

November 13, 1970

**Report, UN Department of Political and Security
Council Affairs, 'Chile, UNCURK, and the UN Stand
on the Korean Question'**

Citation:

"Report, UN Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, 'Chile, UNCURK, and the UN Stand on the Korean Question'", November 13, 1970, Wilson Center Digital Archive, "International incidents and disputes - Korea - correspondence (603.1)," Executive Office of the Secretary-General, S-0196-0003-02, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UN ARMS), New York, NY. Obtained for NKIDP by Charles Kraus. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/117379>

Summary:

The Department of Political and Security Affairs releases their prospects and suggestions on "Chile, UNCURK, and the UN Stand on the Korean Question." Considering the Marxist administration in Chile, the document outlines Chile's participation in UNCURK and potential solutions to remedy.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

CHILE, UNCURK AND THE UN STAND ON THE KOREAN QUESTION
-- PROSPECTS AND SUGGESTIONS --

I. THE PROBLEM

1. The ascendance to office of a Marxist Administration in Chile may have formative impact vis-a-vis the prevalent United Nations stand on the Korean problem. If Chile altered its position on the problem -- either in respect of its voting on the Korean item, or concerning its posture toward the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK)-- this would inevitably exert an influence on the UN stand, simply because Chile is a full-fledged Member of UNCURK.
2. Chile, at the twenty-fifth session, for the first time abstained on both draft resolution concerning the so-called "conditional" vs. "unconditional" invitations; in the past it had always voted for the former and against the latter. Considering that the voting took place on 30 October -- which is 6 days after the recent Chilean elections but 4 days before the inauguration of the new Government -- and also considering the recognition by Chile yesterday of the Cuban Government (earlier than most experts expected), the New Santiago Administration will probably not undergo a period of cautious diplomatic dormancy at this juncture.

3. Earlier, Chile, in a communication dated 5 August 1966,^{1/} addressed to the Secretary-General, announced its withdrawal from UNCURK. However, about 6 weeks later, in a letter to the Secretary-General dated 15 September 1966,^{2/} Chile "decided to reconsider its decision to withdraw from the Commission", and in fact ever since pursued its membership actively.^{3/}
4. Two questions may be posed, as follows:
5. First, would Chile change its basic stand on the substantive aspects of the Korean question (soon to be discussed at the First Committee), and if so, to what extent?
6. Second, would Chile again decide to withdraw from the Commission - a matter which, if it happened, would most likely be permanent rather than temporary?

^{1/} A/6375, issued on 10 August 1966.

^{2/} A/6417, issued on 16 September 1966.

^{3/} There has been a period in the latter part of the 1950's, when Chile did not participate in the Commission. However, this occurred not as a withdrawal, and Chile re-activated its participation 1960. Again, between 1964 and 1966, Chile was not an active participant in UNCURK affairs.

7. Presumably, unless a decision to withdraw precedes (or coincides) with the consideration of the substantive Korean item at this session, forthcoming deliberations -- specifically Chile's voting posture -- could formatively affect its decision as to continued membership or withdrawal. An alternative between active membership and withdrawal might be the adoption of a posture like that of Pakistan where for the last few years it did not participate, did not sign the report and did not resign. Moreover, Pakistan undertook some exchanges with the DPRK and on 9 September 1968, and sent its Foreign Secretary to attend the celebration of the DPRK's founding in Pyongyang.
8. The alternative between active membership and withdrawal is one that was twice exercised by Chile (See footnote 3, above), as Pakistan has been employing, however, short of withholding signature of UNCURK's report and effecting exchange with Pyongyang, except visits by socialist Parliamentarians.
9. As to voting on the Korean item, since the nineteenth session, Pakistan has changed its up-to-then affirmative vote in favour of the traditional UN stand, to abstention. Also, it has been abstaining on the three other substantive draft resolutions opposing the UN stand. These are (a) withdrawal of US and other "foreign" forces from "South Korea"; (b) dissolution of UNCURK; and (c) ending discussion at the UN on Korean unification (tabled for the past 2 years).
10. Chile's votes henceforth might possibly approximate those of Pakistan and, it might hence abstain on all four drafts (the one on "ending discussion has not as yet been tabled this year). However, Chile, which considers itself a Marxist State, but remains a Member of UNCURK, could divide its votes and support or even add its name to the list of co-sponsors for at least one of the draft resolutions opposing the current UN posture on Korea. The only one of the four drafts that this could be done, without unsurmountable difficulty, would be the matter of the withdrawal of troops [(a) in para.9 above]. With far greater difficulty, Chile could also support or even co-sponsor the proposal to end UN discussion on Korean unification [(d) above], at least for the time being. But it could not, ostensibly, go beyond this point and still desire membership in UNCURK.
11. Namely, it could not be expected to support or co-sponsor the draft resolution proposing the dissolution of the Commission [(c) above] without "in effect" renouncing its membership on the Commission. Nor could it vote

against the resolution representing the UN stand -- which is the very raison d'être of UNCURK -- without similar renunciation of membership.

