

Gromyko Telegram to Mikoyan (special No. 2528)
November 18, 1962

For cde. Mikoyan

We are sending for your orientation cde. Kuznetsov's telegram No. 2304-2306.

On November 16th we visited U. Thant and informed him about the meeting with Stevenson on November 15th (see our No. 2296). We told U. Thant that from our side the Americans were told the opinion about the necessity for a treaty to be written right now about the final settlement of the Cuban Crisis and the presence of all the necessary conditions for such a settlement as a result of the steps of the Soviet Union in the fulfillment of its obligations stipulated in the course of the exchange of messages between N. S. Khrushchev and Kennedy.

We told U. Thant that the Americans spoke out against this form of the document about the final settlement that was proposed by the Soviet and the Cuban parties (a three-party protocol), but not against some kind of a document in the form of an announcement or a declaration that could be introduced at the Security Council. U. Thant explained once again why we considered the protocol as the most appropriate form of document about the final peaceful settlement of the crisis.

We also told U. Thant about how the American side took the negative position in relation to the proposal about carrying out further negotiations of the three sides – the USSR, Cuba, and the USA. Having underlined that we considered this negative position ungrounded, all the more so that in the last several years the United States often took part in international conferences, in which, among other countries, the countries that the USA does not have diplomatic relationships with were also represented. In this place U. Thant said that of course, such cases had happened, for example the Geneva conference in Laos. Having informed U. Thant about Stevenson's announcement at our meeting about the question of flights by American intelligence planes over Cuba, we emphasized that these flights were illegal, and grossly violated the sovereignty of Cuba and the statutes of the UN and, naturally, and they were hurting the national feelings of the Cuban people.

Further, we told U. Thant that it was important to us for him to continue his efforts in the search for a solution to the question of the organization of observation for the fulfillment of the requirements taken by all sides for the final settlement of the Cuban question. In connection to this, we cited article 12 of the protocol project and noted that, while by U. Thant's request the plan was remembered in this article for "UN presence" in the Caribbean Sea region, in the current version it is not linked directly with his name, but we believe that this idea belongs to U. Thant and that it is his contribution. We underscored that we support his initiative. We need to now undertake the next steps so that the sides can imagine with more directly how this idea will be carried out. We then asked how U. Thant imagines its concrete materialization.

U. Thant said that, as he suggests it, in the event of the attainment of an agreement between all sides about the articles of protocol, containing the requirements of the sides, it really requires the creation of some sort of mechanism for observation of the fulfillment of these

requirements in the form of UN “presence.” U. Thant further laid out the following preliminary observations about how these observation groups could be organized through the UN.

UN observation group should be created, located permanently in New York at the UN Headquarters, and they should be prepared to go out into the field at any moment if it is demanded for the verification of facts related to the fulfillment of each side’s obligations.

The groups, consisting of citizens from neutral states, accepted by all sides, should have the right to go out into the territory of the US like in the territory of Cuba, and also, possibly, into the territory of several other countries in the Western Hemisphere.

He emphasized, as we understand it, that U. Thant was proceeding in this situation from the principle of an equal approach, we asked about his thoughts regarding who and in what order should be making the decision about the dispatch of UN observers to this or that country in the Caribbean region.

U. Thant answered that he thinks that in the very agreement about the creation of UN observation groups for the Caribbean region there should be distinct provision for those occasions when, in connection with a complaint from this or that side, the UN observation groups should go out to the site. The executive decision about the dispatch of the groups in each concrete situation could be made by the general secretary of the UN or any sort of specially-created organ. U. Thant also added that, having gone out to the field, the UN observation groups could in case of necessity stay there some time. This is mandatory in each situation – also, in U. Thant’s opinion, it should be agreed upon before the creation of the entire mechanism of UN observation groups in the Caribbean region.

U. Thant asked to consider his considerations as being especially preliminary, but all the same said that he would like to know the Soviet leadership’s opinion about these considerations. He has in mind to familiarize the American and Cuban delegations with his considerations about UN observation organizations.

We promised to report about U. Thant’s considerations to Moscow.

From what U. Thant said, it is clear that under the influence of the negative position of the Americans in relation to his initial idea for distribution, for more or less permanent basis, the UN observation posts in several regions of the US, Cuba, and in range of Latin American countries, he is now changing his proposal for “UN presence.” Now conversation is no longer going about the distribution of UN posts in the territories of Caribbean states, but now U. Thant is only talking about the possibility of dispatching from time to time UN observation groups to these territories from the UN Headquarters. Of course, this to a certain extent weakens U. Thant’s original proposal.

Even though the U. Thant’s proposal in the new form still formally relies on an equal approach to both Cuba and the USA; now it has become important who and how would be making the decision about dispatching of UN observation groups because in practice it all could come down to such groups being sent to Cuba’s territory and not be sent to the US territory,

which, of course, would put Cuba practically in an unequal situation in comparison with the USA.

There is a lot that is not yet clear in the new U. Thant's proposal, especially regarding the issue of who and how will be making the decision to dispatch observation groups out into the field.

We are going to consult with our Cuban friends about this question and take action to clarify the Americans' reaction to U. Thant's proposal.

We are submitting our own additional considerations.

Like in conversations with U. Thant, as while exchanging opinions with Stevenson, we will defend those points of view that "UN presence" in the Caribbean Sea region can turn out to be a useful tool for the verification of the fulfillment of all sides' requirements in the final settlement of the Cuban question, but with this it is mandatory to strictly hold on to the principles of an equal approach to all sides in the solving of all concrete questions for the creation and functions of UN observation groups. We will highlight that such an equal approach should be directly attached to any requirements for the sides, which should be attached to the appropriate documents and submitted to the Security Council.

A. Gromyko

[Source: Personal Archive of Sergo Mikoyan donated to the National Security Archive.
Translated by Amanda Conrad for the National Security Archive]