Asian-African Conference Bulletin

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For further information, please contact the Editor of this Bulletin at Pedjambon 6, Djakarta, phone O.P. 1588. & during the Conference at 62 Djalan Asia-Africa, Bandung, phone 4183

21 April 1955

No. 6
COMMUNIQUES
FROM HEADS OF DELEGATIONS

Press Release
20th April, 1955.

The Heads of Delegations of 29 participating countries met today, Wednesday 20th April, at Dwi-Warna Building, from 9.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and again from 2.30 p.m. to 10.00 p.m.

The Heads of Delegations discussed the Question of Human Rights. They also discussed the Palestine question.

Earlier, the meeting elected H.R.H. Prince Wan Waithayakon Krommun Naradhip Bongsprabandh, Foreign Minister of Thailand, as its Rapporteur.

The Heads of Delegations will continue their meeting at 9.00 a.m. on Thursday, 21st April, 1955, at Dwi-Warna Building.

Communique
21st April, 1955.

The Committee of the Heads of Delegations held its third and fourth meetings on Thursday, the 21st April, 1955, in the Dwi-Warna Building from 9.45 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. respectively.

It completed its discussion of the question of Palestine and Self-Determination.

It also completed consideration of the question of Racial Discrimination and Racial Problems, and the problems of dependent peoples in West Irian, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

It will reassemble at 9.00 a.m. tomorrow, Friday the 22nd April, 1955.

FROM ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Press Communiqué
20th April, 1955.

1. The 2nd and 3rd meetings of the Economic Committee of the Asian African Conference were held today at 9 A.M. and 3.30 P.M. respectively. His Excellency Professor Roosseno was in the chair.

2. The Committee completed their discussions on items 1 and 2 of the agenda, namely cooperation in economic development and cooperation in development of trade.

3. The other three items on the agenda, namely cooperation in other fields, development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and organizational aspects will be taken up tomorrow.

4. According to the present time table it is expected that the Economic Committee will be able to discuss its draft report to the conference on the 22nd April, 1955.

Press Communiqué
21st April, 1955.

1. The 4th meeting of the Economic Committee of the Asian African Conference was held today. His Excellency Professor Roosseno was in the chair.

2. The Economic Committee completed its discussions on the remaining three items of the agenda, namely cooperation in other fields, development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and organizational aspects.

3. The Committee adjourned until 3 P.M. tomorrow when it will consider its report to the Conference.
Addresses by Heads of Delegations

Some important parts of speeches, continued from Bulletin No. 5 (Conclusion)

Sardar Mohammad Naim, Afghanistan

The contribution we have in mind to make to the promotion of world peace and cooperation will remain an unrealized dream if we continue to neglect the essentiality of finding effective ways and peaceful means to enable us to settle our differences. In fact it is the solution of these problems amongst us that we can consider as the first step in the direction of peace in its worldwide sense.

To consider social, economic and cultural problems of special interest to Asian and African peoples; to view the position of Asia and Africa and to think of making contribution to the promotion of the World Peace and cooperation, are questions that can never be answered, and problems that can never be solved, except by being quite frank with one another, a frankness which should express the sincerity of our genuine willingness and desire to assist in the peaceful settlement of World Problems. I say "World Problems" because we cannot ignore the fact that whatever happens anywhere in the world is bound to affect us wherever we may be.

There has been much talk recently that the days of colonialism are over; that since certain countries have become independent the position has changed. There is no doubt that many changes have taken place in certain parts of the world, but there are still many millions of people who suffer under the yoke of alien domination in one way or another.

Most of the countries represented here have suffered from alien domination and are well acquainted with the circumstances which either directly or indirectly have affected all of them.

Devoted as we are to the great cause of "Liberty and Equality for All", we should bear in mind that it would be tragic and ridiculous for countries which have attained their own hard-won freedom and have suffered privations and hardships, to think of dominating others or, in their own turn, to deprive others of their liberty.

