

April 21, 1972

**Letter, Ahmet H. Ozbudun to C.V. Narasimhan, "US
Military Assistance to the ROK"**

Citation:

"Letter, Ahmet H. Ozbudun to C.V. Narasimhan, "US Military Assistance to the ROK"", April 21, 1972, Wilson Center Digital Archive, "International incidents and disputes - Korea - correspondence (603.1)," Executive Office of the Secretary-General, S-0196-0006-06, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UN ARMS), New York, NY. Obtained for NKIDP by Charles Kraus.
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/117650>

Summary:

Ozbudun sends Narasimhan a report on US military assistance to the ROK.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Kyungnam University

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
(UNCURK)CONFIDENTIAL: No. 120

21 April 1972

US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE ROK

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

On 13 April, a spokesman of the US Defence Department announced that the US Administration had requested, on 1 March, a newly revised grant-type military assistance fund totalling \$215.71 million for the ROK in the FY 1973. This is about \$20 million less than the original \$235 million request announced by Secretary of State William P. Rogers on 14 March at the House Foreign Affairs Committee. The revised request was composed of 64 per cent in new investment for the modernization programme, 34 per cent in operational and maintenance funds, and the remaining 2 per cent allotted for the training of ROK forces.

The Spokesman also said that in addition to \$215.71 million aid, the US Administration had earmarked for the ROK, in the FY 1973, \$25 million in military credit sales and \$33.6 million from the military procurement assistance programme. The total military assistance fund for the ROK would thus amount to \$274.31 million in the FY 1973.

On 14 April, Rep. William Broomfield, a member of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, announced that he would offer soon an amendment to the Foreign Aid Authorization Bill, which would seek an increase of \$70 million in military assistance funds for the modernization programme of the ROK forces in the FY 1973. He said that the amendment had a very good chance for adoption since most members of the Foreign Affairs Committee recognized the necessity to accelerate the five-year modernization programme and since \$90 million had been cut from the original military aid request for the current year.

In a testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 17 April, US Secretary of State William P. Rogers reportedly stated that when the five-year modernization programme for the ROK forces was completed in 1975, the US grant military aid for the ROK would be

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

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generally replaced by a foreign military sales programme which, unlike grant-type aid, is repayable.

He stressed that the drastic cutback by Congress of the current fiscal 1972 foreign aid programme had "impaired the effectiveness of the Nixon Doctrine". He said that Assistant Secretary Marshall Green, during his recent trip to East Asia, had found that "leaders of many countries now question, not President Nixon's desire to provide adequate assistance in support of their legitimate self-defence needs, but whether this assistance will in fact be forthcoming".

Secretary Rogers reportedly said that the largest single grant-type military assistance request, \$235 million, was intended as continued support for the ROK's 5-year modernization programme. He added; "Given adequate funds, we expect the programme to be completed in 1975. We then expect Korea to meet the bulk of its defence needs through the foreign military sale programme".

Commenting on the Secretary Rogers' remarks, ROK Acting Foreign Minister Yun Suk Heun said on 18 April that the Government had neither held consultations with the US Administration on the reported change of the US military and economic aid plan, nor had received any official report from the ROK Embassy in Washington.

He noted that such a move was expected in view of the continued cutback trend of US military aid to foreign countries and US efforts to overcome the domestic economic slump. The Acting Minister also said that such a policy seemed to be the US Government's general desire. However, he added that this would not affect the projected military modernization programme of the ROK.

The Acting Minister added that Foreign Minister Kim Yong Shik was expected to discuss the problem with Secretary Rogers during their meetings on 23 and 25 April in Washington DC.

Further to the foregoing, in his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 18 April, US Secretary of Defence Melvin Laird reportedly reaffirmed that the US would live up to its treaty commitment to the ROK and emphasized that there was no plan for a complete withdrawal of the US forces from Asia.

Also testifying before the Committee on the same day, Adm. Thomas Moorer, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that the major reduction in fiscal 1972 grant aid could be interpreted by the ROK as a breach of faith on the part of the US in the light of already executed withdrawal of some US troops. He said that the reduction in grant aid would not only jeopardize and delay the modernization programme, but it could adversely affect the ROK economic situation as the Government attempted to secure its essential defence needs unavoidably at the expense of its economic growth. Adm. Moorer also said that the ROK forces, adequately trained and equipped, had constituted an effective deterrent to a north Korean attack against the UN Command.

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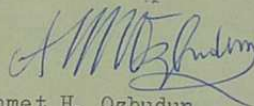
The matter of inadequate US military aid, despite earlier commitments of full support for the modernization of the ROK forces, along with the fear of further reductions of American forces, remains as a burning issue in official circles.

Although the economic prospects are not bright, Seoul's deep-set anxiety for its security may indeed force the rechannelling of funds from the economic to the military sector. This may contribute to the postponement of the target date for the 3rd Economic Development Plan; cause dissatisfaction in the nation; and even contribute to political and social unrest in the future.

Government leaders, disillusioned by withering US credibility, are fully aware of the dilemma, but will nevertheless accord priority to national security.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,



Ahmet H. Ozbudun
Principal Secretary