

September 2, 1971

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

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<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/117499>

Summary:

A thaw in the North-South relationship is occurring, as evidenced by the Red Cross organizations' talks, ROK government's flexible policy on socialist countries, and talking points for initial contact between the two governments.

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

Seoul, 2 September 1971

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

The thaw in the north/south Korea relations ushered last month by the Panmunjom contacts between representatives of their respective Red Cross organisations appear to be seeping through to other distinct levels.

The ROK Foreign Minister Kim Yong Shik stated on 1 September that outstanding questions between north and south Korea could be threshed out through three aspects, i.e. mutual talks and contacts (1) for humanitarian purposes, such as exchange of information regarding separated families; (2) exchange of journalists, athletes, and personages representing the cultural and other aspects of life; and (3) on political issues, such as the question of unification. He made it clear that once the initial contacts for humanitarian purposes bear fruits, it would be possible to conduct talks with the north Koreans, within the framework of United Nations resolutions. He was less clear on this last point, but hinted at the possibility of a modification in his country's old stand concerning the question of the participation of north Korea in the GA debate on the Korean question.

The new flexibility in the ROK's foreign policy has been further demonstrated in President Park Chung Hee's message to the National Assembly (2 September). The President declared that his administration will seek to establish relations with the socialist countries in Eastern Europe and to widen trade with them.

But while the above moves must be viewed in the context of recent Sino-Soviet rapprochement and that of the forthcoming GA Session, they nevertheless indicate an increasing desire on the part of the north and south Korean governments not to be diplomatically isolated. The prompt north Korean acceptance of the south Korean Red Cross proposal for a meeting between representatives of the Red Cross organisations of the two sides - which took place on 20 August - indicate clearly that the two regimes are doing away with many formalities and are willing to take calculated risks and continue these contacts.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

Handwritten signature of Zouheir Kouzbari in blue ink.
ZOUHEIR KOUZBARI
Principal SecretaryMr. C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York