegation Leader's Statement at 8th Session of Sino-Vietnamese Negotiations", October 5, 1978, Wilson Center Digital Archive, S-0442-0365-03, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section. Obtained for CWIHP by Charles Kraus. https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/118420

Summary:

Speech made by Chung Hsi-tung (Zhong Xidong) on the issue of Chinese nationals in Vietnam.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

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UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

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CABLE ADDRESS—ADRESSE TELEGRAPHIQUE UNATIONS NEWYORK

RECORDS CONTROL

REFERENCE NV/78/81

1979

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The enclosed communication, dated 5 October 1978, is transmitted to the permanent missions of the States Members of the United Nations at the request of the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations.

5 October 1978

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中华人民共和国常驻联合国代表团

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

(78) CM. No. 51

The Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to transmit herewith the English translation of a statement made by Vice-Foreign Minister Chung Hsi-tung, leader of the Chinese Government Delegation, on September 26, 1978 at the eighth session of the Sino-Vietnamese negotiations on the question of Chinese nationals residing in Viet Nam. It would be appreciated if this note and the afore-said statement could be circulated as an official document of the United Nations.

The Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China avails himself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General the assurances of his highest consideration.

New York [illegible] 8

His Excellency Mr. Kurt Waldheim,
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Communiqué aux missions permanentes

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CHINESE GOVERNMENT DELEGATION LEADER'S STATEMENT AT 8TH SESSION OF SINO-VIETNAMESE NEGOTIATIONS

Chung Hsi-tung, leader of the Chinese Government Delegation, made a statement on September 26, 1978 at the eighth session of the Sino-Vietnamese negotiations on the question of Chinese nationals residing in Viet Nam. Full text follows:

Your Excellency Hoang Bich Son, Respected Head of the Government Delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,
Colleagues on the Vietnamese Government Delegation,

The talks on the question of Chinese nationals residing in Viet Nam between the Chinese and Vietnamese Government Delegations have lasted for nearly two months.

The mass of Chinese residents in Viet Nam, the Chinese and Vietnamese peoples and all people in the world who are concerned about Sino-Vietnamese relations are following closely the current talks with anxiety. They earnestly hope that the talks will yield positive results so that the friendship between China and Viet Nam will be maintained and their relations improved. The Chinese Government Delegation is keenly aware of the responsibility incumbent on the two sides for these talks. We should by no means fail to live up to the expectations of the people of our two countries and the people of the whole world.

The Chinese Government has always maintained that disputes between nations should be settled through negotiations in a spirit of friendly consultation, mutual understanding and mutual accommodation. It is from this position that the Chinese Government has settled fairly well with several countries the question of overseas Chinese in these countries in accordance with its consistent policy on this question. This is a fact known to all.

As to the disputes between China and Viet Nam on the question of Chinese nationals, the Chinese Government, proceeding from the same position, had the hope of seeking a prompt solution through private consultations and made unremitting efforts to this end. However, the Vietnamese side did not respond to the goodwill and efforts of the Chinese side. On the contrary, it has escalated its anti-China and anti-Chinese activities and intensified its discrimination against and ostracism, persecution and expulsion of Chinese nationals. As a result, over 160,000 Chinese nationals and Vietnamese citizens have been driven to China. Although there emerged such a grave

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situation, the Chinese Government still took the initiative to propose the holding of talks at the vice-foreign-minister level between the two Governments for an overall settlement of the question of Chinese nationals.

Throughout these talks, the Chinese Government Delegation has explained patiently and in detail China's consistent policy towards overseas Chinese and analysed in earnest the cause of the disputes between China and Viet Nam over the question of Chinese residents. Proceeding from the actual situation and the sincere desire for a settlement, the Chinese Delegation has put forward principled propositions and a series of fair and reasonable proposals for a comprehensive settlement of the disputes between China and Viet Nam on the question of Chinese residents, including proposals on specific matters calling for immediate solution. Regrettably, however, these propositions and proposals were completely negated and rejected by the Vietnamese side.

(1) We hold that there are Chinese nationals residing in both north and south Viet Nam. With the nation-wide liberation of Viet Nam, the Vietnamese authorities completely changed the policies they used to adopt towards Chinese residents and took erroneous measures of discrimination against and ostracism, persecution and expulsion of them. This gave rise to very grave consequences, created many complexities and led to disputes between China and Viet Nam on the question of Chinese nationals. This is the stark reality which no one can deny by any means. And that is why it was necessary for the two sides to sit down and seek a reasonable solution through negotiations. However, the Vietnamese side has flatly denied the existence of Chinese nationals in north and south Viet Nam, asserting that all Chinese nationals "have already become Vietnamese citizens" except a few who hold indentity cards issued in Taiwan and Hongkong, that the question was solved long ago and there is no longer any need to discuss it and that if the Chinese side wants to discuss it, that is "interference in Viet Nam's internal affairs".