There has been much talk about co-existence lately. Our consideration of this idea which has become a prominent topic in international affairs should be as realistic as possible.

As long as the powers do not believe that the policy of imposing or defending a certain ideology, political, social or economic, by means of force and coercion should change in favour of a peaceful and trusting way of life between peoples and nations of the world, any attempt for a practical solution of the existing problems will remain a wishful thought.

A practical and peaceful settlement of existing differences depends upon the abolition of all barriers, between peoples and nations, that would hinder their desire for closer relationship and better understanding.

We cannot help reminding ourselves of the fact that in the prevailing atmosphere of colonialism, even countries which in their fight for their political independence succeeded to preserve or to win back their freedom from alien domination have suffered from lasting economic difficulties. Afghanistan as a land-locked country is an example of such an almost permanent economic privation.

And thus a condition has been imposed that countries which are more or less producers of raw materials are confronted with obstacles in the way of promoting commercial relations and trade between themselves.

It might rightly seem that such studies would require more time than the Conference can spare here and now, but it is clear that if a Commission of Experts is set up to carry on this task, although their findings will not be available during this Conference, their studies would provide a tangible basis for the development of the idea of economic cooperation among the Asian-African countries.

In consideration of the economic problems of the underdeveloped countries, among steps to be taken in this direction, particular attention should be paid to the necessity of closer cooperation among the Asian-African States, members of the United Nations, in the economic field as planned and undertaken by the United Nations Organisation.
Sayed Ismail El Azhari, Sudan

It is indeed a happy occasion that the first emergence into the outside world of the newly-born Sudan, which is already on the threshold of complete freedom and mature nationhood, should be its participation in this great historical conference.

Whilst we today enjoy the fullest liberty in running our own internal affairs, this conference breaks new ground and marks the first instance of our exercising external sovereignty and independence.

The heads of the sponsoring states had done well when they had made their viewpoint abundantly clear that the acceptance of the invitation by any one country would in no way involve, or even imply, any change in its view of the status of any other country. To them it implied only that the country invited was in general agreement with the purposes of the Conference.

We are of the opinion that the provisional agenda which had been circulated in advance provided coverage of all the points which can possibly be raised. Henceforth we have not attempted to augment it by suggesting further points; our attempt was merely confined to narrowing down its wide generic terms with a view to facilitate the attainment of fruitful discussion and reaching concrete result. The problems of imperialism and foreign domination which cause deep concern to a number of nations in Asia and Africa is for instance one which calls for collective action and sincere co-operation, not because of ill-feeling towards any particular country, but because of our faith in natural justice, our respect to the inherent rights of man, the inspiration of our people and acting on our traditions which endear freedom.

One cannot over stress the fact that economical difficulties may well lead to acceptance of conditional foreign assistance which could be a real menace to national freedom and sovereignty. Being content with our lots and being possessed by the sole ardent desire to preserve our rights and raise the standard of living among our countrymen, we could teach a panic-stricken world that healthy intentions and honest co-operation could still flourish. By so doing we will set a living example of the possibility of creating a true fraternal spirit among the international community.

In the sphere of culture we can also create a breathing space for our cultural energy and thereby enrich the human treasures of thought. Our contribution would certainly be the manifestation of our factual life and originating from our history in the days when our two continents illuminated the world with their theories in religion, science, art and philosophy. Our goal would be easier to attain if we marry into each other our respective information, research and experience, and we would greatly benefit by exchanging students and scholastic staff. Apart from our humble contribution, we in the Sudan, by virtue of our geographical situation in between Asia on one side, Mediterranean countries on the second and Africa on the third side, could serve as an excellent medium for intellectual traffic.

Prince Wan, Thailand

The promotion of goodwill and cooperation among the nations of Asia and Africa is indeed the first purpose of this Conference. My Delegation has come with genuine desire to get together with the representatives of other nations of Asia and Africa in order to become better acquainted with them, to exchange views with them freely and frankly on questions of common concern, and to help bring about the greatest possible measure of agreement in the interest of world peace and of the security, freedom and economic and social well-being of the peoples of Asia and Africa.

