

December 17, 1963

Record of the Second Meeting between Premier Zhou Enlai and President Nasser

Citation:

"Record of the Second Meeting between Premier Zhou Enlai and President Nasser",
December 17, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 107-01027-06, 25-39.
Translated by Stephen Mercado.
<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/165401>

Summary:

Zhou and Nasser discuss developments in and relations with Libya, Tunisia, Israel, Palestine, Morocco, Yemen, and Mauritania, as well as the Non-Aligned Movement and the proposed second Asian-African Conference.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Henry Luce Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Secret Document 15

Foreign Ministry File

Record of Second Conversation between Premier Zhou Enlai and President Nasser
(Premier has yet to review and approve)

Time: 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., 17 December 1963

Place: Qubba Palace, Cairo

Our side's participants: Vice Premier Chen Yi, Deputy Director Kong Yuan, Vice Minister Huang Zhen, Ambassador Chen Jiakang, Department Director Wang Yutian

Receiving side's participants: Vice President Amer, Executive Council President Sabri, Presidential Council Member Rifaat, Foreign Minister Fawzi, Deputy Foreign Minister Zulfikar Sabri, Ambassador to China Imam, Presidency Secretary-General Farid

Interpreter: Ji Chaozhu

Recorders: Zhou Jue, Zhou Mingji

Premier Zhou: Please start the conversation, Your Excellency the President.

Nasser: Please speak, Premier. I spoke too much the last time.

Zhou: Please finish speaking of each Arab country. I will then offer again some views.

Nasser: Then, let us start by speaking of the issue of Palestine and Israel.

After the First World War, Palestine was under the British Mandate until 1948. In the First World War, McMahon sent the Saudi king a letter, pledging that after the war each Arab country would gain its independence. But at the same time, British Foreign Minister Balfour sent to Weizmann, leader of the Zionist movement, a letter agreeing to let the Jews return to their homeland of Palestine. In Palestine under British rule, the Arab people opposed the local Jews by such actions as conducting strikes and armed riots, but these actions met with British repression. Britain tried to promote negotiations between the Arabs and Jews to partition Palestine but met with the rejection of the Arabs. Later the British again attempted to negotiate with the Arabs but again met with rejection.

A two-thirds majority of the 1947 UN General Assembly passed a resolution for the partition of Palestine, with the United States and Britain voting in favor of it. In 1918, there were 700,000 Arabs and only 80,000 Jews in Palestine. After the passing of the UN General Assembly's partition resolution, the number of Jews increased daily. Jews obtained the support of the outside world, obtained weapons, purchased land in Palestine, and occupied militarily strategic areas. By the time that Britain withdrew from Palestine on 15 May 1948, the Arab population had reached 1.2 million and the Jews, 250,000. Most of the Jews came from Europe, were young, and were capable of military service. The Arabs, including for the most part the old, the infirm, women, and children, were incapable of military service.

On 15 May 1948, the United States recognized Israel. Each Arab country followed by declaring war on Israel. At the time, each Arab country was to some degree or another under the control of the United States and Britain. Egypt had only an army of nine battalions and no tanks. Lebanon had only 4,000 men. The Syrian military was very small. Jordan's military was under the command of Britain's General Glubb. Iraq's military was under the command of Nuri al-Said and the king. The militaries of each Arab country lacked ammunition, but Israel obtained weapons, technicians, and

various kinds of support from the West. As a result, over one million Arabs were driven out of Palestine.

The United Nations intervened, implementing the first ceasefire. Before long, however, there was again an outbreak of fighting, which lasted for five days before the implementation of a second ceasefire. After that, Israel obtained even more weapons and launched an offensive against Egypt's military. Jordan, under Britain's influence, did not send troops to aid Egypt. Nor did the United Nation intervene again. Only at the beginning of 1949 was a comprehensive ceasefire agreement reached. However, the rights of Palestine's Arabs were ignored. Israel obtained the support of the Western powers, including Germany, and even more Jews moved into Palestine.