(2) We have pointed out that there is the 1955 agreement between the Chinese and Vietnamese Parties on the question of Chinese nationals residing in Viet Nam. The practice of the past twenty years and more has proved that this agreement provides the correct guidelines for solving the question of Chinese residents in Viet Nam. As the Vietnamese side, after the nation-wide liberation of Viet Nam, went back on the 1955 agreement between the two Parties and adopted an erroneous policy, there has arisen the present grave situation with regard to the question of Chinese residents in Viet Nam. Therefore, the key to a settlement of the disputes between the two countries over this question is to revert to the 1955

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agreement between the two Parties. The Vietnamese side, however, has assumed the attitude of completely nagating the 1955 inter-Party agreement. It maintains that the agreement is outdated and no longer applicable to the Chinese residents in north Viet Nam. As for the Chinese residents in south Viet Nam, it denies that any agreement has been reached on them at all, not to speak of implementing it.

(3) We have justly demanded that, as the first step towards a solution, the Vietnamese side should stop its erroneous practice of discrimination against and ostracism, persecution and expulsion of Chinese nationals and guarantee their proper rights and interests. This is merely asking the Vietnamese side to act on general international principles. Nevertheless, the Vietnamese side slanderously dubs the above-mentioned Chinese proposal as "unreasonable and truculent" and alleges that "this question will never be solved".

(4) Regarding the nationality of the Chinese residents in north Viet Nam, we have proposed that the Vietnamese side should, in keeping with the spirit of the 1955 agreement between the two Parties, gradually guide Chinese nationals towards adopting Vietnamese nationality on a voluntary basis by patient persuasion and education and not by coercion. The Chinese Government will, as always, continue to encourage and advise the Chinese there to adopt Vietnamese nationality on a voluntary basis. Regarding all those of Chinese origin who have adopted Vietnamese nationality of their own accord, the Chinese side will respect their choice of Vietnamese nationality. But the Vietnamese side refuses outright to give any consideration to this proposal which has solid legal grounds and is based on goodwill and sincerity.

(5) Regarding the nationality of the Chinese residents in south Viet Nam, we have proposed that the two sides, in keeping with the spirit and principles of the 1955 inter-Party agreement and in the light of the actual conditions in south Viet Nam, should advise and guide them gradually towards adopting Vietnamese nationality on a voluntary basis. With the proviso that forced naturalization under the reactionary Ngo Dinh Diem regime is not to be recognized, the Chinese side will respect the desire of all those who adopted Vietnamese nationality of their own free will either before or after the liberation of south Viet Nam. In order to create favourable conditions for the voluntary adoption of Vietnamese nationality by Chinese residents who have not yet done so, the Vietnamese Government should, during a set period, accord them equal treatment as it did to the Chinese residents in the north. The Chinese side will render its cooperation and assistance and will actively encourage and urge them to adopt Vietnamese nationality. This is a rational proposal which accords with

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the reality in south Viet Nam, but it, too, was rejected by the Vietnamese side.

(6) As regards those Chinese residing in north and south Viet Nam who insist on holding Chinese nationality, the Chinese Government enjoins them to abide by the laws of Viet Nam, respect the local ways and customs and live in amity with the Vietnamese people. It hopes that the Vietnamese Government will safeguard their proper rights and interests in employment, education, medical care and other welfare measures, and will refrain from discrminating against them. In fact, the rights and interests the Chinese side requests the Vietnamese side to ensure the Chinese nationals residing in Viet Nam are far less than those the Chinese Government has long granted to the Vietnamese nationals residing in China. Even so, the Vietnamese side turns a deaf ear to the Chinese proposal.

(7) Regarding the Vietnamese citizens who have been driven into China by the Vietnamese authorities, the Chinese side has held that the Vietnamese side is duty-bound to receive them back to Viet Nam and proposed that consultations on this specific problem be held so that an agreement may be reached. As for Chinese nationals driven back to China by the Vietnamese side who still have relatives in Viet Nam, the Chinese side asks the Vietnamese side to receive and properly resettle those among them who wish to return to their original places of residence in Viet Nam. This is a just demand which the Chinese side made with a view to alleviating the grave consequences caused by the Vietnamese authorities' pursuance of the policy of persecuting and expelling Chinese nationals, but the Vietnamese side categorically turned it down and repeatedly asserted that "those who have gone to China may not return to Viet Nam".

