



● *Chen Zuo'er*

# The Last 1,208 Days and Nights

Negotiations on the Handover of Hong Kong



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS



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of Hong Kong

Chen Zuo'er



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## Publisher's Note

This is a translation based on the author's book *Jiao Jie Xiang Gang* (*Handover of Hong Kong*) in Chinese published by the Hunan Literature and Art Publishing House in October 2012. This book is a collection of the author's real life stories during the negotiations on the handover of Hong Kong from 1994 to 1997. The source materials were mainly his working notes, written communications, press reports in Hong Kong and overseas in that period of time and the collective memories of the colleagues from the Office of the Chinese Representatives of the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) and the author himself.

In such circumstances it could be difficult for the translator to ensure that the contents of all the original discussions, negotiations and conversations had been captured with full precision, especially those originally took place in Chinese as well as in English in the historical environment at that time. Although the translator has tried to present the quotes of the English speaking parties in the book with the original expressions as many as possible, a few of them could not be verified. Some of the quotes were translated into English from the Chinese presentations in the book. Hence, there could be inaccuracies. To allow for this, most of the contents regarding the negotiations, especially the dialogues, have been presented in the form of indirect quotations.

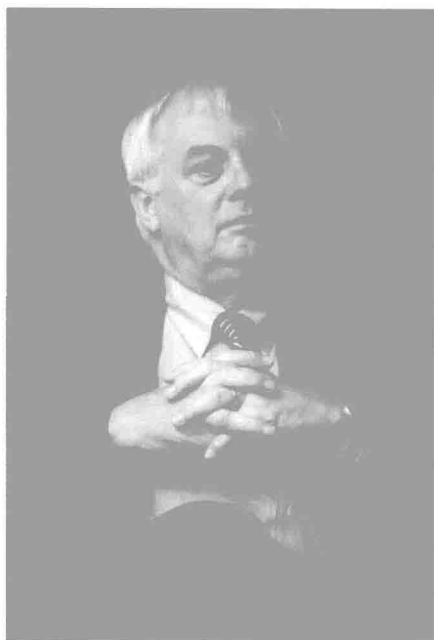
All the names of events, organizations, persons and places that appear in the book have been translated into English as accurately as possible. Those with original English names or Hong Kong common names have been translated accordingly. Pinyin was used for those names which could not be verified. All the photos including many scanned copies in the book, except those marked with sources, were provided by the author.

This book was translated by the Foreign Languages Press of China. It is the fruit of the painstaking effort of the translation team led by Professor Xu Mingqiang. Mr. Lu Ping, former Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council and a seasoned diplomat, personally amended and approved part of the translation. Ms. Anne Chen, the author's elder daughter, put in a great deal of diligent work in editing the draft translation word by word and phrase by phrase, for more precise presentation of the author's thoughts at that time and his unswerving profound sentiment towards Hong Kong. Ms. Zhang Luwen from the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council supported Ms. Anne Chen in the large amount of the editing work. Hereby, many thanks go to the people above.

1. Director Lu Ping meeting with Sir David Wilson
2. During a visit to Beijing in October 2010, Sir David Wilson met with old and new friends from the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council. *From right to left:* former Deputy-Director Chen Ziyang, former Director Lu Ping, former Governor of Hong Kong David Wilson, former Executive Deputy-Director Chen Zu'er, and former Deputy-Director Zhang Xiaoming.
3. Chris Patten, the last governor of Hong Kong



1.



3.

2.





1.



2.

3.







4.

1. Kai Tak Airport, its runway extending into Victoria Harbour

2. Xiamen is my second home. In the first month of my arrival, the Xiamen Natives Association held a warm reception for me. *From right:* Director of the Research Department of Xinhua News Agency Hong Kong Branch Yang Huaji, Chair of the Xiamen Natives Association Chen Jinlie, Chen Zuò'èr, Counselor of the association Chen Zhongqun, and Vice-Chair Chen Zhongsheng.

