

August 20, 1971

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

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Summary:

North and South Korean Red Cross organizations meet to undertake the reunion of separated families. Although the event is a step toward unification, UNCURK is doubtful that the North-South relationship will improve.

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NATIONS UNIES

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

20 August 1971

Dear Mr. Narashiman,

The exchange of letters today, 20 August, between the representatives of the north and south Korean Red Cross organisations, regarding the proposed joint campaign to undertake a reunion of the families separated between the two sides, is viewed here as a significant step in terms of future contacts between north and south Korea. The event took place at the NNSC HQ at Panmunjom and was a simple, formal act of exchange of communications between the representatives concerned and no other subjects were discussed between them.

There is no doubt that this development should be regarded as an important step and must be encouraged by UNCURK whose main objective is to help in creating conditions conducive to the unification of Korea. During the Committee's meeting on 18 August, therefore, the subject was extensively discussed and it was agreed to issue a press release, as already communicated to you, welcoming this initiative.

In essence, the exchange of letters means: that north Korea has accepted the Korean National Red Cross' proposal to initiate a campaign and exchange information concerning the separated families above-referred to; and, an agreement by south Korea to north Korea's proposal that discussion on the matter should take place next September at Panmunjom.

However, considering the mutual enmities and the ideological gulf which separate south and north Korea, it might perhaps be premature to expect much out of these contacts. The fact that they were made though and were also endorsed respectively by the ROK and the DPRK governments indicates a certain willingness on their parts to concede that the long-drawn political stalemate in the Peninsula cannot indefinitely remain in the light of the recent thaw in the Sino-American relations. Moreover, with the realisation by both governments that they can be diplomatically isolated in the Peking-Washington rapprochement, the Panmunjom contacts could well be turned into wider areas in the near future.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

Zouheir Kuzbari
Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal Secretary

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