

August 5, 1977

**US Presidential Memorandum, Jimmy Carter
Administration, Talks between North Korea and
South Korea**

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<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/114642>

Summary:

Zbigniew Brzezinski offers instructions on how best to coordinate tripartite talks between North Korea, South Korea, and the United States, including how the U.S. should work with China, the Soviet Union, and the United Nations on this issue.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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August 5, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Talks between North Korea and South Korea

The President has read your paper concerning possible trilateral discussions between North Korea, South Korea, and the United States, and has indicated that you should proceed to implement the suggested steps. In the light of consultations between State and the NSC Staff, U. S. diplomatic efforts in Korea should include the following:

(1) Early consultations with the ROKG concerning possible joint or parallel diplomatic initiatives that we should undertake in the months to come. In the course of these consultations we should lay out for the Koreans the presentation which you intend to make in Peking concerning the Korean issue.

(2) In the context of our wider discussions with the Chinese on Korea, we should renew our offer to convene a political conference including the four powers most directly concerned with the maintenance of the Armistice on the peninsula (the US, PRC, ROK, and DPRK). We should indicate to the Chinese that we are flexible concerning the modalities of our participation. We are prepared to participate as full members of such a conference, or, if the Koreans prefer, the U. S. and PRC could sit in merely as observers in the early stages of discussions. Alternatively, if the Chinese choose not to participate at all, we would be prepared to join trilateral discussions with the North and South Koreans to consider matters of mutual concern, including the future of the UN Command and other measures to reduce tensions on the peninsula.

(3) With respect to would-be intermediaries between the U. S. and Pyongyang, we should encourage them to reaffirm to the North Koreans

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our desire for renewed North-South talks and our willingness to participate in four-power or trilateral discussions. We should, however, clearly inform the ROKG of any messages we send to Pyongyang via third parties, and make clear to such third parties that we are not seeking their help in facilitating bilateral contacts between the U. S. and North Korea.

(4) At the UN, we should work with the "core group on Korea", the leaders of the non-aligned, and others to discourage consideration of the Korean item this year. If the ROK wishes to raise the membership issue, moreover, we should support proposals for dual membership for the two Koreas in the UN at the earliest possible date.

(5) In the course of our diplomatic discussions with the Soviet Union, we should make clear our intent to honor commitments to the ROK, urge the Soviets to counsel moderation to North Korea, and encourage Pyongyang's willingness to resume discussions with the South.

The East Asia Inter-Departmental Group, chaired by State, should prepare, prior to the fall session of the UNGA, a study of additional diplomatic initiatives on Korea designed to encourage an early resumption of North-South talks (with or without U. S. involvement), including an analysis of ways in which the implementation of the troop withdrawal plan could be used to promote such a result.



Zbigniew Brzezinski

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