

February 6, 1970

**Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN
Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan**

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Summary:

Principal Secretary of UNCURK Zouheir Kuzbari updates Chef de Cabinet C.V. Narasimhan on the request for the repatriation of passengers and crew of the KAL plane that landed in North Korea and the argument between ROK and Japanese governments over a reported germs deal between a Japanese firm and North Korean commercial representatives.

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NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
(UNCURK)CONFIDENTIAL

Seoul, 6 February 1970

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

A diplomatic flurry has erupted this week between the Republic of Korea and the Japanese Governments over a reported germs deal between a Japanese firm and north Korean commercial representatives. The ROK Government and the press have reacted with anger to reports from Tokyo on 3 February 1970 that a Japanese firm in Osaka (Yanagida Co. of Minami Ward) had received secret orders from a north Korean trading office for colonies of cholera bacilli and other germs. The ROK Foreign Minister, Mr. Kyu Hah Choi, summoned the Japanese Ambassador in Seoul on 4 February and strongly demanded that the latter's Government "clarify" whether the reported germs deal was true. At the same time, in an official statement made by the ROK Foreign Minister on 3 February, he alluded that the north Koreans may have been responsible for the cholera epidemic in the West Coast of the Republic in September 1969. Diplomats in Seoul find it very difficult to believe this assumption and pointed out that the ROK Government is attempting to make the maximum propaganda use out of those reports in order to put pressure on the Japanese Government to curb its trade with north Korea. On the other hand, an announcement made by a spokesman of the Japanese Foreign Ministry on 6 February indicated that an investigation into the case of the germs deal found no evidence that germs have been smuggled illegally from Japan to north Korea.

As to the release of the passengers and crew members of the Korean Air Lines plane which landed in north Korea on 11 December 1969, a statement made on 5 February by the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva and received here stated that it had received a telegram from the North Korean Red Cross on 3 February informing that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is ready to repatriate the passengers and crew "if they desire", but the telegram gave no indication of how and when the repatriation would take place. During the MAC Secretaries' meeting at Panmunjom on 2 February, the UNC side requested that the DFRK release the south Korean passengers by 4 February in time for the lunar new year holiday on 6 February, but the DFRK's representative again stated that this matter was one to be settled strictly between the people of north and south Korea and not by the Military Armistice Commission.

With warm personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal SecretaryMr. C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York