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

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Summary:

Principal Secretary of UNCURK Kuzbari updates Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan on the NDP's return to the National Assembly yet their limited authority and Park Chung Hee's extension of only non-military assistance to Cambodia.

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UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

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

CONFIDENTIAL

Seoul, 8 May 1970

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

The decision made by the opposition New Democratic Party over the last weekend to return to the National Assembly after a boycott which lasted almost seven months represents an important development in the political situation here. You may recall that members of the NDP walked out of the National Assembly in the middle of October last year in protest of the introduction by the ruling Democratic Republican Party of the constitutional amendments, which would have permitted the incumbent President to run for a third term. The move by the NDP to again participate in the proceeding of the legislature is regarded as an admission of failure to rally support outside the National Assembly against the present DRP's administration. In addition, the NDP must have realized that the attempt made by former President Yun Bo Sun to form a third opposition party could weaken its position and therefore decided to re-organize its ranks within the National Assembly itself. An example of these new tactics to "oppose from within" is the questionnaire submitted by them to President Park Chung Hee asking him for an immediate withdrawal of the ROK forces presently fighting along with the US troops in Viet-Nam and to refrain the Government from any intervention in the Cambodian situation. The involvement of the ROK in Viet-Nam and the participation of its troops in that country have long been a very sensitive domestic issue and the NDP may appear now to capitalize on this situation in order to embarrass the position of the present administration. Moreover, in the same questionnaire, the NDP has accused the Government of not disclosing the full facts related to the intention of the U.S. Government to reduce its forces in the ROK. It is doubtful, though, that the NDP could muster enough support to influence the decisions already made by the Government, but they can certainly expose various aspects of its foreign policy.

As to the involvement of the ROK in the situation in Cambodia, it was stated today by a presidential spokesman that the Government will only extend non-military assistance including medical supplies

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

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to Cambodia through the International Committee of the Red Cross. According to press reports published here, the ROK embassy in Paris has been conducting negotiations with the Cambodian embassy there in order to establish consular and diplomatic relations with the new Cambodian regime. It is conceivable now that, with the diplomatic recognition by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the newly formed government in exile of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the ROK and the new government in Cambodia may be drawn closer and establish such relations.

As I informed you earlier, the Commission will hold its second session of the year in Seoul on 11 May under the chairmanship of the Representative of the Netherlands. Its provisional agenda includes, among other items, discussion of the second draft report to the U.N. Secretary-General. The members are expected to be briefed by the Commander-in-Chief of the U.N. Command and by the officials of the Ministry of National Unification Board on various developments since the beginning of the year. According to the present arrangement, the Commission will call another session possibly by the first week of August in order to finalize and sign its report. As you already know, the report will this time be submitted to the Secretary-General on the understanding that it should be transmitted to the General Assembly for its consideration should an item on Korea be inscribed in the provisional agenda of the twenty-fifth session.

With warm personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal Secretary