

October 11, 1965

**Record of Conversation between Vice-Foreign
Minister Qiao Guanhua and North Korean
Ambassador in China Pak Se-chang**

Citation:

"Record of Conversation between Vice-Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua and North Korean Ambassador in China Pak Se-chang", October 11, 1965, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 106-00836-13, 118-123. Translated by Jake Tompkins.
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Summary:

Qiao Guanhua and Pak Se-chang exchange opinions on the holding of a second Afro-Asian conference.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Record of Conversation between Deputy Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua and North Korean Ambassador in China Pak Se-chang

Time: 11 October 1965, 4:00pm – 5:00pm

Location: Reception Room of the East Foreign Ministry Building

In attendance: Chinese party: Minister Zhang Wenjin

North Korean Party: Bae Yong-jae (entourage, recorder)

Translator: Jiang Chunyi

Recorder: Ye Chengba

Deputy Minister Qiao explained my estimations concerning the circumstances of the Asia-Africa Conference as well as my measures to indefinitely postpone the conference.

Deputy Minister Qiao said that on 12 September, Foreign Affairs Officer Pak Seong-cheol told Ambassador Hao [Deqing] that he would like to understand his views on and preparations for the 2nd Asia-Africa Conference. He offers his apologies that we could not give North Korea an answer until now. Qiao did not give a reason. (Vice Premier Chen is currently in West Africa investigating the situation in Morocco, China's National Day, the events in India, etc.) We have delayed our meeting with the North Korean ambassador primarily because until recently we were not able to establish a concrete opinion on the postponement of the Asia-Africa Conference.

Deputy Minister Qiao said that, just as Comrade Chen Yi explained at the news conference on 29 September, our position on the Asia-Africa Conference is that we approve holding the meeting if it can be guaranteed, and if there is no guarantee that it will be successful, then we support waiting to hold it until the situation has matured. Under present conditions, if we were to hold it on time, we certainly would not be successful. When Comrade Chen Yi visited Mali and Guinea recently, it was clear that their prejudices against Algeria's new leader run deep. It is hard to say what they could do if we hold the meeting. As for U Thant's participation in the meeting, Comrade Chen Yi had a long talk with the Algerian Foreign Minister Bouteflika. Bouteflika's attitude was bad, he maintained that U Thant should be sent an invitation. Currently, the question of whether or not to invite U Thant concerns more than just Ben Bella, and will be deliberated on by all of Algeria's leaders. Boumediene told Comrade Chen Yi that he is sympathetic with China's position, and that he will think of a way to resolve the problem. However, it stands to be seen how much value these words hold. At the end of June this year, Nasser told Premier Zhou that in regards to the question of Soviets participating in the conference, if someone else were to raise the topic, the United Arab Republic would not oppose, but they will not be the leaders in this matter. But, the joint announcement between the USSR and United Arab Republic on 1 September equates to the United Arab Republic taking the lead in approving the USSR's attendance. The problems of the United Arab Republic's rightward swing, and Mali are not going to be easy to resolve. Tanzania's retreat from opposing America is also negative, as it will be difficult to get them to explicitly condemn American imperialism at the Asia-Africa Conference. Aside from the aforementioned four problems, the conflict between India and Pakistan has still not been resolved as there are still skirmishes in the region. Problems have also come up in Indonesia. If we were to hold the conference under these conditions, it would certainly be unsuccessful. Subandrio told our Ambassador Yao before the situation in Indonesia changed that he felt the conference would be difficult, and that it would be best to postpone it. Bhutto also asked Comrade Chen Yi in the beginning of September whether or not the Asia-Africa Conference could be postponed. After careful deliberation, the Chinese central authorities decided that under present circumstances, it would not be possible to hold the conference successfully, and that it would be best to postpone it indefinitely and wait for a more advantageous opportunity to hold it. Prime Minister Pham Van Dong took initiative to bring up an indefinite postponement when he came, and Sihanouk also gave approval when he

passed through Harbin on the way back from North Korea.

