Viewing cable 06BEIJING24644, CHINA SEEKS ACCOMMODATION ON UNSC BURMA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 024644

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TAGS: PREL UNSC ASEAN BM CH
SUBJECT: CHINA SEEKS ACCOMMODATION ON UNSC BURMA RESOLUTION; WARNS CONFLICT COULD DAMAGE COOPERATION IN OTHER AREAS

REF: STATE 197809

Classified By: DCM David S. Sedney. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

¶1. (C) The United States and China share many common interests in the United Nations Security Council and with regard to Burma, none of which would be served by conflict over a Burma resolution in the UNSC, MFA Director General for International Organizations Wu Hailong told the DCM. Wu urged the United States to drop the resolution or seek another way forward. China will oppose a UNSC Resolution on Burma because Burma's political situation is showing progress, the country's problems involve internal affairs and are outside the UNSC's area of responsibility. The United States has tabled a resolution on Burma because we seek real progress and want to support Undersecretary Gambari's efforts under the Secretary General's Good Offices mission, the DCM said. Problems such as drugs, unrest, human trafficking and infectious disease caused by Burma's government threaten

stability in the region. China should back the Burma resolution, he emphasized. End Summary.

Interference in Internal Affairs of Burma

¶2. (C) MFA Director General for International Organizations Wu Hailong called in the DCM December 19 to reiterate China's opposition to a UN Security Council Resolution on Burma, to urge that the United States drop the resolution or seek another way forward, and to suggest that conflict over a Burma resolution could affect other areas of cooperation at the UN and bilaterally. It is in the United States' and China's interests to maintain stability and promote democracy and national reconciliation in Burma, Wu said. China does not support all of the policies of the Burmese government, for example on democracy or treatment of the opposition, but the problems in Burma are its internal affairs. The regime has recently shown flexibility on participation by the NLD in elections and NGO involvement in society, Wu claimed. After consultations with the Burmese in Beijing, New York and in Yangon, China believes these small signs of progress should be encouraged. China remains interested in discussing Burma bilaterally with the United States, he said.

¶3. (C) Wu said China appreciates the United States' efforts to consult with it on the draft resolution, but cannot support the draft. Problems of drugs and refugees do not belong in the UNSC but in the UN's specialized agencies, including the Human Rights Council. As there is no threat to international peace and stability, there is no legal basis for the UNSC to address Burma. Nine of the ASEAN states and all Non-Aligned Movement states oppose the resolution, Wu claimed. Wu said China is concerned that a UNSC resolution will make things worse in Burma, not better.

Burma Would Split the Council

¶4. (C) The United States and China have cooperated well in many areas and there are many issues more important for us to cooperate on than Burma, Wu said. China would prefer to avoid conflict in the UNSC over Burma, because such conflict would affect our cooperation in other areas. Burma affects the security of Southwestern China and China's base interests. If the United States pushes the resolution, China must oppose it, Wu said. Such a split would be divisive for the UNSC and even France and Japan would have difficulty taking sides, Wu claimed.

DCM: China Should Support the Resolution

¶5. (C) United States officials at the highest levels, including President Bush and Secretary Rice, have emphasized to Chinese leaders the seriousness of the situation in Burma, the DCM said. He summarized our position, drawing on reftel points and emphasizing that Burma is a breeding ground for drug trafficking, infectious diseases and insurgencies, all

of which have cross-border impact on the rest of Southeast Asia, including China. U/SYG Gambari has asked the UNSC to provide clear support the Secretary General's Good Offices mission. A resolution is the best way to do so. The United

States seeks China's support for the UNSC resolution.

¶6. (C) The United States disagrees with China's view that Burma's political situation has shown progress, the DCM emphasized. To the contrary, the situation is getting worse. Regional problems caused by the regime's behavior include drugs, refugees, human trafficking and the rapid spread of infectious diseases. All are within the UNSC mandate and appropriate to address through a UNSC resolution. The United States is skeptical about the ability of other agencies to adequately address Burma's situation, the DCM added, noting the recent ineffectiveness of the Human Rights Council. For all these reasons, China should support the resolution, he concluded.

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