



QTMUN

GENERAL ASSEMBLIES | 2014

1955 BANDUNG CONFERENCE



Honourable delegates,

Welcome to the Bandung Conference at UTMUN 2014!

Let me first introduce myself: I am a fourth year Commerce student with a Minor in East Asian Studies here at the University of Toronto. At my four years here, I have cultivated an interest in the relationship between the West and East Asia, especially relating to issues concerning the political and economic development of developing countries. This has driven me to be the Director of this historical committee for this year. In 1955, in the Indonesian city of Bandung, five countries have called for a conference of Asian and African nations—the first of its kind. The 28 attendees collectively represent some 1.5 billion people, with many of them being newly decolonized states. All seek the possibility of a common path that they can take in an increasingly polarized global system during the rise of the Cold War. The outcome will determine whether these new countries can find mutual support in their common aspirations to achieve the goals of development and self-determination.

As a delegate in this committee, it is your responsibility to stay in accordance in with the foreign policy of your country. As director, it is my responsibility to maintain the academic integrity of the committee. I have thus written this guide as a starting point for your research, but you should aim to conduct more research beyond what I have provided for you in this guide. Having a large knowledge base is extremely important to be successful in your role, as you will be debating with the delegates who may have differing points of view. You will also need a thorough understanding of your country's foreign policies to achieve your own objectives in this conference.

This guide thus contain a brief overview of all three topics that I have identified. Within each topic, the main issues have been summarised for you, and in addition, any relevant available information as well as important historical context have also been included. Under each topic is a short representation of the policies of the major players, as well as links that point you towards further research.

I cannot wait to see you all at the conference, and if you have any more questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Wishes,

John Cao

Director of 1955 Bandung Conference

qun.cao@mail.utoronto.ca



Topic 1: Political Cooperation:

BACKGROUND

The 1955 Bandung Conference, formally called the Asia-Africa Conference, was formed in the midst of political uncertainty and hope. The post-WWII decade had ushered in both a wave of decolonization and a new bipolar international relations system. The movement for independence was in part due to the decline of the major Western European colonial powers as a result of their exposed weakness in WWII and their consequent focus on postwar reconstruction, and to growing nationalistic fervour in the colonial holdings. This made the possession of colonies by Western European countries like the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands increasingly untenable, and major colonial possessions achieved independent sovereignty and formed new nation states one after the other: British India in 1947, which was later partitioned into India and Pakistan; British Mandate of Palestine, Burma, and Ceylon in 1948; Netherland East Indies in 1949 (which became Indonesia); and the creating of the Republic of Egypt in 1952 that ended British occupation.

But the creation of these new states was also accompanied by an ideological conflict that saw existing countries of the world divided into two camps. One camp, the Western Bloc, is solidified through the core alliances of the European community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and is generally comprised of countries with a liberal-capitalist economic system and a democratic political system. The communist Eastern bloc is led by the Soviet Union, which was solidified by the formation of the Warsaw Pact. This faction was formed out of the Soviet victories in World War II and their subsequent establishments of satellite states in Eastern Europe and elsewhere in Asia. These two camps, though allied in World War II, quickly became pitted against each other in ideological conflict in a struggle to achieve global dominance. The first proxy war, the Korean War, between the two Blocs ended in 1953—only two years before our conference.

The fact that the confrontation was played out through satellite states on Asian soil sounded an alarm to the newly created and independent Asian and African states. Unwilling to become pawns in a game of superpower struggle, the leaders of the new Asian and African countries are now pondering the question of what their role should be in this bipolar world, and if there is in fact another option that each country can take that best represents their own interests.

This task is not an easy one, as the states making up the conference is a diverse group that includes all types of ideological commitment, government, and cultural backgrounds, from the Communist People's Republic of the China, to newly formed democracies of India and Pakistan, to the absolute monarchy of Saudi Arabia. Realizing that there may be power in cooperation, the



five prime ministers of Burma, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), India, Indonesia, and Pakistan have proposed a conference where states can cast aside their differences and focus on their mutual political interests. They have managed to attract the attendance of twenty nine countries of the Asia-Africa region, which, together, includes the major regional powers of Indonesia, China, India, Pakistan, and Egypt.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

One major debate of this conference concerns how participant nations should view the policies and actions of the Eastern and Western Blocs. Due to the status of newly won independence that many participant nations achieved through decolonization from the Western powers, the dominant attitude of the conference is the stance of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. These states reject interference by Western nations as they try to build up respect for their national sovereignty. Anti-colonialism remains an important issue at this time since the battle for independence in the remaining colonies is still contested, with one example being the ongoing war of Algerian independence against French Rule. This conference is thus a natural censure of the Western bloc on the grounds of decolonization and of its failure to consult with Asian-African powers on decisions affecting Asia, as the Korean War and the Palestinian partition demonstrated.