3. The issue of *Sing Tao Daily*, March 15, 1993, carried the report that "China's Heavy Gun Chen Zuò'èr Quietly Assumes Office in Hong Kong." A highly-placed British source predicted Chen could be held back by various constraints and keep "stalling as long as possible."

4. The Chinese Representative Office of the Joint Liaison Group

5. In front of the Chinese Representative Office of the Joint Liaison Group



5.



1. No discord, no concord. Alan Paul and I, much alike in disposition, were both rivals and friends.
- 2-3. 28 Kennedy Road, witness to history and negotiation venue of the Joint Liaison Group meetings



2.



3.



1.

## 軍地問題財政承擔談不攏 中英專家組談判有待突破

【本報專訊】本報獲悉，中方在最新一輪聯合聯絡小組防務及治安專家小組會議上，提出了新的要求，要求港府開支負擔港中方的軍事用地的重建費用，專款進行重建，以出更多的財政支持。但英方認為有關要求是一項「無從落實」，拒絕接受。

據悉，英方早已同意負擔港中方的港島兩軍事基地的重建費用，但中方在最新一輪的會議上，要求英方在港中方的軍事基地亦作類似負擔。英方認為這是不切實際的，而且提出新的要求。

不過，英方清楚人士則呼籲外港對軍事用地的談判不必過於悲觀。他認為專家小組原定在本星期一、二開會後結束會議，但現在卻多開了一天，而可能後天會再開會一天，顯示情況也有進展。

從英方代表在會後昨日下午在專家小組第六日的會議結束後向記者表示，中英雙方在港中方的討論中，已就某些事項達成協議，但在其他事項上仍有分歧；雙方代表同意在今年繼續進行討論。

中方代表陳佐周則強調，中方專家組亦已作出了新的、重大的努力，他期望今年的會議會取得新進展。

陳佐周續說，在中方專家組已繼續努力工作以來，發現現在面對還有相當大量的工作要去完成，而中方在此亦是會繼續努力的。

但據悉陳佐周都拒絕透露會議內容，但據悉中英雙方在軍事用地的談判上，一直涉及二個主要問題的討論。



中英聯合聯絡小組防務及治安專家小組昨午舉行第六次會議，中方代表陳佐周（左）與英方代表也德倫略略有微語。（馮國基攝）

包括：「第一一些軍事用地交還中方，那一些軍事用地由港府用特種費撥款；」英方稱中方在港島兩軍事基地的規模大小；及「英方要求中方已抵過半港中方的軍事用地一旦改變用途，會把有關土地歸還港方的特種費撥款。」

在最新一輪專家小組進行會議之前，中英雙方在上述二個問題上都曾達成初步的協議。其中第一、二兩個問題更達初步協議；但中方在這一輪會議不單對第一、二兩個問題提出新的要求，而且提出新的要求。

2.

【本報訊】中英聯合聯絡小組第九次會談，昨日在倫敦舉行。中方代表團團長、外交部副部長錢其琛，與英方代表團團長、外交部次長麥卡錫，在會談後握手，並向記者表示，雙方都認為有建設性，今日繼續會談。

錢其琛在會談後表示，雙方在會談中，就香港問題交換了意見，並就一些具體問題進行了討論。他認為，雙方在會談中，都表現出了誠意和耐心，這對於推動中英關係的發展，具有積極的意義。

麥卡錫在會談後表示，英方對中方在會談中所表現出的誠意和耐心，表示讚賞。他認為，雙方在會談中，就一些具體問題進行了深入的討論，並達成了一些初步的共識。他相信，雙方在未來的會談中，將繼續保持這種誠意和耐心，並最終達成協議。



3.



雙方經過四天非正式接觸，昨起開會，中英軍事用地問題談判取得積極進展。隨在兩報已縮小分歧，爭取早日達成協議。

【本報訊】中英聯合聯絡小組第九次會談，昨日在倫敦舉行。中方代表團團長、外交部副部長錢其琛，與英方代表團團長、外交部次長麥卡錫，在會談後握手，並向記者表示，雙方都認為有建設性，今日繼續會談。

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4.