Cultural cooperation should certainly be promoted, not only because there have been age-long strong ties of traditional culture among Asian nations as among nations of South, Southeast and East Asia, but there have also been close cultural ties with countries of Islam.

The sense of moral and spiritual values in life is ingrained into our nature: it is part of ourselves, it is our essential way of life. The sublime importance of Faith or the Spirit in the life of man should be cherished and upheld by Asia and Africa. Righteousness or the moral law shall prevail, because Buddhism, Islam and Christianity all teach the same lesson — the dignity and worth of man, faith in fundamental human rights, and respect for fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to creed, colour or race. Racial discrimination is inadmissible and should be eradicated.

Economic well-being is the most pressing need of Asia and Africa, and there is an imperative necessity to raise the standards of life of the Asian and African peoples, if only to protect them from the threat of hunger, poverty and disease. Economic cooperation, therefore, is wholeheartedly to be welcomed and closer economic ties among the nations of Asia and Africa should certainly be developed. My Delegation considers that it is necessary and appropriate that there should, at the same time,
continue to be economic cooperation with the rest of the world.

On the question of national sovereignty and of colonialism, the Thai Delegation upholds the principle of self-determination and of self-government and independence for all peoples of Asia and Africa. My Government is happy that the States in Indo-China have regained their independence and our best wishes go to Laos, Cambodia and the State of Vietnam. We are glad, too, that with the approaching elections, Malaya is well on the way to self-government, which is to be welcomed as a prelude to independence.

Thailand’s love of peace and freedom is well known in the history of international relations and my country has always attached fundamental value to international cooperation.

The five principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence, can be understood, except as regards the last principle of peaceful coexistence. What exactly does this mean? Does it mean “live and also let live”, which is the right principle? Does it imply the practice of tolerance as is explicitly stated in Charter of the United Nations? For the Charter says “to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours”.

These doubts in my mind must first be cleared up.

In view of this situation as well as of the invasion of Laos by Vietminh forces in 1953 and also in 1954, Thailand has had clearly to face a threat of infiltration and subversion, if not of aggression itself.

Thailand only seeks to protect itself against aggression and subversion and no one without aggressive design need have any fear of my country. The Thai Delegation, I repeat, has come to this Conference with goodwill towards all.

Fatin Rustu Zorlu, Turkey

I am deeply moved by the significance of the fact that such a large number of nations of Asia and Africa are here assembled under one roof. Could it have been possible to effect such a gathering ten years ago? And had it been possible, how many independent countries would have been among us?

This in itself is the most vivid proof that the constant struggle of mankind for their rights and liberties is for ever on the move.

Tension and insecurity have clouded the political horizon ever since the end of the Second World War. Ambitions of domination, threats of territorial integrity, interference in the internal affairs of others — whether by force or infiltration — and in some cases armed aggression itself, have constantly kept us on the alert and forced upon us the necessity of extreme vigilance for the safeguarding of world peace and of our national independence.

About this period, my country, Turkey, also had to face ambitions directed against its independence and integrity. Pressure was exercised on us to make us cede part of our territory and to force upon us conditions which were incompatible with our national sovereignty and independence. This pressure came to us from a neighbouring country with which we had previously concluded a treaty of friendship and non-aggression, a country with which we had entertained friendly relations and to which we had extended precious help by our benevolent attitude during the war.

These are the reasons and conditions which gave birth to the defensive alliance of peace-loving countries named the “North Atlantic Treaty Organization”.

The same reasons, the same determination to resist aggression and defend Peace, brought about the Balkan Pact, the Turkish-Pakistani Treaty of Friendly Collaboration, the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, the South East Asia Treaty Organization, and other similar agreements.

It was only after it became clear that the peace-loving countries were prepared to defend themselves and to stop aggression that hesitation was seen in the aggressive camp in the prospects of unleashing a “shooting war” and the word “coexistence” began to be used in their ranks.

