

May 2, 2000

The Honorable Stephen W. Bosworth
United States Ambassador to the
Republic of Korea
Embassy of the United States of America
82, Sejong-ro, Chongro-ku
Seoul, Republic of Korea 110-050

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all of the time and effort the Embassy staff devoted to making my first visit, both personally and professionally, to the Republic of Korea such a success. The country team overview led by Ben Fairfax and supported by Youngeun Anderson, Tom Gibbons, Bob Dunn, and Cho Chang-Rae provided excellent background briefings and set the stage for the four days of nuclear power- and safety-oriented meetings and facility tours which followed. Also, the comprehensive administrative arrangements made by Ms. Anderson and Mr. Cho, who most ably accompanied me and my delegation throughout our March 11-17, 2000 visit, helped me accomplish my most important visit objectives. I found my time in-country informative, challenging, stimulating, and a perfect occasion to forge ties and advance nuclear safety dialogues with the Korean nuclear community. Your staff certainly played a pivotal role in my visit.

My one regret is that we were not able to meet during my visit. I hope we can rectify that at some point in the not-too-distant future. I would like to extend an invitation to you to call on me and the other U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commissioners the next time you visit the Washington area. With the Republic of Korea's announced commitment to an active, ambitious nuclear program, we will continue to have much to discuss. I look forward to our meeting.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

May 2, 2000

Ms. Youngeun Anderson
Counselor for Environmental, Scientific,
and Technological Affairs
Embassy of the United States of America
82, Sejong-ro, Chongro-ku
Seoul, Republic of Korea 110-050

Dear Ms. Anderson:

Having now "survived" and recuperated from my very ambitious schedule in the ROK. I wanted to thank you again for all of the time and effort that you and the EST staff devoted to making my first visit to the ROK an experience I shall not forget. My primary objectives in coming were to learn more about the scope and direction of the Korean nuclear program and to meet and open a safety dialogue with the people most responsible for its policy formulation, implementation, and safety. EST's fine planning and arrangements helped me achieve these objectives. As you know, I was able to meet with many influential members of the Korean nuclear community. I made excellent contacts and received comprehensive background briefings as well as first-hand insights into the ROK's current and projected nuclear program and activities. I very much appreciated everything you and your staff did to support my visit, particularly when you were so short-handed. But even with that difficulty, you left us in Mr. Cho's more than capable hands when you could not escort us personally on our facility visits outside Seoul. We were well taken care of throughout our stay.

I hope to return to Korea during my tenure and have more time to devote to facility visits. Four days were simply not enough to cover a nuclear program as diverse as the ROK's. I wish you the best of luck in your EST assignment and look forward to the opportunity to work with you again.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

cc: Ambassador Stephen W. Bosworth
American Embassy Seoul

May 2, 2000

Mr. Chang-Rae Cho
Senior EST Specialist
Office of Environmental, Scientific,
and Technological Affairs
Embassy of the United States of America
82, Sejong-ro, Chongro-ku
Seoul, Republic of Korea 110-050

Dear Mr. Cho:

I want to thank you once more for taking such extraordinary care of my delegation and me during our March 11-17, 2000 visit to the Republic of Korea. I very much appreciated the fine arrangements you made for us, the quiet competence with which you carried everything out, and all of the insights and information with which you enriched our time together. You were probably the single most important factor in the definite success of my trip. Thank you for support and care that went far "above and beyond."

You had mentioned that you might be in the Washington area attending a Foreign Service Institute class this fall. Please let us know if this works out. We would enjoy having the opportunity to "turn the table" and enhance the first visit to the U.S.A. for you. I look forward to seeing you then.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

cc: Ambassador Stephen W. Bosworth
American Embassy Seoul

May 2, 2000

Dr. Chung-Won Cho
Director General for Nuclear Safety
Ministry of Science and Technology
Government Complex - Gwachun
Kyonggi-do
Republic of Korea

Dear Dr. Cho:

I want to thank you again for the opportunity to meet with you on March 13 during my first visit to the Republic of Korea. I found your overview of the ROK's nuclear power and nuclear safety situation both informative and insightful. I particularly appreciated the candor that characterized our discussions. I also appreciated the many arrangements made by both KINS and KAERI to accommodate my meetings and facility tours at the Daeduk Science Center the next day. It was, all together, a very successful trip for me. As a result, I have developed a more thorough knowledge of and appreciation for the scope and direction of the ROK's nuclear program and activities, the planning that underlies them, and the challenges you face. I also met several key members of the ROK's nuclear community and hope that I was able to either open or advance an all-important nuclear safety dialogue with them. These were the primary objectives of my visit. I think they were well met.

