

**June 13, 1970**

**Letter, UNCURK Officer-in-Charge Osman to UN Chef  
de Cabinet Narasimhan**

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**Summary:**

Chief-in-Charge Osman updates Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan on recent ROK developments: North Koreans attacked a ROK Navy broadcasting vessel due to the belief that the vessel was in North Korean territorial waters; ROK's persistent opposition to U.S. force reductions, especially in light of the recent attack; and a discussion between Cambodian and ROK delegations concerning ROK's non-military assistance to Cambodia.

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

Seoul, 13 June 1970

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

Since the beginning of June, there have been two new developments in addition to the possible reduction of US forces in the ROK and the progress in the work of the 73rd extraordinary session of the National Assembly: the reported capture on 5 June 1970 of a ROK Navy broadcasting boat and the seizure by the Government of the 1 June issue of the New Democratic Party organ, the Min Joo Jon Sun "Democratic Front".

In the afternoon of 5 June, the Ministry of National Defence announced that a Navy broadcasting vessel, reportedly assigned to escort the ROK fishing fleet along the West Coast, had been attacked on the same day by two North Korean high-speed boats west of Yunpyong Island and abducted to North Korea. On 6 June, the Ministry announced, as a result of an official investigation team, that the broadcasting boat had been attacked at about seven miles south-west of Yunpyong Island, and that, after a 15-minute exchange of fire, the ROK boat was hit by the North Korean shells, some of the crew killed and wounded and the boat captured by the North Koreans. On 8 June, the Korean Central News Agency stated that "the South Korean boat was in the North Korean waters to conduct espionage activities and kidnap fishing boats ... was destroyed and went to the bottom of the sea". It should be noted in this connexion that North Korea claims 12-mile limit to its territorial waters.

The incident raised deep concern and a great deal of discussions in the ROK Government as well as in the National Assembly. It also led indirectly to some clarification of the nature of UNC's operational control over the ROK armed forces.

A number of legislators held Adm. Chang Chi Su, Chief of the Naval Operations, and Gen. Kim Sung Yong of the Air Force,

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

- 2 -

responsible for not being able to provide sufficient protection to the broadcasting vessel, which had in fact sent a message requesting for assistance. On the other hand, the ROK Navy and Air Force shifted the responsibility to the UNC and reportedly stated that the air support had been at the scene of the incident in time, but the UNC, which seemingly has operational control over the ROK forces, did not give permission to retaliate. Subsequently, an officially inspired news report quoted a high ROK Government source to the effect that the operational control of the UNC over ROK armed forces authorizes necessary action in case of emergency like the present boat incident, and that the ROK jet fighters arrived without delay over the target area, but were unable to identify the target vessels amidst the North Korean fighting boats.

The incident was also brought up at the 302<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the MAC, during which the UNC repeatedly requested the North Koreans for information about the boat and its crew, but the latter maintained that the boat had been sunk, and ignored the request. The Committee of UNCURK also advanced its regular fortnight meeting from 17 to 11 June and, after an exchange of views, decided to mention in the annual report that it took note of the incident.

The 1 June issue of the NDP organ, the Min Yoo Jon Sun Democratic Front, was seized at 2:00 a.m. on 2 June. It reportedly contained, in particular, a satiric poem entitled "Five Bandits", on high ranking government officials, National Assemblymen, Generals and business tycoons. Later, the author of the poem and some staff members of the organ were arrested. The incident crippled the 73rd extraordinary session of the National Assembly which was closed on 9 June without dealing with the supplementary budget bill or any other major bills including the reform of the Election Law.

With regard to the withdrawal of US forces in the ROK, President Park Chung Hee, in his written reply to a questionnaire by the NDP on national security problems, reaffirmed his opposition to the reduction of the US troops in the ROK under the present conditions and circumstances. He said that, in view of the spirit of the ROK-US Mutual Defence Treaty and other commitments by the US, it is unthinkable to consider a unilateral withdrawal of one division of the US forces in the ROK.

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- 3 -

On 4 June, a Cambodian delegation headed by General Srey Saman, Supreme Commander of the Cambodian armed forces arrived in Seoul for a six-day visit to the ROK. He held discussions with the Government officials, including those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and President Park Chung Hee, on the establishment of relations between Cambodia and the Republic of Korea and on the ROK assistance to Cambodia. At the conclusion of the visit, the ROK Government informed the Cambodian delegation that it would be difficult for the ROK to extend military assistance to Cambodia as long as the threat from North Korea still persists. However, the Government would study the best means of providing Cambodia with a non-military assistance.

Yours sincerely,

*M. J. Osman*M.I. Osman  
Officer-in-Charge