

**November 21, 1962**

**Minutes of Conversation between Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Hanfu and Ambassadors from Socialist Countries on Beijing's Decision to Unilaterally Withdraw Its Forces**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Zhang Hanfu informed the ambassadors of China's decision to unilaterally withdraw its forces 20 kilometers from the Line of Actual Control and answered some of their questions.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

Chinese

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Minutes of Conversation between Zhang Hanfu and  
Ambassadors from Socialist Countries in China  
(not read)

To notify all the diplomatic envoys of China's decision on 22 November to cease fire along the Sino-Indian border and that, after 1 December, China will retreat from the current battle field to more than 20 kilometers from the 7 November 1959 Line of Actual Control.

Time: 11 November 1962, 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Place: East Building, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Attendant: Yu Zhan, Deputy Director of Department of Soviet and European Affairs

Interpreter: Wang Yiqing

Recorder: Yin Shizhang

Vice Minister Zhang Hanfu (hereafter Zhang): I am sorry for disturbing you today at such a late time, but I have an important notification for you about the Sino-Indian boundary issue.

Comrades, as you all know, the Chinese government has consistently advocated settling the Sino-Indian boundary issue through peaceful means and friendly negotiations, but has not done so. I will not mention the events that occurred before the invasion and the provocation of the Indian army on 20 October of this year. On 20 October, the Indian army launched a massive assault on the Chinese army. On 15 November, the Indian Ministry of National Defense ordered another massive attack. Under such circumstances, China was forced to fight back.

Nevertheless, the Chinese government issued a statement on 24 October and proposed three recommendations to settle the military conflicts along the Sino-Indian border. We believed that these three recommendations are the most fair and reasonable, but India repeatedly refused such recommendations and asked the Chinese army without reason to retreat to the positions that were China's before 8 September; that is, to resume the situation in which the Indian army occupied a large portion of Chinese territory, set up forty-three strongholds, and was ready for a massive attack. The Chinese government steadfastly refused India's unreasonable and ridiculous claims.

India repeatedly refused China's recommendations, and it ordered another massive attack on 15 November, causing the Sino-Indian border to become tenser and more dangerous. Under such circumstances, the Chinese government proactively took measures to facilitate the realization of the three recommendations which could reverse the situation.

The Chinese government decided for a complete ceasefire along the Sino-Indian border on 22 December; that is, tomorrow. China also decided to withdraw the border defense forces from the Eastern, Middle, and Western sectors to more than 20 kilometers away from the 7 November 1959 Line of Actual Control. The Line of Actual Control mentioned here is the same as that referred to in the second recommendation of the three proposed by the Chinese government on 24 October. China is actively and unilaterally withdrawing.

China's active measures are enough to show China's great sincerity to stop the conflict along the border and peacefully settle the Sino-Indian boundary issue. We hope the Indian government will agree to take corresponding measures.

With respect to this issue, the Chinese government will make a statement today. We are all fraternal countries, so we are notifying you first. Please make it known to your government. After the statement is issued, the whole text will be sent to you and all of the embassies.

Ambassador of Vietnam: [We] welcome you to take active measures.

Ambassador of Mongolia: My understanding is that the contents of this statement are the same as that on 24 October and the issue is to withdraw to more than 20 kilometers from the Line of Actual Control.

Zhang: We are taking the initiative to withdraw. We are taking this measure in order to promote the realization of the three recommendations. In this regard, this statement is very different from that on 25 October.

Ambassador of Czechoslovakia: What are the differences?

Zhang: The difference lies in that we are actively taking measures and initiating the withdrawal.

I am sorry to disturb you at such a late time. We meant to notify you first because we are fraternal countries.

(The Vietnamese ambassador was late so Zhang retold him the measures China would take after the other ambassadors left.)

Vietnamese Ambassador: You are welcome to take proactive measures, but some people believe that China is withdrawing because China lost.

Zhang: It is quite obvious which country won and which lost. At parliament yesterday, Nehru was saying they lost Walong and how many people were killed or wounded. But we do not pose as a winner, nor are we doing so because it should be this way.

Vietnamese Ambassador: This is a good thing. I will report to the government after I return to the embassy.