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**The Chinese Government's May 5th Response to the
Soviet Government on the Memorandum on the
Expansion of the Geneva Conference and the
Peaceful Conclusion of the Laos Issue**

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Summary:

The Chinese Government advocates for a ceasefire and an international conference on Laos "in order to consolidate the victory."

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The Chinese Government's May 5th Response to the Soviet Government on the Memorandum [on the] Expansion of the Geneva Conference [and the] Peaceful Conclusion of the Laos Issue

(Approved by the Central Committee Secretariat)

The Chinese government has studied the memorandum [which the] Soviet Union's [Ambassador to] China Comrade Ambassador [S.V.] CHERVONENKO [gave to China] on May 5th regarding [the] Soviet government's position on the expanded Geneva Conference aiming at the peaceful settlement of Laos issue. The Chinese Government agrees with the points made by the Government of the Soviet Union in the memo. We should make the most of the favorable conditions [which] have recent emerged [so as to] ensure the independence and neutrality of Laos, and do everything possible to ensure the interests of democratic and patriotic peoples of Laos.

Because of the Lao People's victorious struggle, the US and its satellite countries were forced to agree to a peaceful solution to the Laos issue. [Including] the Korean Armistice, this is the Americans third major defeat in the Orient since the first Geneva Conference on Indochina. We should take advantage of this kind of favorable situation. However, the United States [is] not reconciled to defeat. At present, Laos's ceasefire situation is still very unstable. [Furthermore] with regards to the expanded Geneva conference, the American side is doing their utmost to undermine the situation.

At present, the total international situation and the situation in Laos all are very beneficial to us. The entire Socialist Camp plus the National Democratic Movements going on in Asia, Africa, and Latin America has a greater advantage compared to the US-led imperialist bloc. Southeast Asia's current situation is [very much] like the capitalist world [in that] it has many weak links. It is unstable. But [it] also cannot [be made] stable. To speak [from a] strategic [viewpoint], use of this situation [would assist in] the gradual promotion of revolutions in this region. [This] is beneficial to us. In the specific case of Laos, the Lao progressive forces have made great victory, but the victory has not yet been consolidated. The Lao insurgents have a certain degree of strength. America also is not [yet] reconciled to defeat. Therefore, in order to consolidate the victory [which has already been] won, in order to facilitate further future developments, [in order to] strive for a peaceful situation in Laos--even if only a temporary one--it is strategically necessary [for] our policy to [be to] treat the ceasefire and an international conference in Laos as the basic starting point.

I) Domestic Aspects of the Laos Situation

[The] Chinese Government completely agrees with the point brought up in the memorandum, that this international conference is only entitled to solve the international aspects of Laos problem. Laos's domestic issues should [be allowed] to [be] resolved on their own.

The [main form of the] struggle of the Lao People [is] currently changing from a primarily military struggle to a primarily political struggle. At different times, depending on different circumstances, the two types of struggle must be used in interchangeably. But, in any case, the two types of struggle have to be coordinated to take advantage [of the real situation]. For now [it would be best] to take advantage of military victories to promote favorable political situations and create favorable

conditions for further future development.

With regards to Laos's domestic issues, we have the following ideas:

1) At present, Laos has achieved a de-facto ceasefire. Regardless of whether or not the related parties can reach a formal ceasefire agreement, the Lao Patriotic Forces should strengthen solidarity, [be] vigilant against enemy sabotage of the ceasefire, [and] prepare for the end of the situation.

2) Regardless of [whether or not] a [formal] ceasefire agreement is achieved or not, fighting should still stop. The current military task should be properly adjusted to mobilize the masses, eliminate bandits, and consolidate land held.

3) The International Control Commission can only [act in] accordance [with] the ceasefire agreement. Under the circumstances [wherein] both parties of the Joint Commission [are] cooperating with [The International Control Commission], The Commission should choose some locations at the front line and supervise cease fire. To reach an agreement both parties must choose a location at the front line for a supervised cease fire, [if] both parties are unable to reach a ceasefire agreement, the International Control Commission can independently contact with both parties to discuss how the ceasefire can be achieved.

4) At the same time [that] the Lao Patriotic Forces consolidate and develop [their] own strength, [they should also] vigorously resist Phouma, [and if] possible strengthen cooperative relations with Phouma.

