



**Wilson  
Center**

**Digital Archive**  
International History Declassified

[digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org](https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org)

**April 3, 1964**

**Cable from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'Reporting  
the Contents of Premier Zhou's Talks with the  
Ambassadors of Arab Countries in China'**

**Citation:**

"Cable from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'Reporting the Contents of Premier Zhou's Talks with the Ambassadors of Arab Countries in China'", April 3, 1964, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 107-01035-02, 15-18. Translated by David Cowhig.  
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/165429>

**Summary:**

Zhou discusses China's relationships across the Middle East, including PRC policy toward Israel. He also reviews the proposed nuclear-weapons-free-zones in Africa and Latin America, as well as developments concerning the Non-Aligned Movement and the Second Asian-African Conference.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

**Original Language:**

Chinese

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Telegram from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Before transmission, Peng Fei has read and approved transmission to Han Nianlong  
Already sent see header (64) Mao 8  
Priority: Urgent Appendix attached

Digest of Notes on Premier Zhou's Conversations with Arab Country Diplomatic  
Envoys in China

To Embassies and representation offices in foreign countries:

Foreign Affairs Bulletin No. 37

The conversations of March 24th between the Premier with the diplomatic envoys of  
the United Arab Republic, Morocco, Iraq and Syria are summarized as follows:

I. On Relations between China and the Arab countries.

The Premier said that we have already established diplomatic relations with eight of  
the fourteen Arab countries including Oman. Some Arab countries have not yet  
established diplomatic relations with China. They have difficulties in international  
relations. We can wait. However, the general trend is towards change and  
development. At the urging of the leaders of your countries, the attitude of those  
countries will change.

The Premier reaffirmed our firm support for the struggle of the Palestinian Arab  
people for the restoration of their legitimate rights and their return to their homeland.

The Premier said, "During the Bandung Conference, we talked with President Nasser,  
and we have not established diplomatic relations with Israel. Israel has long  
recognized China and favors restoring China to its legitimate seat at the United  
Nations. Israel recently proposed establishing diplomatic relations with China.  
However, we will still not establish diplomatic relations with Israel. We have a moral  
obligation. Eight-and-a-half years have passed but we still keep our word. We are  
worthy of our friends. This incident also shows that the Chinese government upholds  
the truth. The Chinese government is trustworthy. If we promise anything, we will  
never look for an excuse to break that promise. We did not establish diplomatic  
relations with Israel on the grounds that some Arab countries have diplomatic  
relations with the Chiang Kai-shek clique. We are not willing to do this. Establishing  
diplomatic relations with Israel would be wrong and unjust. We understand the  
difficulties of Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait and Libya.  
We can wait. We still support their struggle against imperialism and Zionism."

"When discussing strengthening the unity of the Arab countries, the Premier said,  
"The important issue is the unity of the Arab countries themselves. This is the most  
important question. The Arab summit was very successful. This is what we have long  
foreseen. Therefore I sent a telegram to congratulate you. The result was better than  
I had expected and so now I am congratulating you again. Israel and Zionism, but one  
has to admit that it is also a good thing. It promotes the unity and unanimous  
consensus of the Arab countries in the face of the enemy. The third of the five  
positions we have announced on our handling of relations with the Arab countries is  
to support the aspirations of the Arab peoples to achieve unity and unity in any way  
they choose. One of the goals of Arab unity is to unite against the enemy, that is,  
against imperialism and Zionism. Arab unity also includes Palestine.

The Iraqi ambassador said that he hoped that the Premier can visit Iraq, Syria and other Arab countries. The Premier said that he must visit them on his next trip and welcomes the visits of their leaders to China.

## II. On the Second Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries and the Second Asian-African Conference.

The Premier said, "Our attitude has always been consistent. We believe that the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries and the Asian-African Conference should not be mutually exclusive. We hope that both meetings will go well. We hope that the second meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries will be as successful as was the First Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries. The First Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries reached an agreement on the principles of opposing imperialism, maintaining world peace, opposing both colonialism and neo-colonialism, and supporting national independence movements. As to which meeting opens earlier and which meeting opens later, we do not think that that is an important issue.

"Some people around the world have said that our visit was aimed at destroying the Non-Aligned Conference and advocating for the Asian-African Conference, and aimed at replacing the Second Meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries with the Second Asian-African Conference. This is not true and is simply a false rumor. The two conferences are different in their nature, different in their scope and different in their mission. How could one replace the other? There are some people in the world who do want to replace or squeeze out the Second Asian-African Conference and replace it with the Second Meeting of the Non-Aligned Conference but such people are a small minority among the non-aligned countries. We believe that through the joint efforts of your country and other Asian and African countries, such attempts will eventually fail."

The Premier mentioned that Ben Bella, in his opening address at the Council of the Asian-African People's Solidarity Organization, said that non-aligned countries should meet the two conditions of no foreign military bases on their territory and no military alliances. Ben Bella said that the issue of concluding military treaties should be interpreted broadly. It should include both what is written and what is unwritten. If it has an invisible military treaty with an imperialist country, then it will not qualify as a non-aligned country. Some countries actually do have alliances but pretend to be non-aligned countries in order to participate in the meetings of the non-aligned countries.

## III. On Nuclear-Free Zones.

The Premier said. "We approve of Africa's nuclear-free zone but this issue is very complicated. We believe that the African nuclear-free zone must include the following three elements:

(1) The African nuclear-free zones should include the Middle East and West Asia. For example, the United Arab Republic is on both the Asian and African continents. It cannot be assumed that one side of a country is nuclear-free but the other side is a nuclear weapons zone where there is a US military base in Israel, Turkey or other countries. If the nuclear-free zone does not include these area, then the Arab League and other Arab countries will be seriously threatened.

(2) Elimination of all foreign military bases.

(3) It is important that the major powers with nuclear weapons should undertake guarantees for this region.

"The United Nations discussed a nuclear-free zone in Latin America. The representative of Cuba proposed two conditions:

(1) The total dismantling of all military bases in Latin America, including Guantanamo.

(2) Nuclear states should provide guarantees for Latin American nuclear-free zones.

"However, the United States rejected the above two conditions. The African nuclear-free zone also encountered the same problem.

"Regarding the issue of Asia's nuclear-free zone, we advocate the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Asia-Pacific region that would include the United States. The United States has long-range missiles so they can reach Asia without being launched from a base in Asia. They can be based outside Asia and still threaten us so the United States must be included.

"It would be easy to reach an agreement in principle about signing a treaty on a nuclear-free zone. However, the specific issues involved are very complicated and need to be carefully studied."

The Premier concluded by saying that we have no differences in principle with you on the Non-Aligned Conference, the Second Asian-African Conference, the nuclear-free zone, the recognition of New China, the just struggle to support the Palestinian people, and strengthening of Arab unity. We are in complete agreement.

Our Chinese embassies, in your external contacts, should express a position when these three statements are discussed.

Embassies in Asia, Africa and Latin America should also actively carry out your work in line with the spirit of the Premier's conversations, clarify our position on the second Asian-African Conference, the Non-Aligned Conference, the nuclear-free zone and smash the imperialist, revisionist and reactionary conspiracies.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

April 3, 1964