The more ambiguous question concerns the policies of the Eastern bloc under the leadership of the Soviet Union, and of whether their actions in Central Asia should be censured as well. The discussion of this issue implicates the nature of the censure taken by the participant countries: Is it a censure that is anti-Western in practice only, justified through resentment over past colonial grievances, or is it a censure of all imperialist behavior as a whole, that makes all power blocs subjective to judgement? The problem of dependent peoples is also a major issue in the countries, which have yet to break from colonialism, as well as those who have achieved sovereign status even as some racial groups are still disenfranchised. The conference will thus have to give a stance on the issue of racial discrimination, domination, and subjugation of dependent peoples.

Whatever the final conclusions may be, foreign reactions to this conference also need to be considered. The United States and other major Western powers will likely view this conference with caution and fear that it represents a leftward shift in the ideological leanings of the newly created states in Asia and Africa, so this may be a reason for participant countries to restrain from a full on denunciation of the Western Bloc. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc is also considered as a counterbalance to the Western powers.



MAJOR COUNTRIES AND THEIR POSITIONS:

Indonesia

Indonesia recently gained independence from the Netherlands in 1949, just 6 years prior to this conference. As one of the five original sponsorship countries, it is the host country of this conference, with the opening speech of this conference given by Sukarno, the president of the country. It thus has a major stake in this conference's direction. Influenced by its colonial legacy and the subsequent national awakening and independence struggle, it supports a position of an independent coalition of Asian and African states not allied with either the Western or the Eastern bloc, and has an anti-imperialist stance. The chaotic nature of Indonesia's nascent parliamentary democracy at this time means that solidifying internal stability is on top of Indonesia's agenda. Hence, while it opposes Western capitalism, it also opposes the spreading of communist ideology in the area that can destabilize its regime. The fractured unity also means that it has a highly sensitive issue to discuss with the People's Republic of China with regards to the nature and status of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia—as an economically powerful ethnicity, they are viewed by Indonesian government with suspicion as to their loyalty for the regime.

China

The People's Republic of China, as an invited guest, quickly became recognized as one of the most important participants of this conference. Founded 6 years ago in 1949, the same year as Indonesia, it is a country that has just recently undergone a Communist revolution, making it the only major country in this conference to have adopted a Communist regime. This fact, together with the status of the country as with the largest territory, population, and economic potential among the participant country, makes the nature of China's role in the conference suspect in the eyes of many fellow participants, since they are widely perceived to be a part of the Eastern communist bloc. The Chinese delegation under Prime Minister Zhou Enlai thus needs to assure the participant states of China's neutrality and adopt a conciliatory tone to ensure the participant countries of its cooperative intentions. This conference is one of the first few opportunities of international representation for the People's Republic since independence, and the first time of meeting representatives from other developing countries. Chinese foreign policies call for a strengthening of relationships with other developing countries, both to strengthen China's public relations in the lack of recognition from Western nations and as part of the communist ideology to build relations with the third world. Thus, securing the goodwill of developing countries is a crucial objective of the Chinese mission.

India

India, together with Pakistan, gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1947 as a result of the partition of British India. As a result of its colonial legacy, it is also opposed to colonialism and imperialism, and it also seeks to secure partnerships with the rest of the developing world to



counterbalance the two superpowers. India, though its status as one of the most influential countries that initiated the conference, seeks to develop into a regional power of its own right, and this has come into conflict with Pakistan, their regional neighbor with similar aspirations ever since their initial partition out of British India. Compared to Pakistan, however, it seeks a more strict policy of non-alignment that created a working relationship with both the United States and the Soviet Union in order to gain benefits from both.

Pakistan

Pakistan also gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1947 as a result of the partition of British India. Its foreign policy has historically been overshadowed by its conflict with India since its relative political, economic, and military strength render it the junior competitor on the Indian subcontinent. Unlike India, Pakistan's government system has been one of a constitutional monarchy with the British Queen as its nominal head, and have much closer ties to the commonwealth since independence than India does. As a result, it is friendly with the UK and is relatively pro-Western, and warier of socialist ideologies.

Egypt

Egypt is the most significant power from Africa that is represented in this conference, and have proven to be one of the dominant powers of the Middle East. Egypt has been nominally independent for decades prior but their full independence was only secured with the Egyptian revolution in 1952 that toppled the pro-western monarchy and created a nationalistic republic. Egypt is thus a fiercely anti-Western country and a staunch supporter of sovereignty and self-determination among Asian and African states. The Pan-Arabism outlook of Egypt has ambitions in creating a coalition of independent states in the Asia and Africa in order to strengthen their collective position, and General Nasser seeks to use the opportunity of this conference to solidify Egypt into a leader in the Middle East.



SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- http://franke.uchicago.edu/Final_Communique_Bandung_1955.pdf
- http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-04/20/content_435929.htm
- <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/lw/97935.htm>
- <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/bandung-conf>
- <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/51624/Bandung-Conference>
- http://www.insouth.org/index.php?option=com_sobi2&sobi2Task=sobi2Details&sobi2Id=100&Itemid=68



Topic 2: Economic Cooperation

BACKGROUND

The economies of these newly created Asian and African states can be described as nascent in many cases. The break from colonialism has left these states behind in economic advancement compared to the Western states. These states as a whole have yet to start wholesale industrialization, and their economy remains agriculturally based with the majority practicing sustenance agriculture. Furthermore, many countries with colonial histories, while free from their colonial status, still have to contend with an economic system that is built around large-scale export of raw materials, and thus have a limited domestic industry.