Israel's policy is to force the Arabs through war to accept peace and not to allow the Arabs to return to Palestine. This involves two issues: 1) the issue of the right of the Arabs expelled from Palestine to return home and recover their property; and 2) the use of Israel as a bridgehead by the colonial countries to attack the Arab countries. Therefore, there is nothing for us to do but to strengthen our armed forces. Israel, based on the history of their ancestor Moses having lived in the Suez Canal region, proposes that Israel's territory includes the vast area from the Nile to the Euphrates River.

At present, Israel has 200,000 Arabs and two million Jews. The Arabs are controlled and confined to live in fixed areas. One aspect of Israel's policy is to manufacture misunderstandings between Arab countries and the West. Another aspect is the energetic building of its military and the maintenance of a huge reserve force. The West does its utmost to exert influence on Arab leaders, demanding that they not oppose Israel. The West propagandizes the realization of peace between the Arabs and Israel, that the Jews have science and technology, that Israel can be built into a center of industry, and that the Arab countries engage in agriculture.

Palestine's Arab refugees have been receiving all this time aid from the United Nations. The aid is provided via various UN members, chief among them the United States. Recently, the United States threatened that, if the refugees did not settle down, they would stop the aid. We have with us here 350,000 refugees and have given them various kinds of aid.

Israel plans to use the water of the Hasbani and Banias rivers, tributaries of the Jordan River, in building a canal, expanding the area under irrigation and thus making possible the settlement of four million persons. The United States supports this plan. Eisenhower sent a representative to prompt the Arabs and Israel to reach an agreement on the issue of dividing the water, or the United States would halt its aid. But the Arabs and Israel have yet to reach an agreement. At present Israel, using US aid, has started construction of the canal.

Militarily, Israel obtained the support of the United States, Britain, France, and other Western countries. Israel, after launching in 1956 an invasion of Egypt, immediately obtained from France the aid of three units of fighter aircraft and warships. At the start of the war, we in fact fought France's navy.

The United States, Britain, and France also carry out activities toward Africa by way of Israel. We do not go into countries originally under the control of Britain or France, but Israel can. They take advantage of the condition of Israel not being a colonial country to act by way of Israel to provide aid to African countries and to exercise control over them. In Casablanca at the start of 1961, I asked President Keita of Mali why his country was purchasing small arms from Israel. He replied that France refused to provide them. Mali could not but buy them from Israel. I urged him to buy them from France, or else we also could provide them, and at a price lower than that of Israel. As a result, Keita cancelled the agreement with Israel and bought the

weapons from us.

At present, relations between the Arabs and Israel remain tense. At the beginning of next year, the Jordan River will be diverted. War could break out at any time.

Next, let us speak of Libya.

Libya is very poor, under Italian rule before the war and under the joint occupation of the United States, Britain, and France after the war. After independence, in an agreement with Britain, Libya has provided bases to Britain, which each year has given Libya four million pounds in aid. Four years ago, France withdrew, but the United States and Britain are still there. Libya has only something more than one million people but has abundant petroleum resources. At present there are 21 corporations in Libya prospecting for petroleum. The national movement is not strong. At the time of the Algerian War, our relations with Libya were not bad. We sent weapons to Algeria via Libya. Algeria asked that Libya supply oil. Libya's king agreed. In 1956, Libya's king refused to let Britain use the bases to attack Egypt.

We support Tunisia's struggle. When Tunisia was struggling in its fight for independence, Bourguiba was in Paris. After Bourguiba returned to Tunisia, he implemented with France a policy of cooperation, which thus gave rise to misunderstandings with us. Suddenly, in 1961, France entered into conflict in Bizerte. Tunisia demanded France's withdrawal and staged demonstrations. France repressed them, killing more than a thousand persons. I did everything possible to give Tunisia support, providing weapons and tanks and helping Tunisia build its military. The Bizerte Incident was the turning point in Bourguiba's policy. Thereafter Bourguiba adopted a policy of non-alignment and has been friendly with us. Recently, Bourguiba definitely wants me to go to Tunisia to take part in Bizerte Day. We hope that Bourguiba continues to adopt an independent policy.