In a word, the Vietnamese side has insolently rejected all the principled propositions and important proposals put forward by the Chinese side, arbitrarily dismissed them as "of no practical significance" and slandered us as "making use of the question of the Hoa people to realize the scheme of opposing and antagonizing Viet Nam". The crux of the Vietnamese side's "four points" is its demand that China should "stop using the Hoa people to interfere in the internal affairs of Viet Nam", which in essence harbours the design to use this trumped-up charge as a pretext for anti-China propaganda. As to the second and third of the four points, which deal with the exit procedures for "Hoa people" and Chinese residents wishing to leave Viet Nam for China, they in fact represent an attempt to legalize continuation of the expulsion of Chinese residents by the Vietnamese authorities. The Vietnamese side has all along failed to put forward any principled and constructive proposals for a comprehensive settlement of the question of Chinese residents in Viet Nam. In this way it has shut the door to negotiations.

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But this is not all. Throughout the talks the Vietnamese side has created a series of violent incidents of expelling, abducting, arresting and even killing Chinese nationals at border passes and in its capital Hanoi. Negotiation has become a fraud used by the Vietnamese side to camouflage violence. A typical example is the Vietnamese "proposal" at the talks for settling the question of the victimized Chinese who are stranded at the border.

Regarding the victimized Chinese nationals driven away by the Vietnamese side and stranded on the Vietnamese side of the Sino-Vietnamese border, the Chinese side has suggested many times that the Vietnamese side should through persuasion send them back to their original places of residence, resettle them properly and take effective measures to ensure their personal safety, livelihood and employment. The problem could have been solved properly according to the above-mentioned Chinese proposal. However, the Vietnamese side, while suggesting on August 19 that the leaders of the two delegations jointly issue a draft "appeal" which was actually aimed at shifting onto the Chinese side the responsibility for the state of the victimized Chinese stranded at the border, in the afternoon of the same day created at Yuyi Pass the violent incident of assaulting victimized Chinese and driving two or three hundred of them across the border to Chinese territory. While indicating its readiness to comment on the Chinese draft "announcement" at the fourth session scheduled for August 25, the Vietnamese side amassed nearly one thousand troops and police in a secret emergency deployment to ruthlessly suppress and expel victimized Chinese nationals, thus creating a grave incident of bloodshed at Yuyi Pass on the same day. Then, the Head of the Vietnamese Delegation Hoang Bich Son declared at the fourth session held the next day that the Chinese draft "announcement" was "unacceptable", thus erasing this item from the agenda at the negotiating table, an item the Vietnamese forces had "settled" by violence.

Similar incidents also occurred when Chinese nationals residing in various parts of Viet Nam were compelled to go to Hanoi to complete the procedures for repatriation. Employing the tactics of fabrication and blame-shifting at the negotiating table, the Vietnamese side demanded that the Chinese side "should not incite the Hoa people to pour into Hanoi from other parts of Viet Nam to disturb order in the capital". Meanwhile it dispatched armed public security personnel in the night of August 11-12 to use water hose and tear-gas against the hundred-odd Chinese nationals in a hotel near the Hanoi railway station and forcibly took them away and put some of them in prison. In this way, the Vietnamese authorities replaced negotiation with force and "settled" by force the question of victimized Chinese who were supposed to go to Hanoi to complete formalities for their repatriation.

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The above-mentioned facts suffice to prove that the Vietnamese authorities do not have any intention to settle questions through negotiation. What they believe in is force. The Vietnamese authorities put forward proposals at the negotiating table only to shield their acts of violence. The violent incidents created by the Vietnamese side were premeditated schemes designed to undermine the talks.

The process of the talks also reveals that, for the Vietnamese authorities, the real purpose of the talks is not to settle the question of Chinese nationals but to vilify China and hoodwink the Vietnamese people and world opinion. The talks have been used as a forum for anti-China propaganda by the Vietnamese authorities.

As a matter of fact, every session and every statement of the Vietnamese delegation have provided the Vietnamese press, radio and t.v. with important materials for their anti-China propaganda, and have kept busy the Vietnamese authorities and their diplomats throughout the world. Moreover, the Vietnamese propaganda machine has supplemented the statements of the Head of the Vietnamese Delegation by churning out vilifications and rumours of its own. With the rapid escalation of the Vietnamese authorities' anti-China activities and their measures to undermine the talks, the Vietnamese side eventually revealed its true purposes by casting away its graceful disguise at the negotiating table and pouring out abuses. It slandered the Chinese Delegation as using the same language as the "personnel of the CIA, comprador capitalists, active counter-revolutionaries and incorrigible personnel of the puppet army and government". It also tried to stick on China the labels of "expansionism", "hegemonism" and "international reaction" and resorted to flagrant personal attacks against Chinese Party and state leaders. Thus the Vietnamese side has turned solemn diplomatic negotiations between governments into a forum for its despicable anti-China propaganda.

