



March 6, 1954

Cable from Zhang Wentian, 'Reporting the Preliminary Opinions of Our Side on the Geneva Conference to the Soviet Side'

Citation:

"Cable from Zhang Wentian, 'Reporting the Preliminary Opinions of Our Side on the Geneva Conference to the Soviet Side'", March 6, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 206-Y0054. Translated by Chen Zhihong.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/110039>

Summary:

Zhang Wentian discusses his visit with Molotov. During this meeting, Molotov says delegations from China, Korea, and Vietnam are welcome to Moscow before the Geneva conference to discuss its proceedings. Molotov also mentions several issues that still need to be discussed, such as relaxing tensions in Asia, Korean unification, ministers in attendance at the conference, and India's participation in the Indochina discussion.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

(Top Secret)

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Report to Zhou Enlai and the Central Committee:

I called upon [Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav M.] Molotov this afternoon, conveying to him the preliminary opinions of and preparation work on our side for the Geneva Conference. He says that all opinions are very good, and he will forward them to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Central Committee and the [Soviet] Foreign Ministry for discussion. He also welcomes the delegations from China, [North] Korea, and Vietnam to visit Moscow in mid-April, to have discussions and consultations on various issues before (the Geneva Conference). Concerning Ho Chi Minh's plan to visit Moscow, he will report to the Central Committee immediately and will then give us a reply.

During the conversation, Molotov touched upon several questions, and they can be used as reference for us at home.

(1) At the Geneva Conference, apart from discussing the Korea and Vietnam questions, should such questions as relaxing tensions in Asia (including the Taiwan question, opposition to rearming Japan, and opposition to the US-Pakistan pact) also be discussed? He says that these issues should be considered.

(2) Concerning plans for settling the Korea issue, should the issue of North Korea and South Korea "organizing a provisional government for the whole of Korea on the basis of equal rights" be raised? This should be given further consideration. He says that prior to 1950 the Soviet Union had used [the principle of] "on the basis of equal rights" with regard to the German question, but has not used it since then. This is because this statement is likely to cause many new and difficult problems. He says that he has heard that [Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Prime Minister] Kim Il Sung does not welcome free elections.

(3) Concerning the participation of foreign ministers from various countries, this [issue] was not clearly defined by the Berlin Conference. Molotov has consulted with several foreign ministers, and they have shown an interest in attending the conference. But they have attached a condition to this: it is possible that they may only attend the conference's opening ceremony, or may attend only part of the conference.

(4) At the Geneva Conference, the countries which will be invited to participate in discussions of the Korea question have been agreed upon by all in advance. However, the countries which should be invited to participate in discussions of the Indochina question have not been worked out. It is likely that there will be disputes on this issue. As to whether India should be invited, Molotov says that he is not interested in this matter at the moment, as India's participation may weaken the role played by China at the Geneva Conference.

(5) Concerning the organization of the conference, according to [United Nations (UN) Secretary General Dag] Hammarskjold, the institution of the United Nations can be used. However, Molotov emphasizes that the United Nations should not be allowed to get involved and that members of various delegations should be able to use their own institutions, just like the situation during the Berlin Conference.

(6) Molotov says that the Soviet Union will start the preparatory work in the near future, and those involved will probably include [Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei A.] Gromyko, [Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily V.] Kuznetsov, [Soviet Foreign Ministry Collegium Member Nikolai T.] Fedorenko, and [K.V.] Novikov, head of

the Southeast Asian Department [of the Soviet Foreign Ministry].

(7) Concerning the procedure question of the conference, he believes that there will be many disputes over it after the beginning of the conference.

(8) Comrade Molotov will ask Comrade Gromyko and others to make presentations to us on matters needing attention in attending an international conference.

Zhang Wentian

6 March [1954]