



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister.

Agree this note of conclusions? (I have of course made a much more detailed record - attached)

16 January 1984

A.J.C. 17/1

Dear John,

I agree - (have put some suggestions only where I think the Unofficials may not be quite satisfied)

Future of Hong Kong

Following today's meeting between the Prime Minister and the Governor of Hong Kong and his Unofficials, I enclose a note summarising the main conclusions reached. This has been seen by Mr Luce, but not by the Foreign Secretary, who left for Stockholm immediately after the meeting.

Subject to the Prime Minister's approval, this note will be shown to the Unofficials at Mr Luce's meeting tomorrow.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street





SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS REACHED AT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE  
PRIME MINISTER AND THE UNOFFICIALS ON 13 JANUARY: FUTURE  
OF HONG KONG

Objective of the Negotiations

*Insistence?* 1. There was general agreement that it was unrealistic to continue to seek British administration and that within the conditionality contained in the Prime Minister's messages to the Chinese Government of 10 March and 14 October, the British negotiating objective should now be defined as follows:-

"Negotiation for the highest possible degree of autonomy for Hong Kong, both internal and external, consistent with the assumption by China of sovereignty and the right of administration. We should also seek in the negotiation to assert the principle of minimum change in the Hong Kong systems. Any agreement should contain the maximum possible safeguards against Chinese interference including of course a Chinese undertaking of no change for at least 50 years after 1997."

This was an internal definition. The reference to "interference" could be covered in the negotiations by use of a formula relating to continuity.

*Agreed*

Assurances

2. It was agreed that we should try to insert at appropriate stages of the negotiation as many assurances against Chinese interference as we could for inclusion in any final agreement. No particular assurance or group of assurances could be seen as absolute requirements for acceptance of an agreement, nor

/could





could there be any absolute guarantee against Chinese violation, but the objective should be to seek sufficient assurances to enable the agreement to command confidence in Hong Kong. The package would need to be examined as a whole. It would be important that observance of the agreement, once signed, should be carefully watched. This task would naturally fall to Britain as the other party to the bilateral agreement.

*[The monitoring could be carried out through the British presence in Hong Kong?]*

#### Conditionality

3. It was agreed that the British side had to retain the principle of conditionality. This would have to remain until such time as the Chinese side had passed the Basic Law <sup>on special order</sup> and the British Parliament had approved the overall package. *Reyn*

#### Interim Statement

4. It was agreed that in the light of the Chinese deadline of September 1984, it would be highly desirable for both sides to aim for at least a joint interim statement at some point in the summer or early autumn. Among other things this would have the advantage of preparing public opinion particularly in Hong Kong, on the nature of the likely settlement and to give an opportunity of assessing its reactions.

#### Constitutional Development up to 1997

5. The meeting endorsed in general terms the idea of progressive change towards a more representative system of government in Hong Kong. The precise pattern and rate of constitutional development would require further discussion.

#### Public Presentation

6. It was agreed that a paper would be prepared for discussion with EXCO as a matter of urgency on how to prepare opinion in Hong Kong and in the UK for the possibility of a solution not

/involving





involving continued British administration. It would in no way prejudice the principle of conditionality.

Representation by a Hong Kong Resident in the British  
Negotiating Team

7. Unofficials explained their concern that the absence of an Unofficial Hong Kong representative on the British negotiating team could fuel suspicion about British motives in the negotiations. The Prime Minister noted this view and said that it would be considered, but thought at this time it would not be the best way of furthering the negotiations.