

Statement of CHOU En-Lai, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China on the recognition of the Geneva Conventions of August 12th, 1949.

---

CHOU En-Lai, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, was authorized on July 13th, 1952 to make the following statement:

In accordance with article 55 of the common program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which provides:

"The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China shall examine the treaties and agreements concluded between the Kuomintang and Foreign Governments, and shall in accordance with their contents, recognize, abrogate, revise, or reconclude them respectively".

The Central People's Government has examined "The Convention for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded and sick in armed forces in the Field", "the Convention for the amelioration of the condition of wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea", "the Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war" and "the Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war", which were signed in Geneva on August 12th, 1949, in the name of China.

The Central People's Government considers that the contents of the above mentioned conventions are basically conducive to a lasting peace amongst all nations and are in conformity with humanitarian principles and, therefore, has decided to recognize them.

The Central People's Government declares, at the same time, that, in connection with these conventions, there are certain principles which the Central People's Government deems to be of extreme importance and must insist upon. These principles are, for instance, that the substitute for a protecting power shall be subject to the consent of the power to which the protected persons belong, that the detaining power shall not be allowed to be absolved of its liability even after the prisoners of war, or the wounded and sick have been transferred to another power, that the protection provided for in the Conventions shall be equally applicable to civilian persons outside the occupied territory, and that the prisoners of war who have been convicted as war criminals according to the principles established by the international military tribunals of Nuremberg and Tokyo shall not be entitled to the benefits of the convention concerned. The Central People's Government is prepared to make reservations in regard to the provisions relative to these points, at the time of ratification, in order to assure more effective and satisfactory implementation of these conventions.

The Minister of the People's Republic of China to Switzerland has been instructed to transmit the present statement to the Swiss Federal Council by note, for communication to the governments of the contracting powers of these conventions.

Peking, July 13th, 1952.