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Letters between Ahmet H. Ozbudun and C.V. Narasimhan

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Summary:

Ozbudun sends Narasimhan a letter on guarantee for safety of visiting Red Cross groups by ROK and DPRK authorities, ROK Foreign Minister on unification and the United Nations General Assembly, and press release on UNCURK's report.

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UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

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cc. Mr. Kutakov

CONFIDENTIAL

30 August 1972

Dear Ahmet,

Thank you for your confidential letter No. 155 in which you reported on various matters and the contents of which have been noted.

Yours sincerely,

C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet

Mr. Ahmet Ozbudun
Principal Secretary
UNCURK
Seoul, Korea

Mr. Ahmet Ozbudun
Principal Secretary
UNCURK
Seoul, Korea

C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
(UNCURK)CONFIDENTIAL; No. 153

25 August 1972

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

Since I last wrote on 19 and 21 August 1972, the following appear to merit your attention:

GUARANTEE FOR SAFETY OF VISITING RED CROSS GROUPS
BY ROK AND DPRK AUTHORITIES

Indicative of a resort (probably among several recently) to the special "Hot-Line" established by the North-South Joint Communiqué, the two sides issued statements guaranteeing the safety of Red Cross teams and their entourage during visits to Pyongyang and Seoul for formal talks on 30 August and 13 September respectively.

On 22 August, Mr. Lee Hu Rak, Co-Chairman of the South-North Co-ordinating Committee and Director of the ROK Central Intelligence Agency, issued a statement guaranteeing the personal safety for the North Korean Red Cross delegation and accompanying group during their stay in Seoul for the second round of the formal Red Cross talks. The statement in part said: "I shall guarantee their personal safety to the fullest extent during their travel between the south and the north and their stay in the south for the conference ... I shall take full responsibility of assuring all the members of the north Korean delegation and press corps of their safe return to the north after a satisfactory performance of their duties at the conference". Mr. Lee added that he would welcome the visitors with brotherly love.

On 23 August, the Social Safety Department of the DPRK was reported to have issued a similar statement.

Meanwhile, on the same day, the ROK Red Cross replaced one of its seven consultants, Mr. Kim Hi Joing, the Chairman of the Central Federation of the Five Provinces in North Korea (an organization of north Korean refugees in the ROK). The South Korean Red Cross explained that it had acted on the matter as a result of the tenacious demand by its counterpart for the replacement of Mr. Kim on the basis of "unreasonable misunderstanding".

On 24 August, the Red Cross organizations exchanged copies of the statements through the Liaison Offices at Panmunjom.

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

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To political observers, the foregoing does not rule out the possibility that the issue of the replacement developed as a last minute controversy causing (i) possible resort to the "Hot-Line"; (ii) preclusion of a simultaneous announcement of the safety-guarantee; (iii) the issuance of the guarantee first by the Southern side (although chronologically Pyongyang and not Seoul would be the first site for the formal talks on 30 August); (iv) full and prompt acquiescence by the South to the Northern demand; and (v) the declaration of the South's guarantee by Co-Chairman Lee of the Co-ordinating Committee, and that of the North, not by Co-Chairman Kim Young Joo, but the Social Safety Department of the DPRK.

Some diplomats maintain the opinion that although the formal Red Cross negotiations are definitely scheduled for the specified dates in Pyongyang and Seoul, further difficulties cannot be absolutely ruled out. Moreover, these persons are not at all sure that after the first or both of these sessions further meetings would be immediately scheduled, as contemplated, on an alternating basis between the two Capitals. They find a clear correlation between the Red Cross talks, other dialogue through the yet-to-be-established North-South Co-ordinating Committee, and availability of clearer prospects for the Korean issue (particularly the "Algerian item") at the forthcoming session of the UNGA.

ROK FOREIGN MINISTER ON UNIFICATION AND THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On 22 August, on an official visit in the Philippines, ROK Foreign Minister Kim Yong Shik told reporters that the question of peaceful Korean unification would be discussed stage by stage, with political problems being the last item on the agenda. He said that south and north Korea would commence discussions through Red Cross meetings on humanitarian issues, including the question of reunion of separated families, and later would deal with non-political and then finally the political issues in their journey towards unification.

The Minister declined to commit himself on whether the ROK would accept the idea of a coalition government with the north. He said: "We are not thinking of that now".

On the Korean question at the forthcoming UN General Assembly, the Minister said: "The first stage of our unification talks with the north is in progress and my Government wishes that all discussions on the Korean question in the United Nations be postponed until we resolve the problem by ourselves".

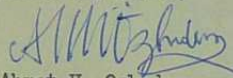
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PRESS RELEASE ON UNCURK'S REPORT

The Members might finalize the Press Release on UNCURK's report on 29 August. If there is any need for expedited transmittal, I would appreciate your cable for its despatch by special pouch.

With kindest personal regards,

Sincerely yours,



Ahmet H. Ozbudun
Principal Secretary