1. Deadlock within, hesitancy outside
2. Failure to achieve agreement is common, but so is progress.
3. The first public handshake between the head representatives since the beginning of the negotiations
4. A smile from Alan Paul as the military sites negotiation makes progress
5. Mimi, the big white cat in Beijing, my devoted companion for 21 years

5.

# DPO GROUP PHOTO

## 防務及治安專家小組會議全體合照



Front Row (From Left to Right)  
前排 (由左至右)

Mr Wang Jin  
王津先生  
Ms Joanne Foakes  
霍嘉倩女士  
Mr Chen Huibang  
陳惠邦先生  
Mr A.R. Paul  
包雅倫先生  
Mr Chen Zuocer  
陳佐洱先生  
Mr J.F. Morris  
莫禮士先生  
Mr Wu Hongbo  
胡洪波先生  
Mr Mike Arnold  
顏樂德先生

Back Row (From Left to Right)  
後排 (由左至右)

Miss Anita Chan  
陳淑華小姐  
Mrs Elizabeth Tseng  
鄭曾靜英女士  
Mr John Binks  
彭嘉士先生  
Miss Barbara Ellington  
區麗婷小姐  
Mr Charles Parton  
彭朝思先生  
Mr Zhao Liping  
趙立平先生  
Mr Ye Xingping  
葉辛平先生  
Mr Simon Page  
貝西蒙先生

Mr Zhou Jun  
周駿先生  
Mr David Skinner  
施健能先生  
Mr Qian Lijun  
錢力軍先生  
Mr Duan Jielong  
段潔龍先生  
Mr Li Yijian  
李奕健先生

- Members of the experts group on defense and security in the ground-floor hall of the negotiating building

# Contents

CHAPTER ONE	1
The Last Leg in a Long Relay	
CHAPTER TWO	22
Negotiations on Arrangements for the Future Use of Military Sites	
CHAPTER THREE	55
Briefing on China's Garrison Law and Negotiations on the Entry of Advance Personnel	
CHAPTER FOUR	91
Negotiations on the Advance Entry of the PLA Vanguard	
CHAPTER FIVE	121
Negotiations on Budget	
CHAPTER SIX	172
Negotiations on the Construction of the New Airport	
CHAPTER SEVEN	225
Negotiations on the Establishment of the Court of Final Appeal	

CHAPTER EIGHT	256
<b>Negotiations on the Right of Abode and the HKSAR Passport</b>	
CHAPTER NINE	289
<b>Negotiations on the Sewage Disposal Scheme</b>	
CHAPTER TEN	301
<b>Negotiations on the Mobile Communications Franchises and the Construction of the Northwest Railway</b>	
CHAPTER ELEVEN	317
<b>The Last Negotiations</b>	
CHAPTER TWELVE	325
<b>Social Activities Outside the Negotiations</b>	
CHAPTER THIRTEEN	338
<b>At the Historic Turning Point</b>	
AFTERWORD	351
<b>Each New Wave Higher than the One Before</b>	
INDEX	356



# Chapter One

## The Last Leg in a Long Relay

### Setting Out from Beijing

March 11, 1994 was a bright and crispy early spring day in Beijing. At noon all three members of my family left Beijing's Capital Airport on a Dragonair flight bound for Hong Kong, which was in the global spotlight at the time.

Our plane flew west over the Taihang Mountains before turning south into a sea of boundless clouds. The surface of the rolling clouds was glowing in the radiant sunshine.

This journey marked a new chapter in my career in the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs – I was appointed China's representative to the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group<sup>1</sup> (JLG), which was established as an interim diplomatic service under the term of the Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong (hereafter, Joint Declaration) and its Annex II. Its mission was to handle the details of bilateral negotiations to ensure a smooth transition during the handover of Hong Kong's sovereignty from Britain to China. I was to serve in the office of the Chinese Representatives until July 1, 1997, the day that Hong Kong would be restored to China in its entirety.

Heading for this important historic posting, I was entrusted as China's representative during the transitional period of Hong Kong's