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May 14, 1971

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

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Summary:

In connection with the upcoming election, UNCURK observed a disinterest of voters for the National Assembly campaigns and a general dislike of the 'horse trading' of seat distribution. Additionally, the opposition NDP will have difficulties gaining seats because of the fragmentation of the party.

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UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

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

Seoul, 14 May 1971

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

The National Assembly elections scheduled to be held on 25 May 1971 appear to have generated less enthusiasm among the voters than during the recent presidential election campaigns. There is also a noted feeling of disappointment among the majority of the voters in view of the split which occurred last week in the leadership of the opposition New Democratic Party, and the amount of "horse trading" that has been taking place with regard to the distribution of parliamentary seats according to the proportional representation system. This is, by the way, a unique system under which a number of candidates do not have to run in their constituencies, but are chosen by their own parties. Although there are approximately 15 million eligible voters in the Republic of Korea, the turnout in the coming National Assembly elections is not expected to be as large as that of the presidential election. Nevertheless, many important issues are being debated by the candidates of the two major political parties which are likely to influence the outcome of the election campaigns. On one hand, the ruling Democratic Republican Party spokesmen including President Park Chung Hee himself have appealed to the voters during the recent election rallies to vote for the Democratic Republican Party representatives in order to ensure the continuation of the country's economic growth and political stability and, on the other, the opposition New Democratic Party which has suffered a major setback recently because of the split in its leadership is hoping to muster at least 1/3 of the 204 parliamentary seats in order to check the influence of the Democratic Republican Party in the National Assembly. It is important to note in this connexion that, unless the Democratic Republican Party secures a 2/3 majority in the next National Assembly, it would appear difficult for the incumbent President to carry out his promised administrative and economic reforms. Surprisingly enough, during the present campaigns, international issues and problems connected with the security of the Republic of Korea have not been publicly debated as much as during the recent presidential election. Most questions raised by the candidates appeared to touch on local conditions. However, the defeated presidential candidate of the New Democratic Party, Mr. Kim Dae Jung, has reopened the question of the South Korean security in one of his recent speeches and accused the Government for undermining the impact of the expected admission of Communist China to the United Nations on the Korean question. He again stated that the whole United Nations posture in the Republic of Korea will have to undergo a major change once this event takes place.

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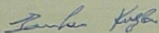
Mr. C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York

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The Committee of UNCURK, at its meeting on 13 May, discussed the Commission's plan to observe the National Assembly elections and approved the composition and itineraries of the various teams. The Commission itself will reconvene on the 21st of May in order to hold a general discussion on those elections before its teams proceed to the field.

With my warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal Secretary