

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

Seoul, 25 June 1971

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

The Government of the Republic of Korea moved quickly this week to put an end to the long crisis on the campuses. On personal instruction from President Park Chung Hee, the new Minister of Education ordered yesterday the reopening of four colleges in the Seoul National University, which had been closed for almost a month as a result of students' protest against compulsory military training, and he promised that the Government will introduce a new military programme to shorten the hours of training on the campuses as well as the period of military service for students after their graduation. It is to be recalled that the students in most leading universities and colleges have demonstrated since March this year against the Government's policy of compulsory military training on the campuses which led to the suspension of classes in a number of those educational institutions. By normalizing the situation on the campuses, the Government is hopeful to come to an understanding with the students' body regarding their grievances and to avoid extending the students' unrest. On the other hand, it is unclear yet whether these new measures taken by the Government could lead to the appeasement of the students since a large number of them expressed the view recently that the Government aims at splitting their ranks and at isolating them from the opposition New Democratic Party who has aligned itself with their movement.

With regard to the convocation of the newly elected National Assembly, little progress was reported this week by the ruling Democratic Republican Party and the New Democratic Party as to the date of its opening session. The Democratic Republican Party proposed the 1st July, the date of the inauguration of President Park Chung Hee, for holding the first session of the National Assembly, but its request was turned down by the New Democratic Party on the ground that this suggestion is unconstitutional. It is becoming evidently clear that the smooth functioning of the 8th National Assembly will depend from now on largely on the close

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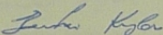
Mr. C.V. Narasimhan  
Chef de Cabinet  
United Nations  
New York

co-operation between the major Democratic Republican Party and the main opposition New Democratic Party since the Government party failed to secure a 2/3 majority during the last National Assembly elections. The new National Assembly could represent either a better quorum for discussion between the two major parties or ends up in a complete deadlock as was the case last year during the 7th National Assembly.

Another interesting development this week is that both the Government's and the opposition's circles seem to be quite displeased with the remark made recently by U.S. Secretary of Defence Melvin R. Laird, in which he stated that the United States would no longer provide ground troops for future Asian conflicts. The Government of the Republic of Korea interpreted this remark as meaning that the United States has, under no circumstances, any obligation, according to the United States -- Republic of Korea Mutual Defence Treaty, to come automatically to its help should a war break out again in the Korean peninsula. There have recently been repeated demands by the major political parties for a revision of this treaty in order to ensure the automatic intervention by the United States on the side of the Republic of Korea, but the demands were turned down by the United States.

With warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



Zouheir Kuzbari  
Principal Secretary