

July 9, 1971

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

Citation:

"Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan", July 9, 1971, Wilson Center Digital Archive, "International incidents and disputes - Korea - correspondence (603.1)," Executive Office of the Secretary-General, S-0196-0004-03, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UN ARMS), New York, NY. Obtained for NKIDP by Charles Kraus.

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Summary:

A UN Command officer suggests future ROK and DPRK talks should be conducted directly. The ROK government, anxious to maintain US and UN military presence in ROK, criticizes the statement.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

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

9 July 1971

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

A development which could possibly affect the UN military and political presence in the Republic was detected in the remarks made this week by UNC Senior MAC member Lt-General Felix M. Rogers which suggested the concept of a South Korean representing the UNC in future MAC meetings. In an interview with the Associated Press on 6 July, he advanced the view that the time has come for "Koreans to talk to Koreans" and that this could be done only if direct contacts could be established between the North and South Korean representatives at the MAC meetings.

His remarks drew sharp criticisms from ROK authorities which are anxious to maintain the UN and the US military presence in the Republic as a guarantee for its security; officials of the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs expressed doubts as to the conceivability of taking such a step, pointing out that acceptance of such an idea would be tantamount to an implicit recognition of the North Korean regime. Prime Minister Kim Jung Pil, however, hinted that although his government has not been informed or consulted regarding General Rogers' suggestion, he nevertheless believes that the time has come to consider such a possibility. Meanwhile, a UNC spokesman stated on 8 July that the views expressed by General Rogers do not reflect US government policy nor do they imply any current or contemplated changes in the setup of the MAC. Since the Armistice Agreement was signed in July 1953 the UNC has invariably been represented at Panmunjom by high-ranking US military officers.

The significance of General Rogers' suggestion could only be seen within the context of the current "phase-out" trend in US military presence from the Republic, the proposals made on 12 June by the UNC to clear the DMZ of military fortifications and convert the area for peaceful

Mr. C. V. Narasimhan
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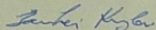
civil pursuits, including the assumption by the ROK forces of defence responsibilities along the DMZ since the withdrawal of the 2nd US Division.

In effect what General Rogers implied was that since there is complete political deadlock between South and North Korea the Armistice machinery could be made to serve as the point of direct contact between the two Koreas through which, prospectively, meaningful talks could possibly evolve.

However, according to US official sources here, no formal proposals were made yet to the ROK government in regard to this subject.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely yours,



Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal Secretary