

No. 55/7 ASIAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE

Text of Final Communique of the Asian-African Conference issued at Bandung, Indonesia, April 24, 1955.

The Asian-African conference, convened by the Governments of Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Pakistan, met in Bandung from the 18th to 24th of April, 1955.

In addition to the sponsoring countries, the following twenty-four countries participated in the conference:

Afghanistan, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam, State of Vietnam and Yemen.

The Asian-African conference considered the position of Asia and Africa and discussed ways and means by which their peoples could achieve the fullest economic cultural and political cooperation.

A. Economic Cooperation:

1. The Asian-African conference recognized the urgency of promoting economic development in the Asian-African region. There was general desire for economic cooperation among the participating countries on the basis of mutual interest and respect for national sovereignty.

The proposals with regard to economic cooperation within the participating countries do not preclude either the desirability or the need for cooperation with countries outside the region, including the investment of foreign capital.

It was further recognized that assistance being received by certain participating countries from outside the region through international or under bilateral arrangements had made a valuable contribution to the implementation of their development programmes.

2. The participating countries agree to provide technical assistance to one another, to the maximum extent practicable, in the form of:

Experts, trainees, pilot projects, and equipment for demonstration purposes;

Exchange of know-how and establishment of national and--where possible--regional training and research institutes for imparting technical knowledge and skills in cooperation with the existing international agencies.

3. The Asian-African conference recommended:

The early establishment of a special United Nations fund for economic development;

The allocation by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development of a greater part of its resources to Asian-African countries;

The early establishment of an international finance corporation, which should include in its activities the undertaking of equity investment; and

Encouragement of the promotion of joint ventures among Asian-African countries in so far as this will promote their common interest.

4. The Asian-African conference recognized the vital need for stabilizing commodity trade in the region.

The principle of enlarging the scope of multi-lateral trade and payments was accepted. However, it was recognized that some countries would have to take recourse to bilateral trade arrangements in view of their prevailing economic conditions.

5. The Asian-African conference recommended that collective action be taken by participating countries for stabilizing international prices of and demand for primary commodities through bilateral and multilateral arrangements and that as far as practicable and desirable they should adopt a unified approach on the subject in the United Nations Permanent Advisory Commission on International Commodity Trade and other international forums.

6. The Asian-African conference further recommended:

Asian-African countries should diversify their export trade by processing their raw materials whenever economically feasible before export; intra-regional trade fairs should be promoted and encouragement be given to the exchange of trade delegations and groups of businessmen; exchange of information and of samples should be encouraged with a view to promoting intra-regional trade; and normal facilities should be provided for the transit trade of landlocked countries.

7. The Asian-African conference attached considerable importance to shipping and expressed concern that shipping lines reviewed from time to time their freight rates often to the detriment of participating countries.

It recommended a study of this problem and collective action thereafter to put pressure on the shipping lines to adopt a more reasonable attitude.

8. The Asian-African conference agreed that encouragement should be given to the establishment of national and regional banks and insurance companies.

9. The Asian-African conference felt that exchange of information on matters relating to oil, such as remittance of profits and taxation, might finally lead to the formulation of a common policy.

10. The Asian-African conference emphasized the particular significance of the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes for Asian-African countries.

The conference welcomed the initiative of the powers principally concerned in offering to make available information regarding the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes;

Urged the speedy establishment of an international atomic energy agency which should provide for adequate representation of the Asian-African countries on the executive authority of the agency; and

Recommended that Asian and African governments take full advantage of the training and other facilities in the peaceful use of atomic energy offered by the countries sponsoring such programmes.

The Asian-African conference agreed to the appointment of liaison officers in participating countries, to be nominated by their respective national governments for the exchange of information and matters of mutual interest.

It recommended that fuller use should be made of the existing international organizations, and participating countries who were not members of such international organizations but were eligible should secure membership.

12. The Asian-African conference recommended that there should be prior consultation of participating countries in international forums with a view, as far as possible, to furthering their mutual economic interest. It is, however, not intended to form a regional bloc.

B. Cultural Cooperation:

1. The Asian-African conference was convinced that among the most powerful means of promoting understanding among nations is the development of cultural cooperation. Asia and Africa have been the cradle of great religions and civilizations which have enriched other cultures and civilizations while themselves being enriched in the process.