Before Algeria's independence, French residents and secret military units attempted to destroy Algeria's economy, opposing Ben Bella with all their might. They regarded Ben Bella as the greatest danger. Personnel of Algeria's previous provisional government, in exile in Tunisia, also agreed to cooperate with France to get rid of Ben Bella. But Ben Bella, clever and capable, relied on the people and military and achieved victory in the end. The present Algerian government has taken measures regarding its French residents, nationalizing the land of 2.5 million pro-French people and every enterprise without an owner. These measures are playing a driving role in regard to the Algerian Revolution. The influence of socialism in Algeria is great. Tunisia, too, is now speaking of socialism, Bourguiba-style socialism. Morocco, in contrast, is the opposite, denouncing Ben Bella for importing socialism into North Africa and originally cooperating with the French in Algeria against Algeria. The Algerian government has now removed the French from within its government, changed its school textbooks to Arabic, and uses Arabic in education. By the end of 1964, the French will have completely withdrawn. At present there are still two French bases: one naval base and one rocket base.

When Morocco, when King Mohammed was alive, demanded that France withdraw from Morocco, we gave our support. France banished Mohammed to Madagascar. When Mohammed returned to Morocco, he adopted an attitude of cooperation with France. Despite an agreement that the French bases would be withdrawn, the French are still there. At present, Hassan is still cooperating with France. He has organized a royalist party in an attempt to grasp all power in his hands. Hassan obtained some tribal support but encountered the opposition of intellectuals and workers. While Mohammed was alive, we had friendly relations, but after Hassan took power he was pro-French and not too good with us. In October this year, Algeria and Morocco clashed. We tried to mediate but met with Morocco's rejection. Algeria asked for my help. I gave heavy weapons. Our relations with Morocco thus grew worse. One of our

helicopters went down in Morocco. Five military officers on board were taken into custody and at present have yet to be released. They have used this as an excuse to attack us and withdraw their ambassador from here. Four hundred Egyptian instructors in Morocco were also sent back. France, too, is interested in the area in dispute between Algeria and Morocco. The reason is that this area is only 280 kilometers from the sea for Algeria and over 1,000 kilometers from the sea for Morocco. France also fears that Algeria will engage in nationalization. Sixty percent of Morocco's public officials at present are French. France has 90 percent of the foreign investment there. There are also US bases. Even though there is an agreement for their withdrawal, it has had no result.

Such is the situation for all the Arab countries.

The tactic of the colonial countries from the start has been to attempt to isolate us among the Arab countries. When they speak of Northern Africa, they speak only of four countries -- Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco -- without speaking of Egypt. When they speak of the Arab countries of the Orient, they speak only of the Arab countries of Western Asia and do not speak of Egypt. After the 1955 Egyptian Revolution, the US ambassador said to me that so long as we limit our activities within Egypt, we can receive US aid. I said that we cannot isolate ourselves, that in order to defend ourselves it is necessary to carry out activities beyond our borders. The affairs of each Arab country are mutually influential. When I went that time to Tunisia, the West thought it strange, saying that Egypt is not a country of North Africa. Because I went, Hassan did not go. This, on the contrary, encouraged me to go to Tunisia.

Zhou: I thank Your Excellency the President for twice introducing me to the situation concerning each Arab country and related African countries, giving us new knowledge and adding new understanding. One can say that, since the time of the Bandung Conference we have begun to pay attention and understand the situation regarding the Arab countries and the relations between them. The former Chinese government in the past rarely mentioned the situation of the Arab countries. Despite our close historical relations, under the control of imperialism, our relations were interrupted. The former reactionary rulers essentially accepted this, unwilling to understand and publicize the situation of the Arab countries. It has been since the Bandung Conference that New China truly understands the situation of each Arab country. The Suez Canal struggle, not long after the Bandung Conference, attracted the Chinese people's attention and admiration for the Arab people. Then there was Algeria's armed conflict, allowing us the opportunity to introduce to the people to the Arab situation. Since then, exchanges between the governments and peoples of China and each Arab country have grown more and more frequent, and there is an upswing in our establishing diplomatic relations with the Arab countries. With the addition of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization's promotion, relations between China and each Arab country are increasingly developing. But sadly, despite having established diplomatic relations eight years ago, only now is it that authorities of our country's government have begun paying visits to West Asia and Africa. One could say that this is relatively late. We hope that this visit can become a new turning point. We are greatly interested in the situation that Your Excellency the President has introduced to us. Our actual contacts plus Your Excellency the President's presentation enable us to advance our understanding in regard to the region.

