

October 22, 1965
**Letter from Premier Zhou Enlai to North Korean
Premier Kim Il Sung**

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Summary:

Zhou Enlai writes to update Kim Il Sung on the status of the proposed Second Asian-African Conference.

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Premier of the Cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Comrade Kim Il Sung:

You surely know that, in the past several days, the standing committee composed of representatives of 15 Asian and African countries has been meeting in Algiers and discussing the issue of whether or not the Second Asian-African Conference should be held as scheduled. In the meeting of 19 October, representatives of China and the Kingdom of Cambodia officially put forward a joint recommendation to postpone the convening of the Second Asian-African Conference. I am enclosing here now the full text of the recommendation. I would like to take this opportunity to explain to you the Chinese Government's considerations in putting forward this recommendation.

China has consistently and actively supported the convening of the Second Asian-African Conference and for this has made unremitting efforts. Even after the incident of 19 June in Algeria, China still hoped that the Second Asian-African Conference would convene as scheduled. However, when later we discovered that convening the conference as scheduled would face the danger of division, we resolutely agreed with the position of postponing the conference. Comrade Premier will remember that, at the time, the decision to postpone the conference was made unanimously by the standing committee.

China, of course, had sincerely hoped that the Second Asian-African Conference would be able to open, and open successfully, on 5 November. Unfortunately, however, since the end of June, the situation has grown increasingly complicated. Comrade Premier knows that in this period there have emerged some new tensions and conflicts among some Asian and African countries. Also, regarding a series of key issues on successfully holding the Second Asian-African Conference, such as whether or not countries that are not Asian or African can participate in the Asian-African Conference, whether or not the Second Asian-African Conference should have relations with the United Nations, whether or not the Second Asian-African Conference needs to condemn imperialism led by the United States and the new and old colonialism, particularly to condemn US imperialism's aggression against Vietnam, and such, there still remain at present differences impossible to resolve for the moment. All this cannot but cast a shadow over the Second Asian-African Conference. It may be said that the current situation is even more disadvantageous than it was in June to convening the Second Asian-African Conference.

Of course, the Chinese Government is fully aware that the government and people of the host nation, Algeria, have made many contributions toward holding the Second Asian-African Conference and have made all the necessary material preparations. However, faced with the current complicated situation, for the benefit of Asian-African solidarity, we believe it necessary to weigh carefully the pros and cons of holding the Asian-African Conference at present. The Asian-African Conference, it goes without saying, should be of benefit to the solidarity of the Asian and African peoples against imperialism and to friendship and cooperation among Asian and African countries. However, holding the conference now certainly will have the Asian and African countries start by a foreign ministers' preparatory meeting, and its falling into serious disputes will not only not help this common purpose that all of us have, but will harm Asian-African solidarity and harm the friendly relations among Asian and African countries, leading to a split among Asian and African countries. The Chinese Government, after repeated and careful consideration, believes it better not to hold the conference for the time being than to disregard the principle of consensus, force the holding of the conference, and cause a split among Asian and African countries. It may also help the Asian and African peoples to maintain the Bandung spirit and adhere to the cause of solidarity against imperialism. The Chinese Government's position has received support and sympathy from Cambodia, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Tanzania, as well as from some other Asian and African countries. It is precisely from support for the overall interest of Asian-African solidarity that the Chinese

Government and the Kingdom of Cambodia's Government have jointly recommended postponing the Second Asian-African Conference until a favorable time.

The Asian-African Conference is a matter of common concern to us all. Our two countries hope for the Second Asian-African Conference to open well and contribute to the cause of solidarity of the Asian and African peoples against imperialism. I hope that, through the above statement, the recommendation to postpone the convening of the Second Asian-African Conference, which the Chinese Government and the Kingdom of Cambodia's Government have jointly put forward, will receive careful consideration and a favorable response from you and the government of your country.

Starting from the overall situation of safeguarding Asian-African solidarity, the Chinese Government sincerely hopes that the standing committee will be able through patient consultation will make the decision to postpone the convening of the Second Asian-African Conference. If, despite the opposition of China, the Kingdom of Cambodia, and other countries and in violation of the principle of consensus, there is an insistent demand to convene the Second Asian-African Conference as schedule, the Chinese Government will be compelled not to participate in this divisive conference.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

Zhou Enlai, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China
22 October 1965