

CONVENTION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND TIBET
SEPTEMBER 7TH 1904

(British and Foreign State Papers, 1904-1905, Vol. XCVIII, PP. 148-151)

WHEREAS doubts and difficulties have arisen as to the meaning and validity of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890, and the Trade Regulations of 1893, and as to the liabilities of the Tibetan Government under these Agreements; and whereas recent occurrences have tended towards a disturbance of the relations of friendship and good understanding which have existed between the British Government and the Government of Thibet; and whereas it is desirable to restore peace and amicable relations, and to resolve and determine the doubts and difficulties as aforesaid, the said Governments have resolved to conclude a Convention with these objects, and the following Articles have been agreed upon by Colonel F.E. Younghusband, C.I.E., in virtue of full of powers vested in him by His Britannic Majesty's Government, and on behalf of that said Government, and Losang Gyaltsen, The Ga-den Ti-Rimpoche, and the representatives of the council, of the three monasteries Se-ra, Dre-pung, and Ga-den, and of the ecclesiastical and lay officials of the National Assembly on behalf of the Government of Thibet:-

- I. The Government of Thibet to engage to respect the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890, and to recognize the frontier between Sikkim and Thibet, as defined in Article I of the said Convention, and to erect boundary pillars accordingly.
- II. The Thibetan Government undertakes to open forthwith trade marts to which all British and Thibetan subjects shall have free right of access at Gyangtse and Gartok, as well as Yatung.

The regulations applicable to the trade mart at Yatung, under the Anglo-Chinese Agreement of 1893, shall, subject to such amendments as may hereafter be agreed upon by common consent between the British and Thibetan Governments, apply to the marts above mentioned.

In addition to establishing trade marts at the places mentioned, the Thibetan Government undertakes to place no restrictions on the trade by existing routes, and to consider the question of establishing fresh trade marts under similar conditions if development of trade requires it.

- III. The question of the amendment of the Regulations of 1893 is reserved for separate consideration, and the Thibetan Government undertakes to appoint fully authorized delegates to negotiate with representatives of the British Government as to the details of the amendments required.
- IV. The Thibetan Government undertakes to levy no dues of any kind other than those provided for in the tariff to be mutually agreed upon.

- V. The Thibetan Government undertakes to keep the roads to Gyangtse and Gartok from the frontier clear of all obstruction and in a state of repair suited to the needs of the trade, and to establish at Yatung, Gyangtse, and Gartok, and at each of the other trade marts that may hereafter be established, a Thibetan Agent who shall receive from the British Agent appointed to watch over British trade at the marts in question any letter which the latter may desire to send to the Thibetan or the Chinese authorities. The Thibetan Agent shall also be responsible for the due delivery of such communications and for the transmission of the replies.
- VI. As an indemnity to the British Government for the expense incurred in the despatch of armed troops to Lhasa, to exact reparation for breaches of Treaty obligations, and for the insults offered to and attacks upon the British Commissioner and his following and escort, the Thibetan Government engages to pay a sum of 500,000-equivalent to 75 lakhs of rupees to the British Government. The indemnity shall be payable such place as the British Government may from time to time, after due notice, indicate, whether in Thibet or in the British districts of Darjeeling or Jalpaiguri, in seventy-five annual instalments of one lakh of rupees each on the 1st January in each year, beginning from the 1st January, 1906.
- VII. As security for the payment of the above-mentioned indemnity, and for the fulfilment of the provisions relative to trade marts specified in Articles II, III, IV, and V, the British Government shall continue to occupy the Chumbi Valley until the indemnity has been paid, and until the trade marts have been effectively opened for three years, whichever date may be the later.
- VIII. The Thibetan Government agrees to raze all forts and fortifications and remove all armaments which might impede the course of free communication between the British frontier and the towns of Gyangtse and Lhasa.
- IX. The Government of Thibet engages that, without the previous consent of the British Government -
- (a) No portion of Thibetan territory shall be ceded, sold, leased, mortgaged or otherwise given for occupation, to any Foreign Power;
 - (b) No such Power shall be permitted to intervene in Thibetan affairs;
 - (c) No Representative or agents of any Foreign power shall be admitted to Thibet.
 - (d) No concession for railways, roads, telegraphs, mining or other rights, shall be granted to any Foreign Power, or the subject of any Foreign Power. In the event of consent to such Concessions being granted, similar or equivalent Concessions shall be granted to the British Government;

(e) No Thibetan revenues, whether in kind or in cash, shall be pledged or assigned to any Foreign Power, or to the subject of any foreign power.

X. In witness whereof the negotiations have signed the same, and affixed thereunto the seals of their arms.

Done in quintuplicate at Lhasa, this 7th day of September, in the year of our Lord, 1904, corresponding with the Tibetan date, the 27th of the seventh month of the Wood Dragon year.

(Thibet Frontier
Commission)

F.E. YOUNGHUSBAND,
Colonel,
British Commissioner

(Seal of Dalai Lama
affixed by the
Ga-den Ti-Rimpoche)

(Seal of British
Commissioner)

(Seal of Council)

(Seal of Dre-pung
Monastery)

(Seal of Sera
Monastery)

(Seal of Ga-den
Monastery)

(Seal of National
Assembly)

In proceeding to the signature of the Convention, dated this day, the representatives of Great Britain and Thibet declare that the English text shall be binding.

Thibet Frontier
Commission)

F.E. YOUNGHUSBAND,
Colonel,
British Commissioner

(Seal of Dalai Lama
affixed by the
Ga-den Ti-Rimpoche)

(Seal of Council)

(Seal of Dre-pung
Monastery)

(Seal of Sera
Monastery)

(Seal of Ga-den
Monastery)

(Seal of National
Assembly)

AMPTHILL,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India

The Convention was ratified by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council at Simla on the 11th day of November, 1904, subject to reduction of the indemnity to Rs. 25,00,000 and a declaration that British occupation of the Chumbi valley would cease after payment of three annual instalments of the indemnity, provided that the Tibetans had complied with the terms of the Convention in all other respects.

This was the first direct treaty between Great Britain and Tibet. The Chinese Amban at Lhasa was present at the negotiations and signing, but did not sign.