From a telegram by the President of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, I.V. Stalin, to Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, V.M. Molotov, 20 November 1946

To Comrade MOLOTOV

[…]

1. Regarding item "a" of your suggestions I believe it would be better to declare ourselves a directly interested party concerning the former mandates of the League of Nations. The times when the USSR could consider itself a nonexistent (sic) state concerning any mandated territories are in the past. If we want to stand up for something in the Security Council regarding the mandated territories and to play some role in the Trusteeship Council, we cannot shy away from this business, and should declare ourselves to be a directly interested party concerning all the mandated territories or, at least, concerning those mandated territories or colonies which were held by the countries at war with us, that is Japan, Germany and Italy. Only such a position will let us play an active role on the issues of trusteeship and if needed - to compromise in favour of the partners in exchange for counter compromise on behalf of the partners in a number of practical issues. Shortly: I am not against compromise, but I want our compromise to be compensated by compromise on behalf of the partners.

2. I agree with item “b”.

3. I agree with item "c" if the partners agree to recognise us as a directly interested party.

I want our delegation to have maximum independence, but I would like to first learn your opinion about direct interests of the USSR.

It is necessary to keep in mind that the issue of mandated territories gives us a variety of opportunities and means to influence the partners which should not be ignored during negotiations with them. Mandated territories and in general the territories under trusteeship are the weak point of the Anglo-Americans, since their position on this issue is especially anti-democratic unlike our position, which is certainly democratic. Thus, in this field we can pressure the partners and make them compromise in exchange for our compromise. Second, our position regarding the mandated territories should not be more leftist than that of the leaders of mandated territories. As you know very well, the majority of these leaders are corrupt and do not care so much for independence of their territories, but rather for preservation of their immunity from the population of these territories. It is not yet the time for us to argue about the future of these territories and to quarrel for the sake of it with the whole world, including corrupt leaders. Therefore the interests of our country demand that in this business we present some compliance on condition of getting corresponding indemnification from the partners in other fields.

[…]

DRUZHKOV.

Sochi.

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