5) So as to get the best benefit from military victories, strive for ceasefire negotiations and political negotiations to be held simultaneously. During the ceasefire negotiations, as soon as a ceasefire is reached, the most beneficial circumstance would be not to take one step further, in order to avoid the domestic situation in Laos being immobilized and static, while preventing the International Control Commission from monitoring conditions in excess of the ceasefire, since the supervision of truce will inevitably lead to interference in internal affairs. While political matters are being discussed [we shall] strive for Phouma's legitimate government to establish itself with Phouma at the head [Phouma and the Lao Patriotic Front are predominantly [in charge of the] interim coalition government] and send out a delegation group composed of members from all three parties to attend the International Conference. But, also should prepare a joint government [in case] the coalition representative group which can be formed is not ideal or simply cannot be formed because the situation is too complex.

6) In order to ensure the Patriotic Front's strength and political position, it is necessary to deal with complex situations: the ideal solution is to leave the whole country namely controlled by [creation of] a coalition government and joint command, with territories under each side remained to be self-governed respectively. And the military should remain independent rather than mixed. If [military or regions controlled by coalition government or joint command] being completely integrated with Phouma, though this is not helpful for Phoumi and Boun Oum's group, it is even less helpful for the Patriotic Front. Dividing the government [will only serve] to bind themselves hand and foot and will not be beneficial for the development of the revolution. Military being enrolled with Phoumi's or regions controlled by coalition government or joint command being integrated with Phoumi's should be avoided.

[If] the US [can] accept [the limits] of their influence under Phouma, they will advocate unity. To put it another way, [the United States will] otherwise advocated partitionism or [will work to] destroy Lao [efforts] to reach an agreement. We must insist on internal affairs remaining wholly under the control of the Lao People, the

principle that outsiders cannot interfere, [and we must] oppose American advocacy [and American led] activities [which] sabotage [this ideal].

II) Regarding the Laos Issue's International Conference

1. Our policy is [to] vigorously strive for convening [of the] international conference, moreover [our policy is to] reaffirm a new international agreement [which] basically ensures the neutrality and independence of Laos as [was previously affirmed] in the 1954 Geneva Accords. [This will help] facilitate a step towards basic self-reliance and further development on the part of the Lao progressive forces. If the international conference is not convened or the start of the conference is delayed owing to negative actions on the part of America and/or American satellite countries, then, this is not a real loss for us. Under these kinds of circumstances, Laos's progressive forces can still be developed.

2. Since 1954, America's actions to damage the Geneva Accords in Laos have primarily been via meddling in internal political affairs. This time the international agreement's most important aspect should be protecting Laos's internal political affairs from external meddling. This will give the Lao People a chance to solve their problems on their own. We want to strongly promote Laos's neutrality. [We] also want to strongly promote Laos's independence.

3. We agree with the government of the Soviet Union stance in the memorandum that the decision of the 1954 Geneva Conference was to guarantee Laos's basic neutrality. Currently, America is in Laos agitating for 'Austrian Style Neutrality'. It is quite obvious, America's goal is to use this as a pretext for abandoning the 1954 Geneva Accords. Moreover [American clearly plans] to use the slogan 'Austrian Style Neutrality' as a pretext for action limiting the development of the Laotian Revolutionary strength. Laos's situation is completely unlike the situation in Austria. We feel the goal of guaranteeing Laos's neutrality is to put a stop to the American led imperialist bloc's encroaching on and meddling in Laos's affairs. For the Lao People's strength to develop [they] cannot have restrictions from outside parties. Starting from this point of view, we feel it is not suitable [for us to] put forth [the concept of] 'permanent neutrality'. In order to ensure the neutrality of Laos, [and to] respect the [parts of the] 1954 Geneva Conference's which are related to Laos's sovereignty, independence, unity, territorial integrity, and internal affairs, Laos cannot participate in military blocs [nor can] new military bases be established in Laos [by outside parties, and] other regulations [that were issued at the 1954 Conference] should be reaffirmed.

4. The Manila Treaty is incompatible with the 1954 Geneva Accords. The memo from the government of the Soviet Union puts forth the suggestion to abolish all provisions of the Manila Treaty. Politically, this is very good for us. We support this action. Moreover, [we] feel the issue of abolishing the Manila Treaty should be brought up [and dealt with] first.

5. Obviously, according to the provisions, the French troops and military bases in Laos should be disbanded and withdrawn. However, in order to make best advantage of the frictions between France and America, we feel that [we should] temporarily preserve the French military bases in Laos according to the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Accords. This is more advantageous.

6. In order to preserve Laos's neutrality and independence, with the exception of situations specifically laid out in provisions of the 1954 Geneva Accords, all foreign troops and military personnel must withdraw from Laos. However, a separate agreement [to this effect] does not need to be reached. It can be included in the general agreement guaranteeing Laos's neutrality and independence. We agree that the withdrawal of foreign military personnel from Laos should take place within a

strictly prescribed time period. We also believe that socialist countries can specifically [use the] meeting to bring up [the issue of] American, Thai, and South Vietnamese troops and military personnel's [presence in Laos and their necessary] withdrawal from Laos. [We Chinese also may] bring up the matter of armed Chiang [Kai-shek] militants who are [currently] within the borders of Laos and the issue of their deportation. In order to ensure the independence of Laos and a [policy of] noninterference [by outside powers] in Laos's internal affairs, any country which gives any kind of assistance to Laos should not get any kind of privilege or special treatment.

