

June 21, 1954

**Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and Others,
Regarding the Situation at the Sixteenth Restricted
Session**

Citation:

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Summary:

Zhou reports on his meeting with the four partner delegations to bid farewell to Comrade Nam Il and to discuss the proposals of Laos and Cambodia. Also, Zhou discusses the three points of agreement both sides made during the sixteenth restricted session on Indochina.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

(Top Secret)

Chairman Mao [Zedong], Comrade [Liu] Shaoqi and the Central Committee:

(1) The four delegations from our side came to our place for dinner on the evening of the 18th to say farewell to Comrade Nam Il. On that evening we discussed the two proposals presented by the delegations from Laos and Cambodia. We presumed that we could reach an agreement on the Laos and Cambodia issues at the meeting of the 19th with our counterparts. On the morning of the 19th, Eden came to see me (see the other telegram for details) after the French delegation brought us two draft proposals by our counterparts. [Harold] Caccia went to see Gromyko, and [Jean] Chauvel's assistant met with [Director of the Staff Office of the PRC Foreign Ministry] Wang Bingnan. [The delegations] exchanged views separately. [We] put together points in common between the Chinese proposal and the two proposals of Laos and Cambodia, copied the Vietnamese Resolution on 29 May and made three principles. Through repeated discussion back and forth between both sides, [we] obtained agreement outside the conference first and then held the meeting. We reached an agreement on three points at the sixteenth restricted session. See the communique for details.

(2) Three points of the agreement need to be explained:

1. The word "and" in "the representatives of commands of two sides shall meet immediately in Geneva and on the spot" was changed to "or." This was proposed by the Cambodian delegation with the support of Americans (the process will be reported separately) to the Soviet Union. Molotov agreed with that. Cambodia does not want to negotiate here. They emphasize that [the parties to the negotiation] should be the Cambodian Royal Command on one hand, and the command of the Viet Minh on the other. They do not want to recognize France as chief representative. It therefore showed the contradictions between France and Cambodia. Now, [the] only [solution is] to enlarge the ongoing negotiations between the representatives of commands of both sides of Vietnam. It will require more days until the delegations of Laos and Cambodia show up and negotiate directly the issues of the Kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos.

2. It was the Western countries that suggested jointly that we should first discuss the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces.

3. Our side added 'and foreign military personnel' after [']armed forces[']. We meant the Vietnamese Volunteers. The Cambodian delegate stated that Cambodia needed the service of foreign military personnel. The Laotian delegation claimed that the French military personnel in Laos were dispatched there based on agreements between France and Laos.

(3) We originally thought that the meeting would need a recess. However, since France did not want the conference to be interrupted, "the conference will continue" was added to the communique. In fact the foreign ministers of major countries have already left. A special commission discussing detailed plans for international supervision could possibly be established after one or two more meetings.

(4) During the absence of the foreign ministers of the Soviet Union, China, Britain, and the United States, in order to push forward direct contact between France and Vietnam, I met with the Cambodian delegation on the 20th (see the other telegram for details), and I plan to invite the delegations of Laos and Cambodia to have dinner with Comrade Pham Van Dong on the 21st. [I will] introduce them to each other [so that] they can have more direct contacts in the future. Also, I told Chauvel that I was willing to meet with [French Prime Minister Pierre] Mendes-France if he comes to

Geneva in two days. Chauvel has not yet answered me. Even if Mendes-France does not come, I still plan to push Chauvel to contact the Vietnamese side directly. In order to influence France, I also met with two members of parliament from the French Socialist Party. They both insist that [France] should establish diplomatic relations with China (see the other telegram for details.)

Zhou Enlai
21 June 1954