

June 14, 1967

**Letter, UN Secretary-General U Thant to US Senator
Vance Hartke**

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Summary:

United Nations Security-General U Thant replies to US Senator Vance Hartke's letter concerning his question on the consideration of UN admission for South and North Korea and South and North Vietnam.

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14 June 1967

Dear Senator Hartke,

Thank you for your letter of 26 May 1967, concerning the question of the admission to the United Nations of North and South Korea and of North and South Viet-Nam.

As you will recall, Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the admission of a State to the Organization "will be effected by a decision of the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council". This presupposes an affirmative recommendation for admission by the Security Council before the General Assembly can admit an applicant State to membership. The General Assembly has, however, in the past considered the general question of membership and has recommended to the Council that it reconsider certain applications on which it had failed to act affirmatively.

Applications for membership from North and South Korea have been before the Security Council since early 1949, and from North and South Viet-Nam since December 1951. However, the Council, which has considered these applications on a number of occasions, has failed to act affirmatively upon them. The last instance of substantive consideration by the Council appears to have been in December 1958, on which occasion the Council submitted a special report to the General Assembly. That report states, inter alia, as follows:

"France, Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America submitted a joint draft resolution (S/4129/Rev.1) recommending the admission of the Republic of Korea to membership.

The Honourable Vance Hartke
United States Senator
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

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The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted amendments (S/4152) to the joint draft resolution, providing for the simultaneous admission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea to membership. At the 843rd meeting, on the same date, the Security Council voted on the joint draft resolution (S/4129/Rev.1) and the USSR amendments were rejected by 8 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions. The vote on the joint draft resolution (S/4129/Rev.1) was 9 in favour, 1 against, with 1 abstention. The negative vote being that of a permanent member, the draft resolution was not adopted.

"France, Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America submitted another joint draft resolution (S.4130/Rev.1) recommending the admission of Viet-Nam to membership. Also at the 843rd meeting, this draft resolution received 8 votes in favour, 1 against, with 2 abstentions, and was not adopted, the negative vote being that of a permanent member of the Council."

This special report, insofar as it related to the applications here in question, was not the subject of specific action by the General Assembly.

In your letter you refer to action by the Assembly at its eleventh session in early 1957, on the applications in question. On that occasion, the Assembly, on the recommendation of its Special Political Committee, requested the Security Council to reconsider the applications of South Korea and of South Viet-Nam. The Special Political Committee, however, rejected the USSR proposal that simultaneous reconsideration should be given by the Council to the applications of North Korea and North Viet-Nam. At its twelfth session, towards the end of 1957, the Assembly once more reaffirmed that South Korea and South Viet-Nam were fully qualified for and should be admitted to membership in the United Nations (General Assembly resolutions 1144 A and B (XII) of 25 October 1957), but made no recommendation concerning the other two applications here involved. It was these recommendations of the Assembly which gave rise to the Special Report of the Security Council in December 1958, which has been quoted above. They appear to be the most recent recommendations by the Assembly on this matter.

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As the Security Council remains seized of an item on admission of new members to the United Nations, and as the applications of North and South Korea and North and South Viet-Nam are still formally before the Council under this item, the only action required to reactivate their consideration by the Council would be a request by a member of the Council for a meeting to take up the applications once again.

Yours sincerely,

U Thant

cc - Mr. Narasimhan
Mr. Stavropoulos
Mr. Lemieux
Registry