

October 26, 1973

**Letter, Ahmet H. Ozbudun to Ismat Kittani,
"Contingencies on the Korean Question"**

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Summary:

Ahmet H. Ozbudun sends Ismat Kittani a letter containing "Contingencies on the Korean Question."

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UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
1947-1950CONFIDENTIAL No. 224

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18 October 1973

CONTINGENCIES ON THE KOREAN
SITUATION

Recd 23 Oct

26 October 1973

Dear Mr. Kittani,

Despite the return of Foreign Minister Kim Yong Shik from the UN, neither confirmation nor alteration of ROK policy has been made known, either officially or in round about manner. However, this in itself speaks of purposeful secrecy and indicates that definitive lines have yet to be drawn in New York after the Kissinger visit to Peking.

Information of the part of diplomats is available and may be useful for contingency planning, which makes such conjecture more concrete than sheer guess-work.

Dear Ahmet,

Thank you for your letter number 226 dated 18 October 1973. I have taken note of its contents.

The following points raised by some Korean experts and sources merit attention: With kind regards,

-- The Middle East crisis may procedurally delay Korean deliberations, if they are to be held at all, since Security Council or Plenary proceedings etc. may affect the First Committee's time-table for its agenda items.

Yours sincerely,

-- Such delay may cut short the actual debate and in fact preclude negotiations as well as substantive deliberations on the "Foreign Forces-UN Flag" aspect of the Korea question.

Ismat T. Kittani
Executive Assistant to
the Secretary-General

-- The agreement on debate and agenda items, at Peking and subsequently in New York, may in effect result in a further deferment of Korean problems to the twenty-fourth UNGA session.

-- Besides these considerations the debate that may occur anyway, although on a preliminary basis, may be still very acrimonious and capable of further poisoning the atmosphere. Issues may range between the matter of priority of draft resolutions; the question as to whether two-thirds majority (or simple majority) should be required for the adoption of proposals; whether the General Assembly could determine the issue of the troops; whether the matter of unified or dual UN membership of North and South Korea would be taken up at once, etc.

Mr. Ismat Kittani
Executive Assistant
to the Secretary-General
United Nations
New York

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
(UNCURK)CONFIDENTIAL: No. 226

18 October 1973

CONTINGENCIES ON THE KOREAN
QUESTION

Recd 23 Oct

Dear Mr. Kittani,

Despite the return of Foreign Minister Kim Yong Shik from the UN, neither confirmation nor alteration of ROK policy has been made known, either officially or in round about manner. However, this in itself smacks of purposeful secrecy and indicates that definitive lines have yet to be drawn in New York after the Kissinger visit to Peking.

Conjecture on the part of diplomats is available and may be useful for contingency planning, which makes such conjecture more concrete than sheer guess-work.

The following points raised by some Korean experts and sources merit attention:

-- The Middle East crisis may procedurally delay Korean deliberations, if they are to be held at all, since Security Council or Plenary proceedings etc. may affect the First Committee's time-table for its agenda items.

-- Such delay may cut short the actual debate and in fact preclude negotiations as well as substantive deliberations on the "Foreign Forces-UN Flag" aspect of the Korea question.

-- The aforesaid two points and the Kissinger consultations, at Peking and subsequently in New York, may in effect result in a further deferment of Korean problem to the twenty-ninth UNGA session.

-- Besides these considerations the debate that may occur anyway, although on a preliminary basis, might be still very acrimonious and capable of further poisoning the UNGA atmosphere. Issues may range between the matter of priority of draft resolutions; the question as to whether two-thirds majority (or simple majority) is requisite for the adoption of proposals; whether the General Assembly could determine the issue of the troops; whether the matter of unified or dual UN membership of North and South Korea would be taken up at once, etc.

Mr. Ismat Kittani
Executive Assistant
to the Secretary-General
United Nations
New York

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-- The question also arises whether in the absence of any decision on the substantive draft resolutions, the budgetary Fifth Committee might not "jump the gun" and "decide" the future of UNCURK politically as far as the matter of funding is concerned. All circles here are vehemently against this contingency/.

-- Another contingency that may also arise in the absence of a substantive resolution (through (i) rejection of both or (ii) not-voting on either draft) is that some Member States could propose, as an "independent issue", the dissolution of UNCURK, as a "common point in both draft resolutions". This is also vehemently objected to by some diplomats and officials here, on the grounds that this will totally "remove the fiction" that the political presence is most reluctantly given up as part and parcel of an overall political bargaining, with certain quid pro quo reciprocation involved. The ROK Government may indeed come under untenable internal pressure and attack if UNCURK were given up this year as a separate entity, with no bargaining power saved for next year, even at the face of "professing" that "it is part of the deal for next year."

-- The foregoing aside, when it comes to deciding UNCURK's fate, a powerful argument as could be used by its adversaries is that the Commission has already kamikazied, through the recommendation for its own dissolution, killing along with itself the very principles of the UN on Korean unification. Unless a strong leadership (ROK's or otherwise), develops between now and the hour of decision to (i) attribute UNCURK's recommendation to "undue modesty"; (ii) reject it on the grounds that a political vacuum in Korea, especially after the recent lesson of the Middle Eastern War, could be suicidal; (iii) declare that, far from "creating favourable conditions", ROK concessions to the North have rendered the latter's overall stance "more recalcitrant" than before; (iv) consider that the Korean dialogue, (one major alleged alternative to UN presence in Korea), has all but died; and (v) determine that international detente and rapprochement, which was assumed to be capable of embracing the Peninsula and to be the only other alternative to a Korean settlement, suffered a severe setback.

The foregoing represents some of the keenly felt misgivings if not utterly frank criticism of the frame of mind in which the ROK and its key allies find themselves. They strongly argue that this is no time for change and that the option of change will always be there and could be resorted to next year. In view of the "rigid" North Korean stance they believe that the vote for another deferment is most definitely available.

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Personally, I would have suggested, if there is time and willingness, to have another political presence to take over unless the very spirit of UNCURK is revitalized. After all UNCURK has prematurely declared itself as redundant, and may thus find itself to have become a political eunuch. Yet this is infinitely preferable to an implosive political vacuum.

However, in the absence of such revitalization, and considering the desperate need to preclude a political vacuum at all cost, may I again suggest the institution by the Secretary-General, (if by virtue of the raison d'être of Article 99 of the Charter), of a world renown special representative (i) for the whole of Korea, or (ii) separately for both parts; or (iii) only for the part that is amenable to having such presence.

Opponents of UNCURK should have no serious objection since what they most object against the Commission is that it is the custodian of the UN principles on unification which would also bow out along with the dissolution of UNCURK.

Moreover, proponents of the idea of such political presence in the form of a Special Representative(s), may find it easier (than it is believed) to persuade agnostics and opponents alike regarding the tremendous risk involved in the creation of utter international political vacuum in Korea, for the first time since 1947.

Such attempt at persuasion may be fortified with the contention that the presence of a Special Representative(s) could (i) play the role of conciliator or mediator for the recommencement, if not also progress, of the Korean dialogue; (ii) maintain a direct and continuous link between the Secretary-General and Korea(s); (iii) constitute a most essential political liaison between the UN and the United Nations Command; and (iv) afford the Secretary-General a potentially most important political, military, economic and social listening post.

With warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

