

August 11, 1959

Letters to Dag Hammarskjold on the Japanese-Korean Fishery Conflict

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Summary:

Correspondences between Dag Hammarskjold and Hans Gottfurcht on the issue of fishery conflict between Korea and Japan.

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President

Telephone

11 53 45 - 11 96 15 - 11 98 25

Telegrams

INTERCONFED. BRUSSELS

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BANQUE DE BRUXELLES

Agence Lombard Acc. 5779

Arne GEIJER

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION
OF FREE TRADE UNIONSGeneral Secretary
J. H. OLDENBROEK(to whom all communications
should be addressed)

Cable ES/B/md - 7629

Your ref.

24, rue du Lombard,
Brussels-1, (Belgium)

AUG 17 1959

11 August 1959

ACTION

TO:	Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld
1	Mr. Hammarskjöld
2	Mr. Oldenbroek
3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Completed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Acknowledged
<input type="checkbox"/>	No Action Required
INITIALS	

Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld,
Secretary-General,
United Nations,
New York.

Dear Sir,

Japanese-Korean Fishery Conflict

In the absence of Mr. Oldenbroek, I have the honour to acknowledge with many thanks your letter of 30 July dealing with the Japanese-Korean fishery conflict and particularly with the possibility of an offer of good offices on your part. We are indeed grateful to you for the interest you have shown in this matter.

We have taken note of your view that an offer of good offices could be made only if the two parties concerned were favourably disposed to it and we have accordingly asked our affiliated organisations in the Republic of Korea and in Japan to ascertain the views of their respective Governments on the possible offer of good offices on your part.

There are, it seems, some indications that the two governments concerned might be ready to open negotiations on certain issues. It will be of interest to you, in this connection, to learn that Mr. Dong Jo Kim, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, in a letter which he recently wrote to us, drew our attention to the fact that the Peace Line has never been intended as a line of demarcation embracing Korean territorial waters. This Line, he states, was proclaimed only for limited purposes, such as conservation of maritime resources. Mr. Dong Jo Kim, in his letter, also emphasised that his Government is prepared to meet the Japanese Government with a view to settling this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Hans Gottfurcht

Hans Gottfurcht
Assistant General Secretary

Mr. J. H. Oldenbroek

General Secretary

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

24, rue du Lombard

Brussels-1

Belgium

Po 249 Korea

Po 240 Korea

RECEIVED

30 JUL 1959

30 July 1959

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 10 July 1959, informing me about the request of the Executive Board of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions that I should offer to the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea my good offices, with a view to assisting in the settlement of certain difficulties which have disturbed relations between the two countries. You have referred in particular to the plight of Japanese fishermen detained in South Korea.

You have shown your awareness that the views of the two Governments on the question of the territorial sea are far apart and that this is only one of several questions which have combined to produce severe strains in the relations between those Governments. Because of the complexities of that relationship, I am sure that you would agree on the desirability of making a full study of the various issues before taking any position on whether the United Nations or the Secretary-General could be of assistance to the parties.

Of prime importance in any offer of good offices would be whether the two parties themselves were favourably disposed to it. This could be determined only after careful consultation with those concerned.

Without committing myself to any specific course of action at this time, I wish to assure you that I share your concern about the tensions which exist in the relations between the two countries and I am, of course, fully conscious of the hardship which the situation has caused to private persons in both countries. Certainly if after due consideration I were to conclude that through my assistance, or that of the United Nations, and with the consent and co-operation of the parties, the tension could be eased and the circumstances of those persons improved, I should consider it within my responsibility to act. For the moment, however, in response to your initiative, I can say only that I have the whole matter under review. I hope that you will so inform the Executive Board.

Yours sincerely,

Dag Hammarskjöld
Secretary-General

Mr. J.H. Oldenbroek
General Secretary
International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
24 rue du Lombard
Brussels 1
BELGIUM

J. G.

resident

Telephone

11.53.45 11.96.15 11.98.25

Telegrams

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Amie GEUER

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION
OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

General Secretary

J. H. OLDENBROEK

On whom all communications
should be addressed)

Out-rel ES/B/md

Your ref.

24, rue du Lombard,
Brussels-1, (Belgium)

10 July 1959

PERSONALMr. Dag Hammarskjöld,
Secretary General,
United Nations,
New York.

Handwritten signature
Comm.
please - H.
Dave

RECORDS CONTROL

AUG 1959

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that our Executive Board at its 24th meeting, held in Berlin from 29 June to 3 July 1959, decided to request that you offer to the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea your good offices with a view to settling the fishery conflict which has disturbed the relations between these countries for a number of years and has caused great sufferings to hundreds of Japanese fishermen.

The Executive Board expressed the hope that the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea will rapidly embark on negotiations dealing with the problem of the limit of Korean territorial waters, and that, on the other hand, the International Conference on the Right of the Sea should meet as soon as possible for the purpose of finding a general solution to the problem of the territorial waters. The Board furthermore was of the opinion that the prospects of a settlement of the conflict between the two countries would be considerably enhanced if you were in a position to offer to them your good offices and if this offer were accepted by the two parties.

The immediate reason for our request lies in the fact that, although 932 Japanese fishermen had been released from detention in Korea on the basis of an agreement between the two governments concluded on 31 December 1957, 153 fishermen are again in detention. All these persons have been arrested and sentenced to prison terms on the ground that the vessels on which they were employed infringed the so-called Rhee Line; this line has not been recognised by the Japanese Government.

Deeply concerned at the sufferings of Japanese fishermen who are deprived of their freedom for long periods and of their families in Japan, our Executive Board is of the opinion that the most serious efforts should be made to solve the problem by negotiations between the two governments concerned.

.. / ...

I.C.F.T.U. - C.I.S.L. - I.B.F.G. - C.I.O.S.L.

ACTION

I wish to add that H.E. Dongjo Kim, Acting Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea, in a letter which he wrote to me on 28 May, stated the readiness of the Korean Government to confer with the Japanese Government with a view to "settling the question of the Japanese fishermen amicably and for all time". While we appreciate this position, we are aware that the views of the two governments on the question of the territorial sea are far apart and that, generally speaking, the tension existing between the two countries is so great that an intervention on your part would be exceedingly helpful.

Hoping that you will be in a position to comply with our request,

Yours sincerely,

J. H. Oldenbroek
General Secretary