12. The question arises as to what might happen if Chile did precisely cast these very vital votes, referred to in the preceding paragraph, and yet wished to maintain activemembership in the Commission. This point might best be discussed further below.

13. The immediate point at hand is the query as to what might occur, if Chile renounced its membership or, with or without voting against the UN stand, assumed a posture parallel to Pakistan's, namely not withdrawing from membership but of avoiding participation in UNCURK, and of not signing its reports.

14. In principle, even if Chile chose non-participation in its membership or, for that matter, if Chile and/or Pakistan withdrew from the Commission, there is no rule why the UN could not still retain UNCURK.

15. Indeed, there are the precedents of the Ukrainian SSR in the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) and of Syria in the United Nations Commission on Korea (UNCOK), besides Chile's own brief withdrawal from UNCURK in 1966. The following could be recalled:

16. UNCURK's mandate demonstrates that, besides acquiring its terms of reference, it has inherited those of its immediate predecessor, UNCOK, which in turn had done the same in regard to its predecessor, UNTCOK.^{4/} Hence the cases of the Ukrainian SSR and Syria may be considered direct precedents for UNCURK itself. The following occurred in respect of the two cases:

17. First, when UNTCOK was formed on 14 November 1947, by a vote of 43 to none, with 6 abstentions, the Ukrainian SSR was selected to be one of the 9 Members. Although, as indicated above, the resolution establishing UNTCOK had been adopted without negative vote, the Ukrainian SSR subsequently did not accept membership and did not serve on the Commission. There was no move to fill ^{the} vacancy, and UNTCOK attended to its mission with 8 Members.^{5/}

18. Second, likewise, when UNCOK took over from UNTCOK upon its establishment in 12 December 1948, Syria had been included among its 7

4/ (a) UNCOK's terms of reference state that the Commission "shall be regarded as having superseded the Temporary Commission established by resolution of 14 November 1947."

(b) UNCURK's terms of reference state that the Commission is to "assume the functions hitherto exercised by the present United Nations Commission on Korea."

5/ The other Members of UNTCOK were: Australia, Canada, China, El Salvador, France, India, the Philippines and Syria.

Members.^{6/} This Member resigned in due course. The General Assembly at its next session substituted Turkey in place of Syria.

19. The foregoing, along with the withdrawal of Chile from UNCUREK between 5 August and 15 September 1966, demonstrates that each of the successive three UN Commissions on Korea have functioned for given periods without full membership [not to mention the two periods of inactive membership by Chile (See footnote 3) and the current absence of Pakistan].

20. However, the question next arises whether, in addition to the inactive membership of Pakistan, if and when Chile either emulated Pakistan or withdrew from membership, ~~UNCUREK~~ UNCUREK could function to the satisfaction of the Commission itself and, more significantly, to the satisfaction of those Member States which have been according unstinting support to UNCUREK. It would appear that non-concurrent views, if not controversies, could arise which could consequently render the Commission less prestigious or functional than what is deemed by its ardent as well as moderate supporters.

21. Further, there have been suggestions in the past, among others, on the part of those not favouring (but neither opposing) UNCUREK in its present form, to the effect that the Commission could serve better with an altered membership and/or mandate.

22. These and other Member States of the same view, might very well commence a movement for the re-assessment of UNCUREK as it would stand subsequent to the assumption of a new stance by Chile (withdrawal, or inactive membership in addition to that of Pakistan).

23. Such a movement might possibly be conducive (i) to the review and alteration of UNCUREK's composition and/or mandate, (ii) the replacement of the Commission; and (iii) enhancing the arguments, and contribution to the number of those advocating its dissolution.

24. In any event, in the absence of redoubled efforts on the part of UNCUREK's key sponsors, there may indeed be further reduction in the over-all support accorded to the traditional UN stand on Korea.

25. The once "comfortable" margin of support for that stand has been gradually reduced in recent years. What is more, the support accorded to the draft resolutions opposing the UN stand (see para.9, namely "withdrawal...", "dissolution..." and "ending discussion") has also been growing. This could be fully documented in a companion paper on the assessment of the Korean debate along the lines of a similar study made last year.

^{6/} The other Members of UNCUREK were: Australia, China, El Salvador, France, India and the Philippines.

-5-

26. More significantly still: whether the present trends continue or not, the withdrawal of Chile from UNCURK, or its non-participation, could even endanger the seemingly more than secure two-thirds majority in favour of the UN stand.

27. It should be pointed out, however, that even if this two-thirds majority becomes unattainable, it would still be possible to retain the UN stand insofar as UNCURK and the United Nations Forces are concerned. They could be retained even if the General Assembly remained without a two-thirds majority, until such time when the opponents of the UN stand are able to muster a two-thirds majority of their own to alter, abolish or replace that stand.

28. This is a highly improbable prospect under the circumstances, at least for the foreseeable future.

29. Thus, literally there may ensue an untenable stand-still, if not a deadlock, on the UN approach to Korean unification.

30. There exists, however, some measure of real hope that the potential impasse could be turned into a movement toward furthering the cause of peaceful unification. This is discussed in the next Section.

II. OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

31. Most observations are already included in the main body of this text. However, others incorporating a number of suggestions may be advanced. These may hopefully assist in converting the seeming impasse into realistic and meaningful mobility.

32. Ostensibly, Chile today is faced with the choice between three alternative options:

33. First, it could withdraw from UNCURK regardless of its voting posture on the Korean item. This would certainly hurt UNCURK's mission and cause a setback to the UN stand on Korean unification. It might start a movement aimed at having UNCURK's composition and more significantly its mandate altered.

34. Second, Chile could emulate Pakistan, i.e. remain inactive and not sign the reports of UNCURK. This would cause less hurt to UNCURK's mission and the UN stand. However, its membership and mandate might still be questioned by a growing list of Member States. The matter of the Chilean voting-behavior on the Korean question would enter here and cause problems as discussed above.

35. Third, Chile could decide to remain an active Member of UNCURK, however with a new stance and a different set of policies. The matter of merit aside, some may fear that the new stance and policies could disrupt the Commission's activities and functions.

36. It is herewith believed that given adequate good will, the "worst" that could happen would be the prospect of minority reports by Chile (and perhaps by Pakistan) but that the experience might be useful for all concerned.

37. However, this is subsidiary to the main thesis of this paper which is rendered below:

38. Chile might prove amenable to persuasion to abandon intentions, if any, to withdraw from UNCURK or to remain completely inactive therein.

39. It could indeed play a most constructive historic role on UNCURK to the over-all and balanced satisfaction of all concerned. It is in a unique position to accomplish this, having the following attributes:

40. First, it happens to be a long-standing Member of UNCURK, having served in it for two decades.

41. Second, it maintains relations with both the ROK and the DFRK, as demonstrated most recently by their official attendance to the Inauguration of President Allende. Since both Seoul and Pyongyang are keen on promoting relations with Santiago, without hindrance of any sort of "Hallstein" doctrine, Chile could not only maintain but also advance these relations. It is not inconceivable that such relations could extend to the highest diplomatic level and include the exchange of resident Ambassadors. Thus Chile could become the first and only State maintaining top-rate diplomatic ties with both parts of divided Korea. It may be stated, in passing, that both Seoul and Pyongyang are believed to maintain diplomatic missions of of varying levels, concurrently, at several Capitals, including Jakarta, Rangoon, New Delhi and Cairo.

42. Third, if the foregoing could be done, a further step could perhaps be also accomplished by Chile. Namely, it could strongly request from Seoul and Pyongyang to allow its representative on UNCURK and its Ambassadors in the two Capitals to exchange visits over the frozen frontiers between north and south Korea. Such regular visits might subsequently de-freeze the DMZ to such an extent that other dignitaries might follow suit.

43. Fourth, if any State is in a position to secure, upon demand, such special status from both Koreas, it is Chile, with the possible exception of Pakistan. However, Pakistan, although not a Marxist State, is also in good relations with Pyongyang. The point is that, upon the anticipated success of the Chilean case, Pakistan too could be persuaded to approximate the Chilean example.

44. Fifth, by setting a viable example, Chile might be instrumental in a potential Pakistani decision to resume full participation in UNCURK.

45. Sixth, both Chile and Pakistan, in co-ordination, could play a moderating and constructive role in the Commission. Even if this entailed a minority report or reports, along with a majority report to the General Assembly, more "good" than "harm" can accrue.

46. Seventh, beyond this Chile (and Pakistan) might find itself in the role of direct or indirect intermediary between the ROK and the DPRK. Such role could commence with mere exchange of opinions on an informal basis, to actual emissary functions, and to mediation efforts.

47. Eighth, if Chile (and Pakistan, together or individually) could ingratiate itself with both Pyongyang and Seoul, it could provide UNCURK with relevant information on the DPRK as well. Such reporting by the Commission in turn, could enhance its value and prestige.

48. Ninth, Chile (and Pakistan) could attain a prestigious position, vis-a-vis both Capitals, and in the case of Pyongyang it may succeed to render that Government more co-operative, if covertly, with UNCURK. The DPRK cannot be expected overnight to accept the Commission as such, but some informal co-operation is not beyond the realm of possibility.

49. Tenth, Chile's decision concerning its relationship to UNCURK must be encouraged to take into account the principle of whether it deems the UN to have or not to have a role concerning Korean unification. If it does not recognize such role, the preceding suggestions will be purely academic. If it does, on the other hand, although in a way not coinciding in all detail with the current UN stand, this would be encouraging. Meanwhile, it is most vitally incumbent, primarily to urge Chile not to take a hasty decision concerning UNCURK and Korea, including its voting at the First Committee, when the latter will soon consider the substantive aspects of the Korean question. For, surely, there is a golden opportunity for Chile to assist in the eventual settlement of the Korean problem. Undue haste might ruin this historic sense of mission. At any rate

-8-

Chile would always retain the option to withdraw whenever it pleases.

50. Finally, prudent action at this juncture could avoid both impasse and vacuum on the Korean question, particularly (but not exclusively), at the United Nations.

* * *