Since being with Your Excellency the President at the Bandung Conference, the policy and guidelines of our country in regard to the Arab countries have always adhered to the following several points:

(1) We consistently support the struggle of the people of the Arab countries for national independence, from political independence to economic independence, until they obtain complete national independence. Although in recent years we have done less in this area, our policy is consistent.

(2) We support the governments of each Arab country in the adopting of a policy of neutrality and non-alignment, as this is beneficial to the people, beneficial to the defense of world peace, and beneficial to the casting off of imperialist control and interference.

(3) We support the desire of the people of each Arab country for solidarity and unification. But it is the right of the people of each Arab country to adopt themselves whatever steps and methods. We only have respect for rights and do not interfere.

(4) We support the governments of each Arab country in the adoption of a peaceful way of settling conflicts, without resorting to armed force, such as the conflicts between Algeria and Morocco and between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

(5) We call on countries other than the Arabs to respect the rights of each Arab country and not engage in any interference. We should oppose all interference, whether from the West or from other countries.

The above five points are guided by the Five Principles that we proposed before at the Bandung Conference. This is the famous "Pancasila." Its content consists of: mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. The Five Principles were later adopted in the Bandung Conference Declaration.

We have from the start abided by the five points just mentioned and conducted our affairs according to them. Your Excellency the President previously spoke of issues of revolution and development in each Arab country, as well as issues regarding the United Nations. We think that these should be for the Arab people themselves to resolve. The issue of revolution in one or several Arab countries and that of opposing imperialism and new and old colonialism are for the Arab people and their leaders themselves to decide. Countries other than the Arab ones have no right to make claims. Eight years after the Bandung Conference, our attitude has been consistent in this. Our country has always supported the revolutionary struggle of the Arab people because we think that the Arab people have the right, on the basis of their own view and will, to conduct revolution and decide how to fight. We also support leaders of revolution, whether or not they have joined the communist party. A single political party or some persons cannot have a monopoly on opposing imperialism or conducting revolution. Nor can revolution be imported from outside the Arab countries. For example, Your Excellency the President is clear: Algeria's communist party at the start did not approve of armed struggle, but we support it. The issue of development is similar. Development can promote a country's progress, and it cannot be the monopoly of one political party or some persons. Nor can socialist development be the monopoly of the communist party, if one does not adhere to correct principles. The issue will be decided by the people, decided by the majority of the people. France's socialist party talks of socialism, but when Mollet was in office, he waged war in invading the Suez Canal and turned into an imperialist. At present, there is a new development in the world situation. Those who can represent the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, real revolution, in the aspects of both politics and economics oppose the force and influence of imperialism, strive to develop their own fatherland, not for the benefit of the few, nor for the benefit of a few monopolists, such organizations or persons then can lead revolution and development, and have the right to demand the help of progressive countries. Should a progressive country refuse to help, it cannot then be called a progressive country. There are also such persons who would revolt for the sake of Marxists and Communists. In fact, we cannot call them Marxists and Communists. As with such persons in Mali, they are there even in the socialist party and even in the communist party. Such persons do not speak of any principles of revolution.

Your Excellency the Premier, I have spoken frankly of my view of things. The world is changing. The situation is testing every revolutionary, testing each person in the service of the people. The above is our principle, and we have always abided by it. As for His Excellency the President's reference to Bakdash's speech in Beijing, as I said to Your Excellency the President, we are not responsible for it. Recently he also has opposed me.

At present I would like to speak once more of some specific issues:

(1) Palestine is certainly an important problem. Israel is the wedge of imperialism driven into this region. Imperialism uses Israel to regularly create tension, carry out provocations, threaten, and destroy. Israel often said that it was going to recognize us and establish diplomatic relations with us, but after discussions with Your Excellency the President since the 1955 Bandung Conference, we have always refused to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. Our country's government has continued all along this decision to the present time.

