

**August 21, 1970**

**Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN  
Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan, Park Chung Hee's  
August 15 Address**

**Citation:**

"Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan, Park Chung Hee's August 15 Address", August 21, 1970, Wilson Center Digital Archive, "International incidents and disputes - Korea - correspondence (603.1)," Executive Office of the Secretary-General, S-0196-0003-06, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UN ARMS), New York, NY. Obtained for NKIDP by Charles Kraus. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/117447>

**Summary:**

In a drastic change from previous policy, President Park Chung Hee called for the peaceful reunification of the peninsula. One of the prerequisites would be North Korea's unequivocal acceptance of the competence and authority of the UN. Some believe that the strength of the ROK economy and SALT program may have prompted Park's change in attitude.

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

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Seoul, 21 August 1970

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

There has been this week considerable comment in the ROK's press and among political parties on President Park Chung Hee's address on August 15, calling for the peaceful unification of the Korean peninsula.

Although the address itself does not offer a precise and positive plan on how to bring about the peaceful unification of both South and North Korea, it, nevertheless, marks a certain departure from the political rigidity which has characterized the ROK approach towards the question of unification. The keynote in President Park's address was his call on North Korea to accept "unequivocally" the competence and authority of the United Nations to deal with the Korean unification issue. If that should be brought about, President Park said he would not be opposed to the North Korean presence at the United Nations deliberations on the question. However, the President attached several conditions to his unification "formula", one of which is that North Korea "should desist forthwith from perpetrating all sorts of military provocations" and make an announcement publicly that it will renounce henceforth the so-called "policies of communizing the whole of Korea by force". The President also stated that there is a need to take "epochal and more realistic measures" with the aim of "removing step by step various artificial barriers existing between South and North Korea on the basis of humanitarian consideration". He may have in mind the strict restrictions which have sealed off the two Koreas.

What was indeed significant in the President's address was his reference to peaceful competition with North Korea in various fields and his indirect admission that "a Communist regime" exists in North Korea. It has always been the policy of the ROK to state that it is the only legal government representing the whole Korean peninsula.

President Park's address is viewed by observers here as a sign of an emerging confidence of the ROK in its economic strength. Calling on North Korea to engage in "bona fide competition in development, in construction and in creativity to prove which institution, democracy or communism, can provide better living for the

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

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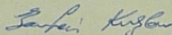
people" is thought of in terms of what his government has been able to achieve in the last decade.

There is no doubt that recent events such as West Germany's efforts to improve relations with East European countries including East Germany and the Soviet Union, the cease-fire in the Middle East and the progress of the Soviet-American Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) have had an affect upon his thinking to propose such a formula. The question remains however whether in the context of the strict existing anti-communist laws in the ROK, the President will be able to permit a free debate on the question of the unification of Korea to take place. Already the Foreign Minister attempted to halt such a debate when he stated on August 20 that there has been no change in the ROK's basic attitude towards the question of unification.

The Committee of UNCURK which discussed, during the week, these developments took note of President Park's address on the question of unification and decided to wait for further developments in this regard. There was a consensus of opinion among its members that the Committee should seek further clarification on this question before making any public statement on it.

With warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



Zouheir Kuzbari  
Principal Secretary

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