In short, the basic attitude of the Vietnamese side at these talks is: first, having absolutely no intention to solve through negotiations any dispute between China and Viet Nam on the question of Chinese nationals; secondly, using the talks to camouflage violence, and using violence to undermine the talks; thirdly, turning the talks into a forum for its anti-China propaganda.

The above-described attitude of the Vietnamese authorities towards the talks is by no means accidental. It is the offspring of their basic anti-China and anti-Chinese policy. The deterioration of the talks to such an extent in less than two months' time is correlated to the escalation of the anti-China activities of the Vietnamese authorities over the same period. In particular,

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the drastic escalation of their anti-China activities round the time of the national day of Viet Nam has inevitably been reflected at the negotiating table.

Reviewing the whole process of the Sino-Vietnamese talks at vice-foreign minister level, we cannot help feeling deeply grieved and drawing the following conclusion against our will: The Vietnamese side has no intention to resolve through negotiations either important matters of principle, or any specific and urgent matters. We have been waiting all the time. But the talks have so far yielded no results and, for the moment, we see no signs that things will take a turn for the better.

We pointed out before that the ostracism of Chinese nationals by the Vietnamese authorities was part of its anti-China policy. Your switch from a policy of friendship towards China to an anti-China policy was prompted by the needs of Viet Nam and also by those of the Soviet Union. Your attitude at these talks further proves that the anti-China policy is your established policy. In order to push regional hegemonism, the Vietnamese authorities need to use the question of Chinese nationals to sow discord between China and the Southeast Asian countries, and so at these talks they repeatedly accused China of using the "Hoa people" as a "political trump card" for interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. The Soviet Union, in order to seek hegemony in Southeast Asia, has also strongly attacked China on the question of Chinese nationals, slandering overseas Chinese as a "fifth column". Echoing each other, you are playing the same tune on different instruments. Now we have grounds for saying further that sabotage of the talks is likewise based on the needs of Viet Nam and those of the Soviet Union. The Soviet authorities have been gleeful over the fact that the Vietnamese authorities have escalated its anti-China activities and closed the door to negotiations.

The journal "Week" of the "Izvestia" said bluntly in its August 28 issue that "the present Chinese leaders pose a grave danger to the cause of peace. One should not be reconciled with them, nor should one abet them by any means". It is by no means accidental that you are singing in harmony, one in the south and the other in the north. From the above-mentioned facts the Vietnamese people, the Chinese people and the people of the whole world will get to the underlying cause for the lack of progress at these talks.

It must be pointed out that the Vietnamese authorities' practice of following the Soviet Union's anti-China policy, turning a blind eye to reality and refusing to solve any problem has not only brought long sufferings to the masses of Chinese residents in Viet Nam. It runs counter to the fundamental interests of the Chinese and Vietnamese peoples. It is of no help to upholding the traditional friendship between the two

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peoples and does not conform with the desires of the people of the world who are concerned about peace in Southeast Asia.

As the Vietnamese side has simply no intention of discussing and solving problems, and has closed the door to negotiations, it is impossible for the talks to go on. This state of affairs is the making of the Vietnamese side alone. The Chinese Government Delegation deeply regrets it. Faced with this reality, we are forced to suggest the need of an adjournment of the talks between the Chinese and Vietnamese vice-foreign ministers. The Chinese Delegation will soon return to China to report on its work. However, we still have hopes for an eventual settlement of the question of Chinese residents in Viet Nam through negotiations. Our sincerity is consistent. We sincerely hope that the Vietnamese side will give earnest and serious consideration to the Chinese side's propositions and proposals. Whenever the Vietnamese side shows a sincere desire to settle the disputes on the question of Chinese residents in Viet Nam through negotiations, makes a positive response to the Chinese propositions and proposals or puts forward its own principled and constructive suggestions for a comprehensive settlement of the question, that will be welcome to us. On China's part, the door to negotiations is always open.

It is our earnest hope that the Vietnamese Government will create no more incidents on the question of Chinese residents but will truly safeguard their personal safety and proper rights and interests.

A long journey tests a horse's strength, a long acquaintance shows you a man's heart. The Chinese Government's consistent policy towards overseas Chinese can stand tests. The Chinese Government's sincerity for settling the Sino-Vietnamese disputes on the question of Chinese residents through negotiations can stand tests. The Chinese Government's patience on this question can also stand tests. We will never spare our efforts.

The Chinese Government and people always value the friendship and unity between the Chinese and Vietnamese peoples. We are sure that the desire of the Chinese and Vietnamese peoples and the people of the whole world for a settlement of the Sino-Vietnamese disputes through friendly consultations will be satisfied.

Thank you.