Chen: At this past festival in Nairobi for Kenya's independence, Israel's representative wanted to shake my hand and talk, but I paid no attention to him.

Zhou: (continuing to speak) (2) There is the border conflict between Algeria and Morocco. The relations between our country and Algeria are clear, Your Excellency the President. Morocco, too, after its independence recognized our country and established diplomatic relations with our country. Therefore we are very much looking forward to a negotiated solution to the boundary issue. We also note the fact that the UAR attempted to mediate but met with the rejection of the Moroccan side. At present, through the efforts of some countries, both sides have reached a preliminary agreement. It is possible to resolve the issue through negotiations. But complications may also arise, due mainly to the five points that I mentioned above, that is to say, the interference of outside forces. Your Excellency the President also spoke of this point. We are about to visit both these countries and hope that they settle their dispute through negotiation.

(3) There is the issue of Yemen. Yesterday evening, President Sallal sent three representatives to see me. One of them was Minister of State Ahmad Muhammad Numan, and the other two were members of the president's council. They have invited me to go visit Yemen and hope that I understand their resistance to the invasion from North Yemen and Eastern Aden as well as the situation of economic difficulty inside Yemen. I expressed appreciation for their kindness, but as the travel itinerary for February is already set, I will be unable to go there. At the same time I feel that, given the restrictions of etiquette, I would also be unable to understand much of the situation there in two or three days. I have suggested to them that we exchange ambassadors, and that our country will strive to send as soon as possible an ambassador to Yemen, which will make it easier to understand the situation and in the future give them some help. It will be better for an ambassador to live there than for me to pay brief visits. In trade, we will help them according to their needs. Once a new ambassador goes, this issue can also be resolved. Whatever they need, we will provide it to them to the extent that we can. Yemen's side desires to send an ambassador to Beijing. We have welcomed this. They have said that it would be a financial difficulty for them. Thinking this over, if there is indeed a suitable person to go, as it is a friendly country, we can give help in the form of loans. Regarding them, I asked that they report to President Sallal at the same time that we, too, explain the situation to Your Excellency the President, because we have friendly relations with both the UAR and with Yemen.

Yemen's government also asked that we help make silver coins. Considering that in the past it has always been the UAR that handled this situation, and that the UAR also imports silver from China, therefore this matter remains appropriate for the UAR. That

is to say, China exports silver to the UAR, which helps Yemen to cast silver coins.

(Nasser interrupted to express his agreement, saying that it was fine.)

We have relations both with various countries of West Asia and with Africa. We have taken note of the complicated and unstable situation in Syria and Iraq, and we do not intend this time to visit those countries.

Other than those countries, we have established diplomatic relations with Sudan. This time our country's foreign minister, Marshall Chen Yi, passed through Sudan in going to Kenya and met Sudan's foreign minister. They hope that I can go pay a visit. Sudan Prime Minister Abboud is preparing to visit our country in May next year. I am now considering the issue of going to visit Sudan after visiting West Asia. As for the general situation in Sudan, Your Excellency the President has spoken very clearly on it.

At present Tunisia's position is tantamount to having recognized our country, but as yet we have not yet established diplomatic relations.

Nasser: This time I asked Bourguiba why he has not established diplomatic relations with China. He said that setting up an embassy after the establishment of diplomatic relations would be quite expensive. Because of this, it would require restraining diplomatic relations with other countries and holding down the number of embassies.

Zhou: With regard to the issue of establishing diplomatic relations with Tunisia, it is not an urgent matter for us. At present between China and Tunisia there are friendly exchanges and trade relations. In the United Nations, they also support us.

Simply put, such are the relations between us and each Arab country. What is Your Excellency the President's view in regard to this? Our policy in regard to the Arab countries, following the Bandung Conference, is one of holding firm to our principle and policy. We hope on this basis to develop again our country's relations with the Arab countries, starting with the UAR. Of course, as a situation develops, policy also can change. We hereafter will keep the position and attitude of which we have just spoken.

