



Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/20830
5 September 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

NOTE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The attached letter dated 5 September 1989 from the Permanent Observer of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations was addressed to the President of the Security Council. In accordance with the request therein contained, the letter is being circulated as a document of the Security Council.

Annex

Letter dated 5 September 1989 from the Permanent Observer of
the Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the
President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you a document dated 5 September 1989 on the position of the Republic of Korea on the question of its United Nations membership.

It would be highly appreciated if you would have this letter and the enclosed document circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sang Yong PARK
Ambassador

Enclosure

Position of the Republic of Korea on the question of its
United Nations membership

The Republic of Korea was inaugurated following the general elections held in May 1948 under the observation of the United Nations pursuant to General Assembly resolution 112 (II) of 14 November 1947. The United Nations General Assembly declared, through its resolution 195 (III) of 12 December 1948, that "there has been established a lawful Government (the Government of the Republic of Korea) having effective control and jurisdiction over that part of Korea ... and that this is the only such Government in Korea."

In 1949, the Republic of Korea applied for membership in the United Nations. The Korean application was discussed in the Security Council. Nine members of the Council supported a draft resolution recommending the admission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, but no recommendation was made to the General Assembly because of the opposition of one permanent member. The same year, the General Assembly, through its resolution 296 G (IV) of 22 November 1949, determined that "the Republic of Korea is, in its judgement, a peace-loving State within the meaning of Article 4 of the Charter, is able and willing to carry out the obligations of the Charter, and should therefore be admitted to membership in the United Nations."

In subsequent years, the Republic of Korea renewed its applications several times. Member States friendly to the Republic of Korea also sponsored the Korean applications. Each time, the admission of the Republic of Korea was blocked in the Security Council. In 1957, the General Assembly, through its resolution 1144 A (XII) of 25 October 1957 reaffirmed that "the Republic of Korea is fully qualified for and should be admitted to membership in the United Nations."

Since 1973 the Republic of Korea has publicly declared that it is not opposed to North Korean membership in the United Nations. The Republic of Korea believes that the admission of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations, as a modus vivendi pending unification, would help to increase opportunities for contacts and co-operation between the two Koreas and create an environment conducive to the sustained inter-Korean dialogue for the peaceful resolution of the Korean question.

President Roh Tae Woo of the Republic of Korea, in his address at the United Nations General Assembly on 18 October 1988, expressed the sincere hope of the Republic of Korea that North Korea would participate fully in the international community, allowing South and North Korea to work towards mutual trust and co-operation in the best common interest of the entire Korean nation.

The North Korean allegation that admission of the two Koreas to membership in the United Nations would perpetuate the division of the country is contradictory to the continued North Korean pursuit of a de facto two-Korea policy. For instance, North Korea has joined most of the United Nations specialized agencies of which

the Republic of Korea has long been a member, and is participating together with the Republic of Korea in the work of the Asian Group and the Group of 77 within the United Nations system. North Korea has acceded to several international treaties and conventions to which the Republic of Korea is already a signatory. North Korea is maintaining diplomatic relations with as many as 72 countries which have diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea.

Thus, the North Korean argument against the admission of both Koreas into the United Nations can not stand the test of reality. It should be noted that North Korea itself applied for admission into the United Nations in 1949 and 1952. On behalf of North Korea, a permanent member of the Security Council proposed the simultaneous admission of both Koreas in 1957 and 1958. None of these applications was acted upon favourably in the Security Council.

It is an anomaly in the history of the United Nations that a country such as the Republic of Korea has been kept out of the world body for more than 40 years against the aspirations of its people. In fact, the birth and early history of the Republic of Korea are directly related to important actions of the United Nations. Therefore, the principle of universality further justifies the admission of the Republic of Korea. Universality of membership remains a fundamental feature of the United Nations.

The Republic of Korea, with a population of over 42 million and the world's tenth largest trade volume, maintains diplomatic relations with most of the States Members of the United Nations. It has continued to make contributions to the goals of the United Nations through its participation in many executive bodies of international organizations in the United Nations system. Currently, the Republic of Korea is an executive board member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The Seoul Olympiad was one of the most successful ever to be staged, in which the best athletes of 160 countries met in sporting arenas for the first time in 12 years, transcending differences in ideology and social systems. It further demonstrates the ability and the will of the people of the Republic of Korea to contribute to peace and harmony within the world community.

The Republic of Korea is a peace-loving country. It is fully qualified to become a State Member of the United Nations. The Republic of Korea is prepared and willing to join the United Nations at an early date to do its due part in the interest of promoting world peace and international co-operation.

