

February 13, 1973
Letter, Ahmet H. Ozbudun to C.V. Narasimhan,
"Enhanced ROK Diplomatic Activity"

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Summary:

Ozbudun sends a letter to Muller, in place of Narasimhan, reporting on enhanced ROK diplomatic activities

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cc: Mr. Narasimhan
UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
Mr. Kutakov UNCURK RM/fp

CONFIDENTIAL: No. 183

9 February 1973

ENHANCED ROK DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

13 February 1973

As of early 1973, ROK diplomatic activity appears to have surpassed its usual intensity of recent years. Observers ascribe this to concerns among top decision makers regarding the impact of the rapidly changing international scene. ROK leaders are fully convinced that the Government must involve itself with enhanced vigour, at home, on the Korean Peninsula.

In the absence of Mr. Narasimhan I take pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your confidential letter no. 183 of 9 February and of your ordinary letter no. 102, Summary of Developments covering the period 1 through 7 February 1973.

ROK POLICY OF DEFERMENT OF UN KOREAN DELIBERATIONS

In fact, ROK diplomatic activity this year commenced reaching a peak earlier than ever in the past, and indications are that the tempo will be maintained relentlessly until a summit conference of the General Assembly. The cardinal goal among ROK officials appears to observers to entail the "fate" of yet another deferment of Korean deliberations at the twenty-eighth session. Officials refrain from public statements in this regard, however, and generally that another postponement is the most realistic and viable alternative among available options conducive to improving prospects for dialogue, détente and unification. It is conceded meanwhile that postponement requires above all a series of impressive breakthroughs in the North-South talks on both the Red Cross and the Co-ordinating Committee levels. Some anxiety is manifested as to what might ensue if the DPRK deliberately precluded progress and warded failure to the ROK and/or the continued UN political presence in Korea. It is felt, however, that unless Pyongyang is "seriously" able to block progress with "highly visible and unambiguous antagonism", and succeeded to persuade the world community regarding the "culpitude" for failure, its would-be "achieve" Seoul bounding irreparably. Proponents of this feeling consequently hold that an obvious "sabotage" of the Korean dialogue by Pyongyang in itself also strengthens prospects for postponement.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Muller

Director

Mr. Ahmet Ozbudun
Principal Secretary

UNCURK

Seoul

Korea

Notwithstanding the aforesaid line of "optimistic" outlook, Seoul prefers to preclude any chance-taking and embarks on unusually early and extensive diplomatic endeavour.

Mr. S. V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations

UNITED NATIONS



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UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
(UNCURK)CONFIDENTIAL: No 183

9 February 1973

ENHANCED ROK DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

As of early 1973, ROK diplomatic activity appears to have surpassed its usual intensity of recent years. Observers ascribe this to the ever-growing concern among top decision makers regarding the impact of what they commonly refer to as the "rapidly changing international scene". ROK leaders are fully convinced that the Government must involve itself with enhanced vigour, at home, on the Korean Peninsula and in all corners of the globe to adjust to the changes positively and to ensure, to the maximum possible extent, that they do not adversely affect Seoul's vital interests. The prime target seems to be offset and henceforth to avert recent "successes" reportedly recorded by the DPRK in its expanding diplomatic relations.

ROK POLICY OF DEFERMENT OF UN KOREAN DELIBERATIONS

In fact, ROK diplomatic activity this year commenced reaching a peak earlier than ever in the past, and indications are that the apogee will be maintained relentlessly until at least the next session of the General Assembly. The cardinal goal among a number of crucial aims appears to observers to entail the "fete" of yet another deferment of Korean deliberations at the twenty-eighth session. Officials refrain from public statements in this regard, however assessing privately that another postponement is the most realistic and viable alternative among available options conducive to improving prospects of Korean dialogue, détente and unification. It is conceded meanwhile that postponement requires above all a series of impressive breakthroughs in the North-South talks on both the Red Cross and the Co-ordinating Committee levels. Some anxiety is manifested as to what might ensue if the DPRK deliberately precluded progress and ascribed failure to the ROK and/or the continued UN political and military presence in Korea. It is felt, however, that unless Pyongyang were "miraculously" able to block progress with "Machiavellian and clandestine astuteness", and succeeded to persuade the world at large regarding the "culprits" for failure, its would-be "scheme" would boomerang irreparably. Proponents of this feeling consequently hold that an obvious "sabotage" of the Korean dialogue by Pyongyang would in itself also strengthen prospects for postponement.