Thus freedom, independence and Peace are not blessings that are bestowed on us without effort, but rather they are ideals whose attainment or safeguarding place a heavy burden of responsibility upon the shoulders of every one of us.

To fail to realise these truths, to take the line of least resistance, and to hope that by shutting one’s eyes to danger one may find security, is a course which is perilous not only to the one who follows it but also to the entire community. Such illusions have existed in very recent times. They have all come to disastrous ends.

The instance of the well-meaning but misguided state of Czechoslovakia has already been appropriately cited from this rostrum.

If we are to exert an influence upon the others for the establishment of lasting peace — and I hope that we may do so — our first duty to ourselves should be to keep our own continent free of violence and aggression.
DISTRIBUTED SPEECH

The Asia and Africa of today are no longer the Asia and Africa of yesterday. Many countries of this region have taken their destiny into their own hands after long years of endeavours. Our Conference itself reflects this profound historical change.

However, the rule of colonialism in this region has not yet come to an end, and new colonialists are attempting to take the place of the old ones. Not a few of the Asian and African peoples are still leading a life of colonial slavery. Not a few of the Asian and African peoples are still subjected to racial discrimination and deprived of human rights.

The courses which we peoples of the Asian and African countries have taken in striving for freedom and independence may vary, but our will to win and preserve our freedom and independence is the same. However different the specific conditions in each of our countries may be, it is equally necessary for most of us to eliminate the state of backwardness caused by the rule of colonialism. We need to develop our countries independently with no outside interference and in accordance with the will of the people.

In China, ever since the people became masters of their own country, all their efforts have been aimed at the elimination of backwardness left behind by the prolonged semi-colonial society and the building of their country into an industrialized one. In the last five years, we have rehabilitated the national economy ruined by long years of war, and have since 1953 started the first five-year plan of economic construction. As a result of these efforts, production in all the main fields, such as iron and steel, cotton cloth, grains, have exceeded the level of any period in the history of China. But these achievements are still very small as compared with our actual needs. Our country is still very backward as compared with the highly industrialized ones. Like other countries in Asia and Africa, we are in urgent need of a peaceful international environment for the development of our independent and sovereign economy.

People irrespective of race or colour should all enjoy the fundamental human rights and not be subjected to any maltreatment and discrimination. However, we cannot help being aware that the peoples of Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and other dependent peoples who have been fighting for independence, have never ceased to be suppressed with violence. Racial discrimination and persecution under racism in the Union of South Africa and other places have not yet been curbed. The problem of Arab refugees of Palestine still remains to be solved.

The struggle of the Egyptian people for the restoration of their sovereignty over the Suez Canal Zone, the struggle of the Iranian people for the restoration of sovereignty over their petroleum resources, and the demand for the restoration of territorial rights of India over Goa and of Indonesia over West Irian, have all won sympathy from many countries in Asia and Africa. China's will to liberate her own territory Taiwan has likewise won the support of all righteous people in the Asian-African region. This proves that the peoples of our Asian and African countries understand each other and have sympathy and concern for one another.

Peace can only be safeguarded by mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty. The encroachment on the sovereignty and territory of any country and the interference in the internal affairs of any country will inevitably endanger peace.

The Geneva Conference was able to create favourable conditions for the establishment of an area of peace. But after the Geneva Conference we witnessed a development in the opposite direction. This is not in the interest of the Indo-Chinese states, nor is it in the interest of peace. We hold that the Geneva agreements on the restoration of peace in Indo-China should be strictly and faithfully carried out. No interference or obstruction from any quarter should be allowed. The question of peaceful unification of Korea should also be solved in accordance with the same principles.

We Asian and African countries need to cooperate in the economic and cultural fields in order to facilitate the elimination of the economic and cultural backwardness caused by the long period of colonial exploitation and oppression. This cooperation should be based on equality and mutual benefit, with no conditions for privilege attached. The trade relations and economic cooperation between us should have for its purpose the promotion of the independent economic development in each country, and not to convert any country into a sole producer of raw materials and a market for consumer needs. Our cultural exchange should have respect for the development of the national culture of each country, and not to ignore the characteristics and special merits of the culture of any country so that we may learn and benefit from each other.