One example may be seen in India, where the British Raj did not fundamentally change the previously feudal economic system and was oriented to an export driven trade of raw materials like cotton and tea; the only developed industries were those with the objective of facilitating effective development of these primary productions, like the Indian railway system for transportation. In Indonesia, the economy is built around the exportation of raw materials like rubber and oil in addition to sustenance agriculture, thereby lacking a developed transportation network to connect the vast amount of islands in the archipelago.

For China, while it did not experience wholesale colonialism, the newly established Communist regime faces the task of reconstruction from decades of foreign invasion, civil war, and the construction of a new socialist economic system. In Egypt, the new Egyptian republic took control of a country whose economy is largely controlled by foreign interests like control of the Suez Canal. These countries' economic powers are weak individually, but cooperation with each other can create interdependence as an alternative to Western or Soviet financial dependencies.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Meaningful and effective economic corporation should promote mutual gains for all of the participating countries and provide both an inter Asian-African Market and develop a joint economic strategy. These include:

- Strengthening economic ties between member countries through the creation of Asian-African trade agreements and a common market, thus creating incentives for inter-Asian-African trade.
- The facilitation of an exchange of technical expertise to aid the development between countries. The participant countries all have nascent industries and it would be beneficial to pool in resources for research for the development of advanced industries.



- There are no Asian-African international economic institutions that promote investment and govern trade. Alternatives include the creation of trade organizations or lobbying for a greater focus on Asia-Africa in terms of institutions like the World Bank.
- Possible alternatives to the current mode of raw material based exports directly to more developed countries, or the formation of an inter-regional trade fair that can accommodate the economic policies of all member nations, whether capitalist or socialist. Increased facilitation of information exchange will also lead to better decision making.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

- http://franke.uchicago.edu/Final_Communique_Bandung_1955.pdf
- <http://www.financialexpress.com/news/redefining-the-hindu-rate-of-growth/104268>
- <http://web.archive.org/web/20060823161225/http://www.economicissues.org/archive/pdfs/5v6p2.PDF>
- http://www.cpcchina.org/2012-02/02/content_14526996.htm



Topic 3: Cultural Cooperation

BACKGROUND:

The countries in Asia and Africa have been the cradle of many of the greatest civilizations and religions, and only recently, with the imperialism of the West, did this past glory fade. Thus, for Asian-African countries, there is this sense of a need and a belief that there will be a renaissance to restore Asia and Africa into a position of renewed glory and fulfill their historical task of modernization and development. Indeed, the regional powers (India, Pakistan, China, Egypt, and Indonesia) all have a long history and deep cultures and see themselves as the successors of their ancient civilizations.

The spirit of this conference means that this renaissance is to be conducted in a peaceful, cooperative, and open manner, where the nations should respect the cultures of other nations. In practice, this means that the conference should attempt to avoid discussing historical disputes, as well as playing down ideological differences between the different participants. For instance, it is encouraged that the India-Pakistan grievances and the status of China as a Communist state will be set aside for the moment,. Instead, the conference will focus on mutually affirming the uniqueness and strength of each nation's culture.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

The promotion of national culture will be a big theme in the conference discussion. This notion is closely linked to the idea of sovereignty and national self-determination, as it links a past of origins and tradition as the justification of a country's independence and right to national freedom and prosperity, to the present of a nation being reborn. This idea will find its use in the critique of the continuing existence of all forms of colonialism, for instance, in countries where independence struggles are still being waged on, like in the French colonies of North Africa. How these forms of colonialism will be interpreted and denounced is surely a question to be discussed.

The mutual cooperation between different countries will also be a point of contention. Many of these new countries in this conference lack a history of diplomacy between each other altogether. Furthermore, many states emerged into statehood from its own struggles against Western powers and have expertise only in the struggle against hegemonic powers, but managing the relationships with other new states is one where the state leaders have little experience in. The participants will thus have to reconcile nationalism against dominant countries with cooperation with other developing countries, and foster a spirit of mutual cooperation and inclusiveness.

The promotion of exchange of culture and understanding between the participants will be a goal to strive for. For many of these Asian-African states, there has been more interaction and



knowledge between themselves and Western countries than between each other. The promotion of information exchange is thus a key to mend this issue. Possible ideas will likely entail the establishment of programs of an exchange of students, professionals, and intellectuals between the Asian-African countries to facilitate mutual understanding and joint development of educational, scientific, and technical institutions. Cooperation in the realms of joint development projects will also be a major point of discussion that can provide mutual benefits in boosting the speed of development among partner countries.

Finally, the Bandung conference will need to take a stance on the ongoing anti-colonial trends and the struggle for sovereignty around the world. The moral issue of holding on to a colony with a people with a different historical and cultural background will need to be stated explicitly, as well as clarifying what sovereignty implies.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

- http://franke.uchicago.edu/Final_Communique_Bandung_1955.pdf
- <http://decolonization.org/index.php/des>
- <http://humansovereignty.org/>