Nasser: I completely agree with the several points of which Your Excellency the Premier just spoke. The government of the UAR, too, has done so in recent years. I think that we can write this in the joint communique.

Zhou: I agree. Is this excluding or not what I said with regard to the communist party?

Nasser: Naturally. I mentioned in our conversation the communist party to clarify the issue. In the past there has been misunderstanding. This just makes it clear. At the same time this is also a chance to explain our attitude and view regarding the local communist party.

Zhou: So, at present can we designate staff on both sides and prepare a draft of the joint communique?

Nasser: I agree.

Zhou: Our side's personnel will be Vice Minister Huang Zhen and our ambassador to

the UAR. And your side?

Nasser: Our side will be Foreign Minister Fawzi and our ambassador to Beijing.

(After settling on whom from both sides to assign, Premier Zhou laughed and said to Fawzi and Egypt's ambassador that this would be a real chore for them.)

Zhou: I would also like to take a moment to hear Your Excellency the President's view regarding the Non-Aligned Conference and the Second Asian-African Conference. The two conferences have both different and identical aspects. I myself attended the First Asian-African Conference. I sent a congratulatory telegram to the Non-Aligned Conference in Belgrade. This conference promotes the movement of the Non-Aligned Countries against imperialism and for peace. President Sukarno has proposed holding the Second Asian-African Conference, and we have already expressed our support. Recently there was reference in the joint communique that Your Excellency the President and the prime minister of Ceylon issued to the issue of holding the Non-Aligned Conference. Therefore I would like to know a little regarding this situation and Your Excellency the President's view.

Nasser: About three years ago, I supported President Sukarno's proposal that he put forward for once again holding the Asian-African Conference. President Sukarno also sent a personal representative, with whom I had contact. At the time we thought that whatever the type of conference, it will aid cooperation and understanding and reduce conflict between Asian and African countries. I even suggested that, in addition to the original Colombo-sponsored countries, there should be a preparatory committee with the participation of certain African countries. But later, due to conflicts arising between Asian and African countries and between each Arab country, this aspiration could not be realized. I therefore thought of the Non-Aligned Conference. I stepped forward to propose holding the Second Non-Aligned Conference. The main purpose is to encourage and attract emerging countries and those still under the influence of foreign countries to adopt an independent policy, to enable Non-Aligned Countries leaders to discuss not only their own national issues but also important international issues, and to emphasize that war and peace not only involve the great powers but influence us as well. Furthermore, the conference can also promote our trade with one another. As for participating countries, in addition to certain Asian and African countries, I am prepared to extend an invitation to participate to five or six countries from Latin America, namely Cuba, Mexico, Brazil, Bolivia, Venezuela, and Ecuador, and three European countries: Yugoslavia, Sweden, and Finland. Latin American countries would participate as observers. The European countries, other than Yugoslavia and a couple others, all reject the idea in saying that their country opposes holding such a conference. In May this year, I spoke with President Tito, who is in favor of it and with us will extend an invitation to other countries. There are also some countries in Africa that refuse to participate, such as Nigeria. In past contacts, there have been differences over such issues as which countries would attend the conference, but in the end it was decided that 29 countries would participate in the next conference. At present such countries as Ceylon, Sudan, Mali, Guinea, and Algeria are all in favor of holding the conference. Bourguiba recently also expressed support for the Non-Aligned Conference. As I see it, holding another Asian-African Conference is useful, even though Africa has an African Conference. There is also the Non-Aligned Conference, but it is still not strong enough and is not the equal in strength to the Asian-African Conference. However, it is easier to hold the Non-Aligned Conference than the Asian-African Conference. Because relations among the non-aligned countries are close, there are no major differences between them. At the last Asian-African Conference, there appeared different views. Some countries close to the West, such as the prime ministers of Ceylon, Lebanon, and Iraq, as well as Pakistan, Turkey, and others, were cold toward the conference.

