

# Statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China

*October 24, 1962*

Serious armed clashes have recently taken place on the Sino-Indian border. This occurrence is most unfortunate. The Chinese and Indian peoples have always been friendly to each other and should remain so from generation to generation. That China and India should cross swords on account of the boundary question is something the Chinese Government and people are unwilling to see, it is also what the peace-loving countries and people of the whole world are unwilling to see.

The Sino-Indian boundary question is a question left over by history. There is a traditional customary boundary between the two countries, but the boundary between the two countries has never been formally delimited. The so-called McMahon Line in the eastern sector is a line which the British imperialists attempted to force upon China by taking advantage of the powerlessness of the Chinese and the Indian peoples. It is illegal and has never been recognized by the Chinese Government. After the independence of India, and especially around the time of the peaceful liberation of the Tibet region of China, the Indian side gradually extended its scope of actual control in the eastern sector northward from the tradi-

tional customary line to the vicinity of the so-called McMahon Line. In the middle and western sectors, up to 1959 the extent of actual control by China and India in the main conformed to the traditional customary line, except at individual places. Although India occupied more than 90,000 square kilometres of Chinese territory in the eastern sector, provoked two border clashes in 1959 and made claim to large tracts of Chinese territory, the Chinese Government has always stood for a peaceful settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question through negotiations and held that, pending a peaceful settlement, the extent of actual control by each side should be respected and neither side should alter the state of the boundary by unilateral action.

Seeking a peaceful settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question, Premier Chou En-lai went to New Delhi in April 1960 to hold talks with Prime Minister Nehru, and tried hard to reach a preliminary agreement conducive to a settlement of the boundary question. Regrettably, the sincere effort of the Chinese side did not evoke a response from the Indian side. Following that, the meeting of the officials of China and India likewise failed to yield results as it should.

The Chinese Government has always held that, even though China and India cannot for a time reach agreed opinions on the boundary question, this should not lead to border clashes. As early as 1959, the Chinese Government repeatedly proposed that the armed forces of each side withdraw 20 kilometres all along the border and stop frontier patrols so as to disengage the armed forces of the two sides and avoid conflict. After the Indian side rejected these proposals, China unilaterally stopped patrols on its side of the boundary in the hope that this

might help ease the border situation. Contrary to our expectations, the Indian side, taking advantage of this circumstance, pressed forward steadily and penetrated deep into Chinese territory, first in the middle and western, and then in the eastern, sectors of the Sino-Indian boundary, set up scores of military strongpoints and continually caused armed clashes, thus making the border situation increasingly tense.

In the past year and more, the Chinese Government has again and again asked India to stop changing the status quo of the boundary by force and return to the table of negotiations. In the last three months, the Chinese Government three times proposed negotiating the Sino-Indian boundary question without any pre-conditions, but all three times met with the refusal of the Indian Government. The Indian Government insisted that negotiations cannot start until China has withdrawn from vast tracts of China's own territory.

Especially shocking to China is the fact that the Indian Government, after rejecting China's peaceful proposal, on October 12 ordered the Indian forces to "free" Chinese frontiers of Chinese troops. Then, on October 20, Indian forces started a massive general offensive in both the eastern and western sectors of the Sino-Indian border. In these serious circumstances, the Chinese frontier guards had no choice but to strike back in self-defence.

Fierce fighting is now going on. The occurrence of this grave situation pains the Chinese Government and people and disturbs the Asian and African countries and people. After all, what issue is there between China and India that cannot be settled peacefully? What reason is there for bloody clashes to occur between China and India? China does not want a single inch of India's terri-

tory. In no circumstances is it conceivable for the Sino-Indian boundary question to be settled by force. China and India are both big countries of Asia having a major responsibility for peace in Asia and the world. They are initiators of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence and participants of the Bandung Conference. Although the relations between China and India are presently very tense, there is no reason to abandon the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence and the spirit of the Bandung Conference. The Chinese Government holds that both the Chinese and Indian Governments should take to heart the fundamental interests of the 1,100 million people of China and India, the common interests of the people of the two countries in their struggle against imperialism and the interests of Asian peace and Asian-African solidarity, and try their best to seek a way to stop the border conflict, reopen peaceful negotiations and settle the Sino-Indian boundary question.

In line with its consistent stand for a peaceful settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question, the Chinese Government now solemnly puts forward the following three proposals:

(1) Both parties affirm that the Sino-Indian boundary question must be settled peacefully through negotiations. Pending a peaceful settlement, the Chinese Government hopes that the Indian Government will agree that both parties respect the line of actual control between the two sides along the entire Sino-Indian border, and the armed forces of each side withdraw 20 kilometres from this line and disengage.

(2) Provided that the Indian Government agrees to the above proposal, the Chinese Government is willing, through consultation between the two parties, to with-

draw its frontier guards in the eastern sector of the border to the north of the line of actual control; at the same time, both China and India undertake not to cross the line of actual control, i.e., the traditional customary line, in the middle and western sectors of the border.

Matters relating to the disengagement of the armed forces of the two parties and the cessation of armed conflict shall be negotiated by officials designated by the Chinese and Indian Governments respectively.

(3) The Chinese Government considers that, in order to seek a friendly settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question, talks should be held once again by the Prime Ministers of China and India. At a time considered to be appropriate by both parties, the Chinese Government would welcome the Indian Prime Minister to Peking; if this should be inconvenient to the Indian Government, the Chinese Premier would be ready to go to Delhi for talks.

The Chinese Government appeals to the Indian Government for a positive response to the above three proposals. The Chinese Government appeals to the governments of Asian and African countries for an effort to bring about the materialization of these three proposals. The Chinese Government appeals to all the peace-loving countries and people to do their part in promoting Sino-Indian friendship, Asian-African solidarity and world peace.