Deputy Minister Qiao said that if we are to postpone the conference, then we should do so indefinitely. Last time a date was decided on in Algeria on 26 June, conditions were not mature and the conference was moved. Rather than set a date and be trapped into having it moved, it would be better to postpone the conference indefinitely. We should wait for a later, more advantageous opportunity to carefully deliberate and have a standing committee decide on the date of the conference. Otherwise, the conference would lose prestige.

Deputy Minister Qiao pointed out that our suggestion is a positive one rather than negative. If we were to hold the conference now, there would certainly be a lot of argument. Of course, we're not afraid of argument, but it would undermine the cohesion between Asia and Africa. It would be better to postpone it.

Deputy Minister Qiao said that our current deliberation is of a promotional nature. If, through deliberation with friendly nations, everyone can agree to postpone the conference, then that is what we will do. However, if everyone is of a mind to hold the conference, then there may be a few ways to do so. We can engage in further deliberation with our brother countries. Currently, the number of countries that are adamantly for holding the conference are extremely few. Those who are most in favor are Boumediene and Bouteflika. They are under the impression that if their foreign friends come, their power will be consolidated and they will be able to ignore the larger issues. The Arab countries may appear to be rather positive about the conference in order to protect their relationship with Algeria. There are around ten such countries. For example, after Comrade Chen Yi issued a statement on 29 September, a friend of the Moroccan foreign ministry told us that there is reason to our intent to postpone the conference, but that the Arab Summit supported holding it on time, so they cannot say not to hold it. Mali and Guinea were positive on the subject in the past, but currently they have changed their minds. Ghana would like to move the conference to Akra. Tanzania and Zambia are following the majority. The Asian left nations including Indonesia, Cambodia, and Pakistan are negative. It is hard to say what India's stance is, but whether the conference is held or not they intend to ruin it. Our position is that we should definitely hold the conference. Today's postponement is for the conference's success in the future.

Deputy Minister Qiao explained our plan: We will share our opinions with those countries with which we have established diplomatic relations to receive their support. Once we see the results of our work, we will engage in the second round of planning. Deputy Minister Qiao said that we will on one hand encourage postponement, but at the same time prepare to hold the conference. If the majority of countries want to hold it, then we will still attend.

Deputy Minister Qiao also told Ambassador Pak that Algeria sent notice on 8 October that a standing committee will be held on the 10th of this month. The agenda for the meeting is that Algeria will report the situation of technical preparations and again confirm that the conference will be held on time. We estimate that the goal is to establish the next meeting's agenda. We have already expressed to Ambassador Ceng that we do not support reaffirming the conference's date, and told them our views on indefinitely postponing it. We have asked everyone to evaluate the situation and think about how we can prepare to do further work.

Ambassador Pak said that Sihanouk said in a magazine that if the Second Asia-Africa Conference is used as a conference against imperialism, then we might as well hold an actual conference against imperialism. How does the Deputy Minister see this?

Deputy Minister Qiao said that Sihanouk has already expressed his opinion to Chairman Liu [Shaoqi] and Premier Zhou [Enlai]. His intentions are good, and we

support him in principle. But, we do not approve of this method. His proposal would make the anti-imperialist united front too narrow. This way, there would only be a few anti-imperialist countries in attendance, limiting themselves. If the core and the front are different, then the front cannot be too narrow.

Ambassador Pak also asked whether or not Sihanouk had raised a particular structure.

Deputy Minister Qiao answered that Sihanouk had only voiced an opinion without any concrete methodology.

Ambassador Pak expressed his thanks, saying that he can already see China's position from Comrade Chen Yi's press conference on 29 September. Deputy Minister Qiao's explanation served to solidify his understanding of China's thoughts and actions. He will pass the report on to North Korea. He also said that the North Koreans' position on the Asia-Africa Conference is the same as before.

Deputy Minister Qiao said that they will be able to speak more in the future.