Thus the cultures of Asia and Africa are based on spiritual and universal foundations. Unfortunately, cultural contacts among Asian and African countries were interrupted during the past centuries.

The people of Asia and Africa are now animated by a keen and sincere desire to renew their old cultural contacts and develop new ones in the context of the modern world. All participating governments at the conference reiterated their declaration to work for closer cultural cooperation.

The Asian-African conference took note of the fact that the existence of colonialism in many parts of Asia and Africa, in whatever form it may be, not only prevents cultural co-operation but also suppresses the national cultures of the peoples.

(B) Mutual cultural exchange and

(C) Exchange of information.

Some colonial powers have denied their dependent peoples basic rights in the sphere of education and culture which hampers the development of their personality and also prevents cultural intercourse with other Asian and African peoples.

This is particularly true in the case of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, where the basic right of the people to study their own language and culture has been suppressed.

Similar discrimination has been practiced against African and Colored people in some parts of the Continent of Africa.

The conference felt that these policies amount to a denial of the fundamental rights of man, impede cultural advancement in this region and also hamper cultural cooperation on the wide international plan.

The conference condemned such a denial of fundamental rights in the sphere of education and culture in some parts of Asia and Africa by this and other forms of cultural suppression.

In particular, the conference condemned racialism as a means of cultural suppression.

3. It was not from any sense of exclusiveness or rivalry with other groups of nations and other civilizations and culture that the conference viewed the development of cultural cooperation among Asian and African countries.

True to the age-old tradition of tolerance and universality, the conference believed that Asian and African cultural co-operation should be developed in the larger context of world cooperation.

Side by side with the development of Asian-African cultural cooperation the countries of Asia and Africa desire to develop cultural contacts with others. This would enrich their own culture and would also help in the promotion of world peace and understanding.

4. There are many countries in Asia and Africa which have not yet been able to develop their educational, scientific and technical institutions.

The conference recommended that countries in Asia and Africa which are more fortunately placed in this respect should give facilities for the admission of students and trainees from such countries to their institutions.

Such facilities should also be made available to the Asian and African people in Africa, to whom opportunities for acquiring higher education are at present denied.

5. The Asian-African conference felt that the promotion of cultural cooperation among countries of Asia and Africa should be directed towards:

- (A) The acquisition of knowledge of each other countries
- (B) Mutual cultural exchange and,
- (C) Exchange of information.

6. The Asian-African conference was of the opinion that at this stage the best results in cultural co-operation would be achieved by pursuing bilateral arrangements to implement its recommendations and by each country taking action on its own wherever possible and feasible.

C. Human Rights and Self-Determination

1. The Asian-African Conference declared its full support of the fundamental principles of human rights as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and took note of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.

The conference declared its full support of the principle of self-determination of peoples and nations as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and took note of the United Nations resolutions on the right of peoples and nations to self-determination, which is a prerequisite of the full enjoyment of all fundamental human rights.

2. The Asian-African conference deplored the policies and practices of racial segregation and discrimination which form the basis of government and human relations in large regions of Africa and in other parts of the world.

Such conduct is not only a gross violation of human rights but also a denial of the fundamental values of civilization and the dignity of man.

The conference extended its warm sympathy and support for the courageous stand taken by the victims of racial discrimination, especially by the peoples of African and Indian and Pakistani origin in South Africa; applauded all those who sustained their cause; reaffirmed the determination of Asian-African peoples to eradicate every trace of racialism that might exist in their own countries; and pledged to use its full moral influence to guard against the danger of falling victims of the same evil in their struggle to eradicate it.

3. In view of the existing tension in the Middle East caused by the situation in Palestine and of the danger of that tension to world peace, the Asian-African conference declared its support of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine and called for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions on Palestine and of the peaceful settlement of the Palestine question.

D. Problems of Dependent People:

1. The Asian-African conference, in the context of its expressed attitude on the abolition of colonialism, supported the position of Indonesia in the case of West Irian (Dutch New Guinea) on the relevant agreements between Indonesia and the Netherlands.

The Asian-African conference urged the Netherlands Government to reopen negotiations as soon as possible to implement their obligations under the above-mentioned agreements and expressed the earnest hope that the United Nations could assist the parties concerned in finding a peaceful solution to the dispute.