Notwithstanding the aforesaid line of "optimistic" outlook, Seoul prefers to preclude any chance-taking and embarks on unusually early and extensive diplomatic endeavour.

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

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Such endeavour has entailed (or will entail) the following activities:

MEETINGS OF ROK ENVOYS IN SEOUL

Most ROK Chiefs of Missions abroad, including Ambassadors and Consuls General, have been called home in two groups to receive briefings and to offer their views on political and economic diplomacy collectively. The first group comprised 23 Mission Chiefs from North-South America and Europe and stayed in Seoul about a fortnight, arriving around 15 January and departing on 8 February. The second group comprised 29 Chiefs of Missions from Asia, Africa and the Middle East. They arrived between 2 and 5 February, and will depart after about a two-week stay.

Topics discussed between top ROK officials and the 52 envoys were not officially revealed. Earlier announcements said that they would be briefed on ROK economic policies. However, some reliable quarters believe that the main focus was on diplomacy, including, above all, the United Nations policy of the ROK. Related topics reportedly comprise, in addition, ways and means effectively to counteract vastly increasing DPRK diplomatic activities around the world, particularly in non-aligned countries; overhauling Seoul's policies as a result of the Viet-Nam cease-fire and troop withdrawal, especially ROK participation in Viet-Nam reconstruction plans; and review of attitudes towards the tottering Asian-Pacific Council (ASPAC), or the formation of another viable regional organization. It was reported that the Foreign Minister had briefed the envoys on government plans to launch an active and "flexible" diplomacy to elevate the global status of the ROK, thus meeting promptly exigencies brought about by the "rapidly changing international situation".

FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISITS ABROAD

The Foreign Minister himself will be actively involved in a fortnight's trip abroad. He is to depart Seoul on 12 February; visit the United Kingdom officially between 18-21 February; and preside over a meeting in New York of the ROK diplomatic and consular chiefs of missions in the area. The Minister hopes very much to meet with the UN Secretary-General, possibly on 23 February, to discuss various topics of mutual interest. He is to host a luncheon or dinner for around 50 UN Permanent Representatives.

TALES IN BONN

In the FRG, Mr. KIM Yong Shik may talk to his counterpart and other Bonn officials mainly on East-West German relations, to draw relevant conclusions as could be emulated or tailored to inter-Korean affairs.

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TALKS IN LONDON

The visit to the UK is described as a reciprocation of Sir Alec Douglas-Home's official trip to Seoul last year. However, it is regarded quite likely that the crucial matter of further deferment of UN deliberations on Korea would be raised by Minister Kim to elicit another UK sponsorship of the issue this year.

TALKS IN WASHINGTON

In Washington D.C., Mr. Kim plans to meet Secretary Rogers to discuss US assistance for ROK military modernization; Korean participation in the reconstruction of Viet-Nam; and policies vis-à-vis the United Nations.

TALKS WITH THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

The latter topic would naturally lead a group of issues if the Minister meets the Secretary-General in New York. It may be interesting, inter alia, if Mr. Kim, for the first time, officially reveals the ROK policy on deferment to Mr. Waldheim.

Also of great interest would be the disclosure, if any, as to what the Seoul Government actually means by its heretofore undefined concept of "flexible" diplomacy, particularly towards the UN.

Yet another useful topic may be the newest assessment by the ROK of the Korean dialogue which has not at all been discussed openly in Seoul since the formation of the North-South Co-ordinating Committee late last year. Contacts have been possibly made since then, but it is distressing to some quarters that no announcement was made on future North-South meetings either on the Red Cross or the Co-ordinating Committee level.

One other sensitive topic that may come up in the contemplated meeting between the Secretary-General and Minister Kim might be the growing number of double-recognitions and establishment of diplomatic relations with the DPRK on the part of non-aligned States which had heretofore recognized only the ROK. Two questions seem to arise in this connexion: First, the impact of double-recognition on the strengthening of a two-Korea policy as a result of the extinction of Seoul's "Hallstein Doctrine"; and second, the influence of the first point on the "revival" of the concept of double Korean UN membership in the foreseeable future. In this connexion a related topic of great interest might be the "dreaded" question in the ROK of the extension of UN observer status to the DPRK; and — in the event of Korean deliberations — the participation of Pyongyang's representative in the debate.

* * *

With warm regards,

Sincerely yours,
AHMED H. OZBUDUN
AHMED H. OZBUDUN
Principal Secretary