There are also other factors that can influence the holding of the Asian-African

Conference. For example, the issues of the Sino-Indian border, India and Pakistan, and Malaysia and Indonesia, as well as the differences between Saudi Arabia and the UAR, Syria and the UAR, and such. If, when the time comes, the disputes all end up on the conference table, the conference will have no result. It is a miracle that the last conference was able to achieve something. Remembering the conference declaration, Lebanon's Prime Minister [sic] Malik said that in order to ensure peace, there was first the need for some countries to have freedom, which in fact means that one must wage war before defending peace.

The Non-Aligned Conference only discusses general issues and easily obtains agreement. Naturally, we in principle do not oppose the convening of the Asian-African Conference.

Zhou: How many countries participated in the last Non-Aligned Conference?

Nasser: Twenty-nine countries.

Zhou: It was the same number of countries both times. How many countries participated in the African summit conference? Was it 32?

Nasser, after talking with Fawzi said that only 31 countries participated in the last African Conference. Morocco, because of the issue of Mauritania, did not participate.

Zhou: The African Conference held in Addis Ababa was quite successful. This point was visible from the start of the conference. The attitude that Your Excellency the President and other countries leaders adopted played a good role in the success of the conference.

Nasser: Yes. At the conference, we did our best to think of ways to prevent the raising of divisive issues and to prevent a breakup. This last conference was only a good start. We hope that the next conference can pass a stronger resolution.

Zhou: With a good start, one can push forward still more. Differing views can be raised gradually.

Nasser: Such a meeting will allow African leaders regular opportunities to meet.

Zhou: In the last Africa conference, was the idea of the Madagascar group raised or not?

Nasser: At the conference, we have yet to use such group names as Casablanca, Monrovia, and Madagascar, but in fact there were two or three groups.

Zhou: In any event, the conference results were good. May I ask Your Excellency the President's view in regard to the issue of Mauritania, of which you spoke a moment ago?

Nasser: Mauritania was a colony of France. Over 200 years ago, Mauritania and Morocco together founded an empire. The government of Mauritania requested that the UAR give its support. I think that Mauritania should first be rid of colonial rule, and after that have its people themselves decide whether or not to unite with Morocco. Due to our relations with Morocco, we could not recognize Mauritania after its independence. Mauritania wishes to establish diplomatic relations with us, and Cairo also has Mauritanian foreign students. We previously attempted to mediate between Morocco and Mauritania but failed.

Zhou: Mauritania has how many people? What nationality are they?

Nasser: Altogether, there are one million persons. Most of them are Arabs who speak Arabic and believe in Islam. There are also some black Africans. The country is rich in iron ore. This is the crux of the problem. France hopes for Mauritania to continue to exist as a small country, so as to obtain iron and steel. Morocco's goal is the same. Between Morocco and Mauritania there is also a Spanish colony, which is called the Spanish Sahara. There are two cities, including Villa Cisneros, which have always been under Spanish rule.

I would like to hear Your Excellency the Premier's thoughts in regard to the Asian-African Conference.

Zhou: We support the holding of another Asian-African Conference. Between us and the conference there exist difficulties and problems, but I think that we should strive to remove the difficulties. As for some specific issues between Asian and African countries, we hope to exchange views again. At the next discussion, we could speak of some specific issues, among them the Sino-Indian border and other issues of concern to Your Excellency the President.

Nasser: I am concerned about your relations with India. I have already spoken with your ambassador and written you a letter.

Zhou: In our next discussion we could speak a bit of the issue of the Asian-African Conference. If you do not mind taking up too much of your time, could we not start the next discussion a little earlier, say at 5:30 p.m.?

Nasser: I would like to speak more with Your Excellency. We can also discuss our views regarding global issues. I also would like to hear Your Excellency's views on Asian issues. I would also like to speak again a bit of the situation in Africa.

Zhou: You are part of Africa, and part of Asia as well. Your land spans the two continents of Asia and Africa.

Nasser: Yes. The Sinai Peninsula is considered Asia.

On Thursday, Your Excellency the Premier, before or after going to the pyramids, we can also go into the city to look around from the top of Cairo Tower.

Zhou: On the 20th we also have a little time. I would like to go visit your home. We could also have a bit of conversation.

Nasser: You are most welcome.