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NOTE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The attached letter dated 9 November 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 contained in the letter, the text is being circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex

Letter dated 9 November 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 forward to you the document entitled "The principle of universality and the United Nations membership of the Republic of Korea".

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

The principle of universality and the United Nations
membership of the Republic of Korea

[9 November 1989]

I

During the current session of the General Assembly, a particularly positive development has attracted the attention of the international community. A great many delegations have advocated or expressed their support for the principle of universality with respect to membership in the United Nations and other international organizations. The Republic of Korea welcomes this development in the belief that it is conducive not only to enhancing further the prevailing international climate of détente and co-operation but also to the early realization of its United Nations membership.

Nearly 50 delegations, in their statements during the general debate in the General Assembly, expressed their support for the admission of the two Koreas into the United Nations, simultaneously or separately, in conformity with the principle of universality. The number of States supporting the position of the Republic of Korea on the question of its United Nations membership is rapidly increasing. A total of 18 delegations, including several non-aligned and Socialist States, have newly expressed such support at the current General Assembly session. It should not be overlooked that there are many other delegations which maintain the same support, although they did not repeat it in public this time.

Special note is also taken of the recent General Assembly document containing an aide-mémoire of a permanent member of the Security Council on the role of the United Nations. The document emphasizes, among other principal policy elements of States towards the United Nations, the realization of the principle of universality and desirability of participation by all members of the world community in international organizations. The Government of the Republic of Korea views such developments as significant and encouraging. These should be regarded as a testimony to the fact that the legitimate right of the Republic of Korea to United Nations membership is recognized by most nations.

II

The position of the Republic of Korea on the question of its United Nations membership was elaborated in document S/20830 dated 5 September 1989. The essence of the position of the Republic of Korea is that the entry of both South and North Korea into the United Nations is desirable as an interim measure pending reunification of the nation. United Nations membership of both Koreas will in no way serve to perpetuate the national division, as contended by North Korea, but rather will help to ease tension and promote peace on the Korean peninsula, thus bringing about a more favourable environment for peaceful reunification. If North Korea is unwilling or not yet ready to join the United Nations, the Republic of Korea, fully qualified for and long desiring membership in the United Nations, should be admitted to the world body without further delay.

The Charter of the United Nations stipulates that "Membership in the United Nations is open to all other peace-loving States which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and, in the judgement of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations." It runs counter to this provision of the Charter and the principle of universality that the Republic of Korea has not been admitted to the United Nations against its wish. Under this anomalous situation, the Republic of Korea has been deprived of its opportunity and right to make more positive contributions to the international community.

The Republic of Korea takes this opportunity to reaffirm its desire to join the United Nations and thereby contribute to international co-operation under the enhanced prestige and authority of the world body. In view of the recent positive developments in the United Nations in favour of Korea's membership and the principle of universality, the Korean Government believes that the time is ripe for serious reconsideration of the question of its membership.

The Government of the Republic of Korea expresses its strong hope that all the States Members of the United Nations, including the permanent members of the Security Council, will recognize the need for favourable re-examination of the question of Korea's membership, so that the Republic of Korea will be able to take its rightful seat in the United Nations as early as possible and assume its due role in the work of the Organization in the pursuit of international peace and prosperity.
