

January 8, 1971

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

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Summary:

Kuzbari writes about the upcoming elections in South Korea and reports that a new political party called Nationalist Party has formed in opposition to the NDP. Regarding trade, the ROK government is opening trade relations with non-hostile communist countries. And regarding relations with North Korea, an ROK fishing boat was attacked by North Koreans due to possible spy activity.

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

Seoul, 8 January 1971

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

Political activities this week have evolved around various preparations being undertaken by major political parties for the next Presidential and National Assembly elections in spring. Although these activities are nothing in fact but the usual pre-election manoeuvring to obtain advantageous positions, they indicate, however, that the major opposition New Democratic Party seems to have been threatened by the formation this week of another new opposition party called the Nationalist Party (NP). The new party is headed by the former Republic of Korea President, Mr. Yun Po Sun, who retired from politics after being defeated twice in the 1963 and 1967 presidential elections.

Political observers in Seoul viewed the formation of this party as weakening the position of the New Democratic Party (NDF) since in the forthcoming elections the new party may compete with the NDF for the opposition votes. Behind this development, though, lies the fact that the formation of this new opposition party is an act of a general disenchantment and disappointment with the role that the NDF has played as a major opposition party in the National Assembly within the last four years. There is apparently a general realisation by the youth and the intelligentsia class here that the opposition NDF has failed in its task to provide the country with a second choice for President Park's leadership. On the other hand, the incumbent President, realising that corruptions could become the hottest issue in the next elections, has quietly asked that leading Government officials and National Assemblymen be investigated before deciding on their nominations on the Democratic Republican Party (DRP) tickets.

For quite some time there has been here an increased talk to establish contacts between the Republic of Korea Government and the so-called "non-hostile communist countries".

.../...

Mr. C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York

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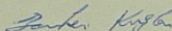
As you may recall, the Government has recently amended the Trade Law with regard to these countries and this week it followed this line through another statement made by its Foreign Minister that one of the major diplomatic goals of the Republic of Korea in the new year is to establish contacts with these countries. It appears obvious what the Government has in mind is to open trade talks with countries like Yugoslavia, Romania and, possibly, the USSR.

As to the general aspects of the security situation here, there have recently been some obscured naval incidents involving South Korean fishing boats and North Korean gunboats on both the eastern and western coasts of the Republic of Korea. A Government's statement made yesterday revealed that a South Korean fishing boat was attacked and sunk by the North Korean gunboats within the fishing control line in the Yellow Sea, south of the Military Demarcation Line. The Government claimed that an attempt was made to abduct the fishing boat to North Korea, but an announcement made today by the North Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) claimed that the boat was on its "spying mission" and that it had attempted to intrude into the territorial waters of North Korea. No complete details have been provided by either side on the nature of the above incident.

It may be interesting for you to note that the Republic of Korea Government has appointed its Ambassador to Thailand, Mr. Han Pyo Wook, as its new permanent observer to the United Nations, replacing Ambassador Kim Young Shik who has now become a special assistant to President Park Chung Hee on foreign policy affairs.

With warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal Secretary