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2. In view of the unsettled situation in North Africa and of the persisting denial to the peoples of North Africa of their right to self-determination, the Asian-African conference declared its support of the rights of the people of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia to self-determination and independence and urged the French Government to bring about a peaceful settlement of the issue without delay.

E. Promotion of World Peace and Cooperation:

1. The Asian-African conference, taking note of the fact that several states have still not been admitted to the United Nations, considered that for effective co-operation for world peace membership in the United Nations should be universal, called on the Security Council to support the admission of all those states which are qualified for membership in terms of the Charter.

In the opinion of the Asian-African conference the following countries which were represented in it-- Cambodia, Ceylon, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Libya, Nepal and United Vietnam--were so qualified.

The conference considered that the representation of the countries of the Asian-African region of the Security Council in relation to the principle of equitable geographical distribution was inadequate.

It expressed the view that as regards the distribution of the nonpermanent seats, the Asian-African countries which, under the arrangement arrived at in London in 1946, are precluded from being elected, should be enabled to serve on the Security Council so that they might make a more effective contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

2. The Asian-African conference having considered the dangerous situation of international tension existing and the risks confronting the whole human race from the outbreak of global war in which the destructive power of all types of armaments including nuclear and thermonuclear weapons would be employed, invited the attention of all nations to the terrible consequences that would follow if such a war were to break out.

The conference considered that disarmament and the prohibition of production, experimentation and use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons of war are imperative to save mankind and civilization from the fear and prospect of wholesale destruction.

It considered that the nations of Asia and Africa assembled here have a duty toward humanity and civilization to proclaim their support for the prohibition of these weapons and to appeal to nations principally concerned and to world opinion to bring about such disarmament and prohibition.

The Asian-African conference urged the Member States to take such steps as possible to ensure that national control should be established and maintained to implement such prohibition and that speedy and determined efforts should be made to this end. Pending the total prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, this conference appealed to all the powers concerned

to reach agreement to suspend experiments with such weapons.

The conference declared that universal disarmament is an absolute necessity for the preservation of peace and requested the United Nations to continue its efforts and appealed to all concerned speedily to bring about the regulation, limitation, control and reduction of all armed forces and armaments including the prohibition of the production, experimentation and use of all weapons of mass destruction and to establish effective international control to this end.

3. The Asian-African conference supported the position of the Yemen in the case of Aden and the southern parts of Yemen known as the protectorates and urged the parties concerned to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

F. Declaration of Problems of Dependent Peoples:

The Asian-African conference discussed the problems of dependent peoples and colonialism and the evils arising from the subject to what is stated in the following paragraph, the conference is agreed:

1. In declaring that colonialism in all its manifestations is an evil which should speedily be brought to an end;

2. In affirming that the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitute a denial of fundamental human rights is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation;

3. In declaring its support of the cause of freedom and independence for all such peoples; and,

4. In calling upon the powers concerned to grant freedom and independence to such peoples.

G. Declaration of Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation:

The Asian-African conference gave anxious thought to the question of world peace and co-operation. It viewed with deep concern the present state of international tension with its danger of an atomic world war.

The problem of peace is correlative with the problem of international security. In this connection all states should co-operate especially through the United Nations in bringing about the reduction of armaments and the elimination of nuclear weapons under effective international control.

In this way international peace can be promoted and nuclear energy may be used exclusively for peaceful purpose. This would help answer the needs, particularly of Asia and Africa, for what they urgently require are social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.



Freedom and peace are interdependent. The right of self-determination must be enjoyed by all peoples and freedom and independence must be granted with the least possible delay to those who are still dependent peoples.

Indeed all nations should have the right freely to choose their own political and economic systems and their own way of life in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Free from distrust and fear and with confidence and goodwill toward each other, nations should practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours and develop friendly co-operation on the basis of the following principles:

1. Respect for the fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and of the equality of all nations large and small.
4. Abstentions from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect for the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
- 6A. Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defense to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers.
- 6B. Abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement, as well as other peaceful means of the parties' own choice in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
9. Promotion of mutual interest and co-operation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

The Asian-African conference declares its conviction with friendly co-operation in accordance with these principles would effectively contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security while co-operation in the economic, social and cultural fields would help bring about the common prosperity and well-being of all.

The Asian-African conference recommended that the full sponsoring countries should consider the next meeting of the conference in consultation with other countries concerned.