Let me also thank you for the wonderful hospitality which you and Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety Lee Hun-Gyu so warmly and graciously extended to my delegation and me. I think we must have experienced here one of the great strengths of the Korean culture. You made our time with the MOST both memorable and satisfying.

I was pleased to deliver for the MOST's consideration an NRC proposal to renew for another five years the NRC-MOST technical information exchange and general cooperation arrangement. Our current arrangement is due to expire this June. KINS has requested a tripartite NRC-MOST-KINS arrangement this time. The NRC Office of International Programs has revised the draft and I am now formally transmitting a copy to reflect this. We look forward to receiving any further ROK comments as well as to the early conclusion of our renewal arrangement. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to expedite this process.

We have also, as promised, passed to the U.S. Department of State your request for U.S. support of the candidacy of Dr. Kim Seong-Yun for the position of IAEA Deputy Director General for Science and Nuclear Applications. As I explained during my visit, our Executive Branch is actually responsible for developing the U.S. Government position on such vacancies. It was already aware of Dr. Kim's candidacy, but we have reiterated your Government's keen interest and strong support.

Dr. Cho

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Again, thank you very much for the time and attention you devoted to my visit. Please pass my thanks and best regards to Deputy Director General Lee as well. I hope to see you both again soon, either during a return trip to the ROK or during your next visit to the Washington area.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

Enclosure:
Draft NRC-MOST-KINS Renewal
Arrangement

May 2, 2000

Mr. Yang Uoo Choe
Senior Vice President
Nuclear Power Division
Korea Electric Power Corporation
Kangnam
Seoul 135-791
Republic of Korea

Mr. Myung-Kook Moon, General Manager
Nuclear Power Generation Department
Korea Electric Power Corporation
Kangnam
Seoul 135-791
Republic of Korea

Dear Messrs. Choe and Moon:

I would like to express my gratitude for all of the time and effort which I know went into KEPCO's planning for and support of my March 13 visit to your Headquarters offices and my March 15 and 16 visits to the Ulchin and Kori Nuclear Generating Stations, respectively. You could not have done more to make my trip not only interesting and highly informative but also extremely comfortable. KEPCO took every possible action to assure that I received comprehensive briefings (with adequate time for questions and discussions) both in Seoul and then again before and during my facility tours. I was impressed by the candor and the perceptiveness of the views expressed throughout. I am grateful for that, as well as for the very gracious hospitality proffered. Thank you for making my first visit to Korea truly memorable. I only wish that I had had more time to spend in Korea.

As I mentioned during my "exit interviews" at both Ulchin and Kori, your state-of-the-art, interactive visitor centers are most impressive. I complimented Mr. Hong Jang-Hee and Mr. Kim Jong Shin for what appeared to be clean, well-run, and well-maintained plants with competent operating personnel and enviable availability records. KEPCO has a right to be proud of its nuclear power program. My only caution would be to do your best to avoid developing operational complacency. As you know, we can never, never rest when it comes to safety.

Messrs. Choe and Moon

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I appreciated the opportunity to meet and to interact with both of you. I hope to visit the Republic of Korea again during my tenure as an NRC Commissioner and look forward to advancing the dialogue we have begun. I wish you continued success and increased public confidence in your nuclear power program.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

May 2, 2000

The Honorable Se-Jong Kim
President
Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety
P.O. Box 114, Yusong
Taejon
Republic of Korea, 305-600

Dear President Kim:

Having now returned from my first visit to the Republic of Korea, I wanted to thank you again for the opportunity to meet and to exchange views with you, Senior Adviser Dr. Eun Young-Soo, and other KINS managers on March 14. I found our discussion on current issues in the Korean nuclear safety and regulatory program and Dr. Eun's briefing on KINS' organization, history, and scope of activities both interesting and highly informative. I was also impressed with the demonstration of the capabilities of KINS' Computerized Technical Advisory System for Radiological Emergencies. I understand why KINS is proud to have developed it. You are to be commended for proposing the CARE system to the IAEA to help enhance nuclear safety worldwide.

I want to thank you as well for the hospitality that KINS so generously showered upon us - from the comfortable transportation provided throughout the day to the delicious lunch you hosted for my delegation and me. You certainly succeeded in making my visit delightful and memorable. Please convey my compliments to everyone responsible, and particularly to Mrs. Hah, who accompanied us to our all of our appointments and orchestrated everything so smoothly.

