

August 27, 1971

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

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Summary:

In reaction to an incident on 24 August involving the mutiny of a number of 'military convicts,' ROK Air Force Chief of Staff and Minister of Defense have resigned, and the government agencies concerned with the maintenance of public security and order are being discredited.

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NATIONS UNIES

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

Seoul, 27 August 1971

Dear Mr. Narashiman,

The Republic of Korea was plunged into a political crisis this week as a result of an incident on 24 August involving the mutiny of a number of "military convicts" in Silmi Islet near Inchoon Port.

Information regarding these incidents were contradictory and confused: an early announcement by the counter-espionage HQ described the mutineers as north Korean armed agents; but it was subsequently found that this group apparently consisted of special recruits from air force personnel who were being trained on that islet for anti-insurgency activities.

Their sudden appearance at the outskirts of Seoul created panic and confusion and resulted in the blockading of the main highways leading to the capital as well as the closing of the Kimpo International Airport for a few hours. Earlier reports indicated that this group prevailed against their own instructors on the Silmi Islet, slain all of them, took a boat and landed on Inchoon Port west of Seoul, and were driving to the Capital in a commandeered bus, on the way they were intercepted and killed in the gun-battle which ensued with police and army units.

The incident led to the resignation of the Minister of Defence, Jung Nae Hiuk, who accepted full responsibility for the incident, as well as the ROK Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Kim Tu Man. The opposition party (NDP) demanded that the whole cabinet be held responsible and be replaced. The local press also has been vehement in its criticism of the government for the obvious break in the chain of command and its communications system and expressed doubts as to the credibility of the statements made by its official spokesmen. The National Assembly has formed a special investigative committee to enquire into the incident and it is expected that the issue will be debated upon when the Assembly reconvenes early in September.

The general view expressed here is that the incident reveals an obvious break in the chain of command and that it has discredited the government agencies concerned with the maintenance of public security and order. The ramifications of the above-mentioned incident are still to be felt soon.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely yours,
Zouheir Kuzbari
Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal Secretary

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