

October 20, 1965

**Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou Enlai's
Reception of Zakaria El-Adly Imam, Ambassador of
the United Arab Republic (UAR) to China**

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Summary:

Zakaria El-Adly Imam believes that there are too many divisions in the Afro-Asian world at present to continue with plans to host the Second Asian-African Conference.

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Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou Enlai's Reception of Zakaria El-Adly Imam, Ambassador of the United Arab Republic (UAR) to China
(Premier has not yet reviewed)

Time: 20 October 1965, 7:20 p. m.

Location: Outside the front door of Quanjude

Accompanying persons: Vice Premier Chen Yi, Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Hanfu

Imam: I feel it a great honor to see once again Your Excellency the Premier this evening.

Premier Zhou: I am a bit late. I just had another meeting.

The issue we have to discuss is that of the Asian-African Conference. With regard to the issue of the Standing Committee in Algeria discussing the delay of the Asian-African Conference, we have discussed it with His Excellency Vice President [Ali] Sabry. We know that the position of the United Arab Republic (UAR) is to show consideration for Algeria and at the same time acknowledge the reasons that we have given for not favoring the meeting. If the meeting is forcibly held, it will face the situation of a split. When in June this year I met in Cairo and Alexandria with President [Gamal Abdel] Nasser and Vice President Sabry, I proposed a delay in order to avoid a split. At that time there were two reasons for a delay: 1) many African countries were not willing to participate; and 2) many countries do not understand the situation in Algeria. The conditions now exist to hold the meeting in Algeria. However, we are facing greater conditions for a split now than six months ago. Algeria is committed to UN participation and is unwilling to change. As for the issue of the Soviet Union's participation, some countries have committed themselves to it and some countries firmly oppose it. Many issues have arisen between Asian and African countries, such as the issue of India and Pakistan, the issue of imperialism's change of horses in Congo (Leopoldville), and other issues. There is no consistent approach towards Vietnam, and the United States is exerting influence.

Therefore, we firmly advocate a delay in order to avoid a split. If today the Standing Committee made a decision for delay that would be very good. If it did not make a decision and we leave it for the Standing Committee to discuss again, we would again approve. In this way it could allow more countries to understand the situation. As far as we know, at present there are not a few countries that agree with our views, such as Cambodia, Vietnam, Pakistan, Tanzania, Congo (Brazzaville), Guinea, and Ghana. There are also other countries that advocate no delay but also disapprove of a split, such as Iraq, Morocco, and the UAR. The UAR at present advocates holding the conference as scheduled but knows that it would not do not to have China participate. Sukarno, too, has suggested that the Soviet Union not participate in order to avoid China's withdrawal from the conference. If the Soviet Union participates, China will resolutely oppose it, and the conference will not take place.

In short, we are facing the situation of a split and we definitely will not participate. The meeting failed to reach an agreement and its way of voting violated the Spirit of Bandung. If in the face of a split you still wanted to participate, then why not meet in June? The reason why in June I was talking over a delay with President Nasser in Cairo and Alexandria was in order to avoid a split between Asia and Africa. Later, after the action of the foreign ministers in Algeria, the Standing Committee issued a decision for a delay. In the same way, why can the Standing Committee not again issue a decision for a delay? It is illogical to refer the issue of a delay to the Foreign Ministers

Conference for a decision. Because the Foreign Ministers Conference is the preparatory meeting for the Summit Conference, holding the Foreign Ministers Conference would require holding the Summit Conference. Therefore, when the Foreign Ministers Conference is called upon to make a decision, we will face a split. The African Summit Conference is meeting tomorrow. I hope that President Nasser fully considers and exerts influence at the African Summit Conference.

We understand your relations with Algeria and understand your difficulties, but with many countries at present advocating delay, you can now speak. I hope that President Nasser is able to find a way to avoid a split.

Today I have used this short time to speak a bit and hope that Your Excellency the Ambassador conveys what I have said to Their Excellencies President Nasser and Vice President Ali Sabry. It is also possible that Vice President Sabry has already followed President Nasser to Accra. Is that possible?

Imam: I have yet to receive positive confirmation of that.

Premier Zhou: Is the Foreign Minister already in Accra?

Imam: Yes. This evening or, to be more precise, tomorrow morning, I will certainly report the Premier's message to President Nasser, Vice President Sabry, and the Prime Minister.

Premier Zhou: Thank you.

Imam: Your Excellency the Premier certainly knows that the UAR has one principle: If we cannot hold the conference well, it would be better to postpone it.

Premier Zhou: Very good.

Imam: I assure the Premier that President Nasser has always advocated Asian-African solidarity and upheld Asian-African solidarity. In this regard, we must cooperate with the Premier.

Premier Zhou: For ten years, it has been this way. President Nasser and we have jointly cultivated the Spirit of Bandung. At present, if we had to destroy it, we would not be willing to do so. We often say that we must agree to differ.

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