

October 23, 1964

**Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Indonesia,
'Subandrio Met with Ambassador Yao for a
Discussion on Nuclear Test'**

Citation:

"Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Indonesia, 'Subandrio Met with Ambassador Yao for a Discussion on Nuclear Test'", October 23, 1964, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 105-01870-01. Obtained and translated by Taomo Zhou.
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/121562>

Summary:

Description of a conversation between Chinese Ambassador Yao Zhongming and Indonesian Foreign Minister Subandrio. Subandrio expresses support for China's recent nuclear test, declaring that it will "contribute to world peace." Subandrio suggests a proposal that the upcoming Conference on Disarmament in Geneva invite China, along with a number of other Afro-Asian countries, which Yao responds negatively to, because this conference is convened by the United Nations.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

[To] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Subandrio met with me in the afternoon of the 22nd [of October]. Our talk touched upon the following topics:

1. Subandrio said that on the whole, he completely supported the nuclear test in China. China should have its own nuclear weapons, otherwise the imperialists and the Soviet Union would monopolize nuclear weapons. But China should be cautious when talking openly in the international arena, so as to avoid raising the sense of insecurity or fear among Afro-Asian countries. In this regard, he said he had to bring up the issue of radioactive dust and ashes. One reason for bringing up the issue of radioactive dust and ashes is that, in the past, the nuclear test by France in the Sahara and the Pacific region caused protests by many parties. He explained that he brought up this issue for the purpose of making clear that although the nuclear test would produce poisonous radioactive dust and ashes, China's successful nuclear test will expedite the complete disarmament and prohibition of nuclear weapons, which would contribute to world peace. He further said that if he had only mentioned how good and how marvelous China's nuclear test was, others would say Indonesia was China's "tail" and a member of the "Chinese bloc."

2. Subandrio later talked about his opinion on Premier Zhou's proposal to convene a summit conference of all the countries of the world. He expressed his doubt on the feasibility of the proposal. He would give us a written reply to further elaborate Indonesia's take on the issue, which covers the following aspects: the Indonesian government 1) supports Premier Zhou's proposal in general; 2) doubts whether such a proposal is relevant to the current situation and whether it is feasible; 3) holds that any conference on disarmament and prohibition on nuclear weapons is useless without the participation of China; 4) would like to propose that the Conference on Disarmament among eighteen countries in Geneva should invite China and a number of Afro-Asian countries, so that both the issue of convening a summit conference of all the countries of the world and the issue of disarmament and prohibition of conventional and nuclear weapons could be discussed; 5) proposes that a discussion on convening a summit conference of all the countries of the world should take place at the Second Afro-Asian Conference. [\[i\]](#)

3. I expressed the following comments on what Subandrio said above: 1) We appreciate that he affirmed the contribution of our nuclear test to world peace. On the issue of nuclear dust and ashes, we have taken into consideration the location, turbulence and direction of the wind, and we will never cause damage to the health of the people of our neighboring countries. We would urge him to pay attention to the possibility that the imperialists and their lackeys will take advantage of his public speech so as to drive a wedge between China and Indonesia. He nodded and said yes. 2) We appreciate that he agrees with Premier Zhou's proposal to convene a summit conference of all the countries of the world. On his doubts on the feasibility of the proposal, I explained that there are already quite a few countries that have responded positively. The proposal is about our common goal and shared interests, which requires our collective efforts. We should actively create the condition for its realization. 3) With regard to the other suggestions he plans to offer to Premier Zhou, I solemnly declare that I will report to my government immediately, and will inform him once I hear back from my government. I urge him not to release the information to public before my government replies. I personally think the suggestion to expand the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva by including China is inappropriate. It is barely acceptable for us. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is an arrangement made under the auspices of the United Nations. You, our Indonesian friends, know very well about our relations with the United Nations. And that conference is only an old stove on which a few big powers cook together. Why should we accommodate the United Nations? Indonesia is among the initiators of Bandung conference, it also advocates that the Newly Emerging Forces should unite against the Old Established Forces. On critical issues in the international arena, we should not

let the imperialists see the discord between China and Indonesia. He explained again that there are a couple of friendly nations at the Conference on Disarmament among the eighteen countries in Geneva, and we should try to win their support so as to undermine the United Nations. I stated that this is an extremely important issue, and exhorted him to wait for the reply from my government. By the end of the conversation he agreed to wait for the reply from the Chinese government. As his deceptiveness began to surface, please advise me on the best course of action to prevent the Indonesian side from further complicating the situation.

Chinese Embassy to Indonesia

23 October 1964

[\[i\]](#) China had been an active advocator for a “Second Bandung Conference” in the early 1960s. Beijing was eager to use the conference as a platform to increase its prestige and popularity among Third World countries and to compete against Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. However, the conference was cancelled in the last minute as its host, the Algerian President Ben Bella, was deposed by the army.