

**June 23, 1954**

**Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and Others,  
Regarding the Situation at the Meeting with  
Sananikone**

**Citation:**

"Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and Others, Regarding the Situation at the Meeting with Sananikone", June 23, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 206-Y0050. Translated by Gao Bei.

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**Summary:**

Laotian Foreign Minister Sananikone explains to Zhou the wants and intentions of the Laos delegation.

**Original Language:**

Chinese

**Contents:**

Translation - English

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

[I] invited Foreign Minister Sananikone, head of the Laotian delegation, to come and meet with me on the 21st. Sananikone first stated that the Laotians came from the Tibetan plateau, and that he had been to China himself. There are also a great number of overseas Chinese merchants in Laos. I said that the peoples of the East are all somehow related. Therefore we should expect each other's independence, sovereignty, and unification even more. Sananikone said[:] "Laos is a small country and has a very small population. We need peace more than any other country. France has [military] bases in Laos based on military agreements between France and Laos. However, there are very few French troops here and their number can be supervised by the supervision commission. If the Viet Minh troops are to be withdrawn, we will ask the French troops to withdraw. We do not have direct aid from the United States. The aid that the United States provides to the French Union is through France. We will not need such aid any more after peace is restored. We hope to establish diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with China after peace is restored. It is not difficult to solve the political problems of Laos. People of the liberation movement can vote and organize a reconciliation government. If the parliament agrees, we can revise the constitution and even establish a republic after the elections. [Prince] Souphanouvong is the brother of the current prime minister. He does not want to overthrow the king. He only wants to join the government. Problems can be solved if we can discuss them directly." I told the Laotian delegation: ["] We are trying our best to facilitate the rapprochement among the three countries. [We] respect the independence of the three countries and oppose the United States establishing [military] bases in these countries. We believe that it is understandable that Laos presented its needs for maintaining armed forces for its own defense. We respect other countries' security and independence ["]. I told him that they do not have to worry about their borders, and that we are willing to join the guarantee by the nine countries.<sup>1</sup> I emphasized that the current French government wants peace, and Vietnam and Laos want peace as well. No one can prevent the realization of peace if the parties concerned demand it. I also warned him to be on the alert so that the Americans cannot sabotage [the peace]. The Laotian delegation hoped to reach an agreement first on the military issues in Laos. I said that we will come to a conclusion in these three weeks and will wait to make a final decision until after the foreign ministers come back. The Laotian delegate expressed his appreciation for introducing him to Pham Van Dong directly.

Zhou Enlai  
23 June 1954