India, Burma and China have affirmed the five principles of peaceful coexistence as the guiding principles in their mutual relations. These principles have received support from more and more countries. Following these principles China and Indonesia have already achieved good results in their preliminary talks on the question of the nationality of the citizens of one country residing in the other. During the Geneva conference, China also
expressed its readiness to develop friendly relations with
the Indo-Chinese states on the basis of these five prin-
ciples. There is no reason why the relations between
China and Thailand, the Philippines and other neighbour-
ing countries cannot be improved on the basis of theseive principles. China is ready to establish normal rela-
tions with other Asian and African countries on the basis
of the strict adherence to these principles and is willing
to promote the normalization of relations between China
and Japan. In order to promote mutual understanding
and cooperation among us, we propose that the govern-
ments, parliaments and peoples' organizations of the Asian
and African countries make friendly visits to each other's
countries.

SUPPLEMENTARY SPEECH

The Chinese Delegation has come here to seek unity
and not to quarrel. We Communists do not hide the fact
that we believe in communism and that we consider the
socialist system a good system. There is no need at this
Conference to publicize one's ideology and the political
system of one's country, although differences do exist
among us.

The Chinese Delegation has come here to seek
common ground, not to create divergence.

As for the tension created, solely by the United States,
in the area of Taiwan, we could have submitted for delib-
eration by the Conference an item such as the proposal
made by the Soviet Union for seeking a settlement through
an international conference.

Again, we could have submitted for deliberation by
the Conference the question of recognizing and restoring
the legitimate status of the People's Republic of China in
the United Nations.

Besides, we could have also made criticisms here as
regards the unfair treatment of China by the United
Nations. But we did not do all this, because otherwise our
Conference would be dragged into disputes about all these
problems without any solution.

Now first of all I would like to talk about the question
of different ideologies and social systems. We have to
admit that among our Asian and African countries we
do have different ideologies and different social systems.
But this does not prevent us from seeking common ground
and being united. Many independent countries have
appeared since the Second World War. One group of them
are countries led by the Communist Parties; another
group of them are countries led by nationalists.

Secondly, I would like to talk about the question as
to whether there is freedom of religious belief. Freedom
of religious belief is a principle recognized by all modern
nations. We Communists are atheists, but we respect all
those who have religious belief. We hope that those with
religious belief will also respect those without. China is
a country where there is freedom of religious belief. There
are in China not only seven million Communists, but
also tens of millions of Moslems and Buddhists and mil-
mions of Protestants and Catholics. Here in the Chinese
Delegation, there is a pious Eamam of the Islamic faith.
Such a situation is no obstacle to the internal unity of
China. Why should it be impossible in the community of
Asian and African countries to unite those with religious
belief and those without?

Thirdly, about the question of the so-called sub-
versive activities.

Chiang Kai-shek is still using some very few over-
seas Chinese to carry out subversive activities against
the countries where they are residing. The people's
government of new China, however, is ready to solve the
problem of dual nationality of overseas Chinese with
the governments of the countries concerned. Some other
people say that the autonomous region of Thai people
in China is a threat to others. There are in China more
than forty million national minorities of scores of na-
tionalities. The Thai people, and the Chuang people
who are of the same stock as the Thai people, number
almost ten million. Since they do exist, we must grant
them the right of autonomy. Just as there is an auton-
omous state for Shan people in Burma, every national
minority in China has its autonomous region. The
national minorities in China exercise their right of
autonomy within China, how could that be said as
being a threat to our neighbour?

The problem at present is not that we are carrying
out subversive activities against the governments of other
countries, but that there are people who are establishing
bases around China in order to carry out subversive
activities against the Chinese Government. For instance,
on the border between China and Burma, there are in
fact remnant armed elements of the Chiang Kai-shek
clique who are carrying out destructive activities against
both China and Burma.

