

Viewing cable 06BEIJING24497, PRC/BURMA: BEIJING STRONGLY OPPOSES UNSC RESOLUTION

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INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 024497

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNSC](#) [BM](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: PRC/BURMA: BEIJING STRONGLY OPPOSES UNSC RESOLUTION

Classified By: Political External Unit Chief Edgard Kagan. Reasons 1.4
(b/d).

Summary

[1](#). (C) The PRC "strongly opposes" a UN Security Council Resolution on Burma and would consider using its veto, MFA International Organizations Department UN Affairs Division Director Yang Tao told Poloffs December 13 in response to reftel message. Though the PRC shares many of the U.S. concerns about the worsening problems in Burma, Beijing rejects the idea that they pose a threat to international peace and security warranting action by the Security Council.

Highlighting our desire to work with the PRC on Burma, Poloffs urged China not to block the resolution from moving forward and cautioned against casting a veto. End Summary

[2](#). (C) Poloffs delivered reftel message December 13 to MFA International Organizations Department UN Affairs Division Director Yang Tao. Yang said that China recognizes that there are serious problems in Burma and is dissatisfied with the Burmese regime. These very real problems are internal

and "do not at this time" constitute a threat to international peace and security requiring a Security Council Resolution, he argued, stating that China "strongly opposes" a resolution. Commenting that while in principle, China always has three choices when voting at the UNSC, Yang said that in practice Beijing's options are usually to support or abstain. Stating that should a Burma resolution come to a vote China would have only two choices, Yang cautioned that "voting yes is not one of them" and that

Burma is not Darfur

13. (C) Referring to recent discussions on Sudan, Yang said that Beijing understood that vetoing a Darfur resolution would cause serious harm to bilateral relations with the United States. Burma is a completely different case, Yang insisted, arguing the PRC will not accept any linkage of a possible UNSC veto to overall U.S.-China relations. He said several times that China would be willing to work with the United States to find a "more appropriate" vehicle to make clear to the Burmese regime the international community's growing dissatisfaction.

14. (C) Noting Beijing's assessment that the United States is pushing for a vote on a Burma resolution before the end of the year because the incoming Security Council members are less likely to support the U.S. position, Yang noted that there are certain ways to delay action at the UNSC. He said that Beijing assumes that the United States must be very confident of having nine votes in order to move a resolution now. Claiming that the Non-Aligned Movement sent a letter to the UNSC President December 11 opposing a UNSC resolution on Burma, Yang said the PRC believes it is competing with the United States to win support from the Africans and Japan. Yang claimed that many countries with similar problems worry that they might be next if the Security Council passes a resolution in based on the idea that Burma's "human rights problems and drugs" pose a threat to international peace and security. He closed by arguing that Burma's neighbors should be expected to be the most concerned by its potential threat to peace and security. He insisted that none of Burma's neighbors support a UNSC resolution, which is supported only by countries that are far away.

Threat Serious, UNSC Must Take Action

15. (C) Drawing from reftel, poloffs rejected Yang's argument, stressing that the deteriorating domestic situation caused by the Burmese junta's attacks on civilians and other human rights violations clearly constitute a serious threat. Highlighting our appreciation for bilateral discussion that has highlighted many shared concerns about Burma's internal problems, poloffs stressed that a UNSC resolution will send the kind of signal that might make clear to the junta the consequences of its behavior and head off further deterioration. Noting U.S. desire to work with China on Burma, poloffs cautioned against Beijing working to block the

resolution from moving forward, stressing the negative impact
of a PRC veto.
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<http://www.wikileaks.ch/cable/2006/12/06BEIJING24497.html>