

October 22, 1962

Soviet Memorandum on the Sino-Indian Border Issue

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Summary:

The Soviet Union outlines its stance toward the ongoing Sino-Indian border war, including its policy of selling arms to India.

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Chinese

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Translation - English

-Translation of the Soviet Memorandum-

The government of the Soviet Union has carefully studied the current situation of the Sino-Indian border as introduced in the conversation between Comrade Zhou Enlai and the Soviet Ambassador on 8 October of this year and expressed its gratitude [for this introduction].

We understand the views of the Chinese comrades and recognize that the government of the People's Republic of China is making efforts to eliminate conflict and settle disputes peacefully. We are confident that this route is consistent with the interests of the entire socialist camp.

We all know that, although the Soviet Union has not issued any statement since 1959, we consistently hold that such disputes should be resolved through peaceful means and take into account the interests of China and India. We are closely watching how the situation develops and agree with your views, namely that the recent information regarding the Sino-Indian border is more worrisome.

It has become increasingly obvious that the tensions are continuing to build. This development is only beneficial to the imperialists and the reactionary clique of India. In the past and in the present, they are doing everything possible to sow the seeds of hostility between the People's Republic of China and India, to weaken the traditional friendship between the great Chinese and Indian people, and to provoke an armed conflict between them. We know very well that the imperialist clique has used every opportunity to take advantage of the Sino-Indian border issue in the dispute to speculate about relations between the Soviet Union and India and the Soviet Union and China in an attempt to divide us and sow dissension between the people of China and the Soviet Union.

Therefore, we are willing to clarify that the Soviet Union and China have an unbreakable fraternal friendship which is based on the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and the principles of proletarian internationalism. It is the fight against imperialism and for world peace that brings us together.

We fully support your desire to solve the border dispute with India through negotiations. Negotiations will prevent the further intensification of the conflict and create a good atmosphere for its peaceful settlement.

We understand your position that the McMahon line is not an established boundary. It is a painful historical legacy.

When this line was delimited, Indian territory was still under the rule of a powerful colonial country-the United Kingdom. England drew and redrew the map of this area without considering the national interests of all ethnic groups, historical characteristics, and national characteristics. At that time, China was weak and could not resist the United Kingdom as it deserved. Nevertheless, China does not recognize the unilateral delimitation of the McMahon line.

Of course, it is difficult to state the specific ways to resolve the border dispute between the People's Republic of China and India, but we believe that the recommendations put forward by the People's Republic of China to hold talks without preconditions and that the two forces should retreat 20 kilometers beyond the 1959 border are constructive suggestions. We believe that these recommendations are a good start for the peaceful solution to this problem which do not damage the prestige of either side and take into account the interests of both the People's Republic of China and India.

As for the comments made by Comrade Zhou Enlai on the sale of airplanes and helicopters to India by the Soviet Union, we are willing to tell you that, so far, the Soviet Union has sold India eight "AH-12" airplanes and twenty "MU-4" helicopters. Obviously, these planes have no military significance and will not affect the balance of power.

The government of the Soviet Union, in forming its policy towards India both in the past and at the present, begins from the desire of how to enable India to maintain a neutral position and prevent the reactionary forces in India from pulling India into the imperialist camp. When deciding to sell arms to India [we] considered how this measure can be used to serve our common interests and prevent India from becoming closer to the imperialist countries and, in particular, to prevent India's military clique from becoming closer to the militarists in the United States and other Western countries.

Finally, we hope that the border conflict will be cleared up and that the Sino-Indian border dispute will be solved in a reasonable manner.