

**March 12, 1975**  
**Meeting Minutes between Lee Sang-ok and Paul  
Cleveland**

**Citation:**

"Meeting Minutes between Lee Sang-ok and Paul Cleveland", March 12, 1975, Wilson Center Digital Archive, South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives.  
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**Summary:**

U.S. diplomat Paul Cleveland relays Department of State remarks on a February 26 incident in the West Sea to South Korean official Lee Sang-ok.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

Korean

**Contents:**

Translation - English

## Meeting Minutes

## Date:

1975 March 12 (Wednesday) 11:00 ~ 11:25

## Location:

Office of Director for Americas Division

## Participant:

Lee Sang-ok, Director for Americas Division  
First Secretary Paul Cleveland

## Details:

First Secretary Cleveland: [I] came to the meeting on behalf of Counselor Horowitz as he is visiting the U.S. temporarily. I am aware that there were discussions between [you and] Counselor Horowitz but I would like to mention once again the incident in the West Sea last February 26th as directed by the Department of State. The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the UN issued press releases twice on February 28 and March 4. Regarding this matter[:]

First, it is desired that Korea "plays down in public relations" regarding the announcement of this incident.

. Second, the press release included a phrase stating the above-mentioned water as "operational waters." The U.S. believes that such a "claim" is complicated. Since the matter involves conflict with international law, if the U.S. is officially asked questions on this matter, we have no other choice but "to disassociate ourselves."

. Third, media reports based on the press release attributed to the United Nations Command announcement on March 4 gives an impression that it is a press release from the United Nations Command.

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The Department of State would like [me] to convey our interests in the above-mentioned three issues.

Director for Americas Division: First, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the UN did not provide a press release on the incident in the West Sea because we wanted to actively publicize it. It was because we wanted to stand against the North Korean puppets promoting propaganda surrounding this incident. Li Yungyeom, the second in command of the Mission of North Korea to the UN, has even insulted [South] Korea by hosting a press conference.

Second, in addressing the operational waters issue, we have delivered your inquiry and the interest of your embassy to the Ministry of Defense. Our Navy is under the directive of the United Nations Command. Regarding this issue, shouldn't we assume that there has been preliminary negotiation or cooperation between the UN Command and our Navy?

Third, the press release on March 4 was a reprint of the excerpt related to the West Sea incident from KPS News Service which we send out to public information officials overseas. KPS is a summary of English newspaper articles in Korea. Therefore, there should be no concern for the press release to be misunderstood as an announcement by the UN Command.

The End.