China has no intention whatsoever to subvert the
governments of its neighbouring countries. On the
contrary, it is China that is suffering from the subversive
activities which are openly carried out without any
disguise by the United States of America. Those who
do not believe in this may come to China or send
someone there to see for themselves.

We welcome the delegates of all the participating
countries in this Conference to visit China at any time
they like. We have no bamboo curtain, but some people
are spreading a smokescreen between us.
Nguyen Van Thoai, State Of Vietnam

It is because we are fully aware of the special importance of this conference, it is because we sincerely want to serve the cause of peace and freedom, that our Government has accepted to come and meet with you here in Bandung. Another reason has also motivated our earnest acceptance; i.e., Vietnam is one of the nations in Southeast Asia which, unfortunately, had been placed for almost a century under the oppression of foreigners, and only recently, thanks to the numberless efforts and sacrifices of our people, did it regain its independence. Deeply aware of all the sufferings of an oppressed people such as in our case, we are naturally the most ardent supporters of all undertakings which may help small nations gain quickly their independence, and provide them with adequate means to strengthen that independence, in order to live under a regime of true freedom, respecting human personalities and the basic rights of mankind.

However, in order to further clarify the position of our Government at this Assembly, we deem it necessary to add that, despite our devotion to the cause of peace and our desire to fasten the ties of friendship with all nations in the world, we strongly protest against all anti-international undertakings which, under the pretext of serving the cause of Peace, violate the inalienable right of self-determination of a people, a right which has been solemnly recognized in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Declaration of May 2nd, 1954 by the Colombo Powers here present to-day.

We don't need to go far to look for evidences; for our country itself has suffered from such an anti-international solution. In the final declaration issued at the close of the Colombo Conference, the Prime Ministers of the participating Powers, here present today, have in fact agreed that the solution to the Indo-China problem required direct negotiations among the parties concerned, viz., France, the three Associated States and the Vietminh, as well as other parties invited by general consent. Yet the Geneva agreements were signed without taking any consideration of the recommendations and protestations strongly made by our Government.

After partition of our country, our people North of the 17th parallel, refusing to stay under a dictatorial regime and wanting to live in a truly free country, have spontaneously emigrated southward to live in peace under the protection of the National Government. Despite obstacles of all kinds created by our opponents (of which we are ready to exhibit evidence any time if necessary), despite the strong attachment of our people to their native villages, until now nearly a million of our countrymen from the North have resolutely left their homes, their properties, the tombs of their ancestors, all they cherish the most in life, to choose and enjoy freedom south of the 17th parallel.

Devoted to the cause of liberty, our government has done everything in its power to assist the refugees from the North to preserve the freedom they have dearly obtained, often at the cost of their very lives. It makes every effort to translate it into a truly happy life under a democratic government.

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Conference News Traffic

The 655 newsmen of all nationalities covering the Asian-African Conference for newspapers, magazines, press services and broadcasting studios all over the world, have been sending up to 280,000 words a day via cables and morsecast, according to the Post, Telegraph and Telephone Service. Approximately 95 hours of morsecast a day, totalling about 180,000 words, accounts for the largest volume, sent out for 13 international and two national agencies. Cables, which are sent from five main centres (Central Telegraph Office, Merdeka Building, Dwijawara, the Homann and the Preanger) account for almost 100,000 words.

Radio facilities have been made available to ten foreign radio broadcasting corporations for direct transmission of copyrighted broadcasts to their own stations. These include Australian, British, Indian, Pakistani, Ceylonese, Japanese, Egyptian and American broadcasting companies.

The Indonesian Government Radio Service gives broadcasts in Indonesian of news and commentaries direct from the conference rooms to the various stations throughout Indonesia for direct transmission and re-broadcast, plus programs in English for local and foreign consumption. In addition, the Government broadcasts in Hindi, Urdu, Chinese and Arabic.