7. The problem of Laos receiving further military aid, and [the additional problem of] external military [forces] being stationed in Laos or building bases in Laos are two completely different kinds of problems. For now, the problem is not just weapons coming into Laos, but is also about America illegally providing support to the Lao rebel groups. We should grant the requests of the legitimate government of Laos, [we] cannot allow ourselves to give the Americans an excuse to provide assistance to the Lao rebel groups. We feel [that we need to] look at the situation from a distance. [Such as this] should not cause a precedent that a sovereign nation needs to accept international oversight before receiving foreign military aid. If the majority of the countries attending the meeting consider it [necessary] for military aid to the legitimate government of Laos to be controlled, then it can be considered for negotiation [and ratification]. Everyone is obliged to abide [these decisions] but [we] must avoid [allowing] certain international organizations to use this an excuse for controlling Laos's military and economic aid.

8. With regards to method by which the relevant countries shall guarantee Laos's neutrality and independence, we feel, the first method brought up in the memorandum [is best]. It would be more favorable for [our side if] all of the countries [which are attending the] meeting [jointly] assume the obligation to adopt a common agreement. Of course, if Laos and other relevant countries believe that a statement put forth by Laos [and] confirmed by other countries is a better way [we] also can agree [to that. The] most important issue is the content of the relevant countries' obligations.

9. If the Americans once again adopt [the same] techniques [which they employed] in 1954, [by] not participating in mutual agreements and even by making independent announcements [regarding their intended] actions against [the agreement, then] we must [actively] oppose [them].

III) Regarding the Issue of International Supervision in Laos

1. With regards to this issue, our basic view has been expounded upon previously in numerous memoranda to the government of the Soviet Union. We agree with the point set forth in the memorandum [most recently issued by the Soviets] that [it is] imperative that [we] oppose granting the International Control Commission [the right to] interfere in Laos's internal affairs and [cause] damage [to] the rights of the patriotic and progressive forces in Laos. Taking into consideration that Laos's current situation is very different from the situation in 1954, [we] should redefine the mandate of the International Control Commission [and] strictly limit [them] to checking whether [or not] any country has allied with Laos, established military bases in Laos, or stationed military personnel in Laos. The main responsibilities of the [International Control] Commission is [supposed to be] stopping foreign interference in Laos. It is not within [the International Control Commission's] mandate to interfere in the internal affairs of Laos. The issue of who shall have the right to vote is purely an internal Laotian matter. Therefore, [we] should try [our best] to avoid granting the International Control Commission [any kind of] supervisory power.

2. [With regards to the] problem of [choosing the] members of the International

Control Commission, in light of the United States flagrant utilization of India in international matters [it can be said that] the main problem is preventing manipulation of the [International Control] Commission by the United States via India. There are two possibilities that can take place. Either the membership [of the International Control Commission should be] expanded [or] the membership should be left unchanged. Whether [or not] one way is better [can only be] determined according to the meeting's conditions and consultation. Whichever approach is taken, we believe chairmanship of the commission should be taken in turns. So as to dilute the role of India, all measures should be unanimously adopted by consensus of all members of the International Control Commission.

IV) Regarding the Issue of Indo-China and Southeast Asia

At the International Conference discussion of the Laos Issue [must] proceed to a certain phase or outcome [after which] we can consider making bringing up an appropriate way of ensuring peace in Indochina and Southeast Asia. [We] should make full use of the platform [provided by the] meeting to condemn American backed aggressors in Southeast Asia [and the ways in which these groups] are undermining the 1954 Geneva Accords, obstructing the peaceful reunification of Vietnam, [engaging in] subversive activities in Cambodia, threatening peace in Southeast Asia. [We should] condemn [the] Americans [for their] support [of] bandit troops [which are using] Thailand for a base to harass Myanmar and Laos and threaten our national security.

[We] recommend that [all of the] participating countries act in accordance to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and the Ten Point Declaration [on Promotion of World Peace and Cooperation which was ratified at] the Bandung Conference. [We also recommend that] a treaty guaranteeing peace in Southeast Asia be signed to replace the Manila Treaty.

V) Procedural and Organizational Issues: We fully agree with the views of the government of the Soviet Union as put forth in the memorandum.

May 9th, 1961