

Viewing cable 07BEIJING6895, MFA SAYS GAMBARI TO PUSH FOR DIALOGUE IN BURMA;

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SUBJECT: MFA SAYS GAMBARI TO PUSH FOR DIALOGUE IN BURMA;
CHINA TO CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR "ROADMAP"

REF: BEIJING 6851

Classified By: Classified by Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson, Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

1. (C) Summary: The Burmese Government has agreed to a November 5 visit by UN Special Envoy Gambari, and during that visit Gambari hopes to push for dialogue between the regime and Aung San Suu Kyi, a more inclusive constitutional process and measures to improve economic development, an MFA International Organizations Department official briefed us October 30. Sun said China hopes Burma will "speed up" the democratic process but, as Assistant Foreign Minister told the Ambassador October 25 (reftel), continues to support the Burmese government's seven-step "roadmap." China remains open to the Gambari's Burma core group concept, but only with Burmese government agreement. End summary.

2. (C) MFA International Organizations Department UN Division Deputy Director Sun Xiaobo on October 30 briefed U.S., New Zealand, French, UK, Norwegian and Canadian Embassy representatives on UN Special Envoy Gambari's October 24-25 visit to China. Sun noted that Burmese authorities have invited Gambari to visit on November 5 and that Gambari is currently waiting in Singapore to depart for Rangoon. Deputy

Director Sun said he does not expect China to take any measures to urge the Burmese government to advance Gambari's trip to earlier in November.

MFA sees positive steps in Burma

¶3. (C) Deputy Director Sun mentioned that in separate discussions October 24-25 with Chinese State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Assistant Foreign Minister He Yafei, Gambari said that during his September visit to Burma he had sent "strong signals" to the Burmese Government and made "serious recommendations" not only about calming the current situation but also on addressing the medium and long term. Sun observed that the recent measures taken by Burmese authorities, including lifting of the curfew, "releasing those arrested," withdrawing troops from the streets, a willingness to hold a dialogue (as shown by the appointment of a "relations minister" for talks with Aung San Suu Kyi) and the acceptance of a visit by UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma Paulo Sergio Pinheiro are all positive steps.

Four Principles

¶4. (C) Sun said that Gambari reiterated to his Chinese interlocutors the four principles of his "good offices" mission. First, the "good offices" mission is a process, not a single event, requiring patience, understanding and persistence. Second, the issues span a broad range, including political reconciliation, poverty, disease prevention, counter-narcotics, forced labor and child soldiers. Third, the "good offices" mission needs to achieve concrete results. Fourth, all parties in Burma should contribute to resolving the issues.

ASEAN Opposes Sanctions

¶5. (C) As Assistant Foreign Minister He Yafei told the Ambassador October 25 (reftel), Sun said that Gambari had reported that all the ASEAN countries he visited supported his mission, but none supported sanctions.

Three Targets for Next Visit

¶6. (C) Sun said Gambari set three targets for his next visit to Burma. First, he would encourage the Burmese government and relevant parties to start a dialogue as soon as possible. According to Sun, Gambari told the Chinese that the differences between Aung San Suu Kyi and the Burmese Government are "not insurmountable," and, if both sides show flexibility, the "gap may narrow." (Note: In contrast, as reported reftel, Gambari told the Ambassador that Aung San Suu Kyi and the Burmese generals share deep mutual distrust.) Second, Gambari will work with the Burmese government to "expand the inclusiveness" of the constitutional process.

The Burmese regime, taking step three in its "road map to democracy" recently established a National Constitution Drafting Committee, and Gambari will encourage the Burmese government to make this committee more inclusive. Third,

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Gambari will advise the Burmese Government to implement measures that stimulate the economic and social development of the Burmese population.

China's Views

17. (C) Sun said Chinese officials told Gambari that, as a neighbor, China wishes to see Burma establish development, stability, democracy and social harmony as soon as possible. The current situation "is moving in a positive direction, and all parties should work in a positive direction." China hopes Burma can "speed up the democratic process," following an approach that "is suitable for the situation in Burma." Burma's seven-step "roadmap" is not perfect, but it is a basis for moving forward, Sun said. Sun reiterated that the Burma issue does not constitute a threat to international peace and security and will only be resolved by the Burmese Government and the people of Burma. Sanctions will be counter-productive, because they will "lead Burma to close its doors to the international community."

Core Group?

18. (C) Sun said China expressed its appreciation to Gambari and for the role of the UN Secretary General and confirmed its positive and its continuing support for Gambari's mission. China also emphasized the important role for ASEAN member countries to play in resolving the Burma issue. In response to questions about China's participation in a core group, Sun said that China will "seriously consider any proposal that is conducive to a final resolution" of the Burma situation, but that the understanding and cooperation of the Burmese government is crucial. Sun said that Chinese officials advised Gambari to gain Burmese government views on the subject during his next visit.

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