You asked, during our discussion, whether there was an NRC document that might help you better understand NRC's operating principles and practices. I am enclosing a copy of the two volume Draft USNRC Strategic Plan, Fiscal Year 2000 - Fiscal Year 2005. The "Corporate Management Strategies" in Part 2, particularly, detail our agency-wide decisions and assumptions, while the individual Nuclear Reactor, Nuclear Materials, Nuclear Waste, and International Nuclear Safety Support chapters elaborate these specific areas. I think you will find the two-part NUREG-1614, Volume 2, a useful "walk-through" of our five-year plan.

I am also formally forwarding the redrafted proposal to renew our technical information exchange and general cooperation arrangement proposal. I understand from our Office of International Programs that it has been modified, at KINS request, to reflect three equal parties: NRC, the Ministry of Science and Technology, and KINS. We welcome this expansion and look forward to receiving any additional comments you and the MOST might have.

President Kim

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I look forward to seeing you again and to continuing the nuclear safety dialogue we have now opened person-to-person. I know that our staffs stay in close contact, but I am a "hands-on" person and I enjoy direct interaction. Please let me know when you next schedule a visit to the Washington area. I, in turn, eagerly anticipate a return trip to the Republic of Korea during my tenure as an NRC Commissioner. I will definitely plan to spend more time at the Daeduk Science Center then. I wish you continued success in your support of the safety and regulation of the Korean nuclear power program.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

Enclosures:

1. Draft USNRC Strategic Plan, Fiscal Year
2000 - Fiscal Year 2005 (NUREG-1614, Volume 2,
Parts 1 and 2)
2. Renewal Arrangement Proposal (04/07/00 Redraft)

May 2, 2000

Dr. In-Soon Chang, President
Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute
P.O. Box105, Yusong
Taejon
Republic of Korea, 305-600

Dear Dr. Chang:

Having now returned to my office, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you formally for the many preparations made and the effort expended to accommodate my March 14 visit to KAERI. The media presentation on KAERI's history and activities was both interesting and informative, and the tours of the Hot Test Loop Facility, the Severe Accident Research Laboratory, and the Integrated Test Facility focused on what I had most wanted to see. Unfortunately, I did not have sufficient time to see more of the KAERI facilities. Perhaps a return trip in the future will allow me to do so. You have some excellent nuclear research facilities at Daeduk and are performing some significant work. I would very much like to see and hear more about them.

I also regret that urgent personnel matters shortened our scheduled time together. It was kind of you to break away from union negotiations to meet me, but I hope next time to be able to engage in some substantive discussions with you and your senior managers. I understand that this is a transition period for KAERI and that you face challenging circumstances. I am highly interested in your "vision" for the Institute - where you hope to direct KAERI's course over the next several years, how you plan to get there, and what will be your continued involvement in support of nuclear safety research. Please let me know whenever you plan to visit the Washington area. I would welcome the chance to advance this dialogue.

Dr. Park Chang K. was kind enough to stand in for you at the beginning of my call on KAERI. Please convey my thanks and best regards to him as well. I wish you and the KAERI community a successful voyage of discovery.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

May 2, 2000

Mr. Jang-Hee Hong, Director
Ulchin Nuclear Power Division
Korea Electric Power Corporation
#84-4, Bugu-ri, Buk-Myeon
Ulchin-gun
Kyoung-buk
Republic of Korea 767-890

Dear Mr. Hong:

I wanted to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for the many preparations made and the efforts expended to accommodate my delegation's March 15 visit to the Ulchin Nuclear Generating Station. I particularly appreciated the comprehensive briefings which we received from you and your senior managers both before and during our tours of the Nuclear Information Center, the Training Center, the Unit 3 turbine hall and main control room, the onsite radioactive waste storage facility, and the Units 5 and 6 construction site. I found the briefings to be both interesting and highly informative, substantially boosting my understanding of what we later saw. I offer my compliments for what appeared to me to be an engaging, state-of-the art visitor facility, an orderly construction site, and a very clean, well-run, and well-maintained nuclear station staffed by earnest and involved operating personnel. You have much to be proud of and an availability factor to be envied.

I also want to thank you for the extra time you spent accompanying me back to Kangnung as well as the very gracious hospitality you extended throughout the day. I enjoyed the chance to have informal discussions and a frank exchange of views with you.

In closing, I would like to extend my best wishes to you and to the entire staff of the Ulchin Nuclear Generating Station. May you continue to operate safely and successfully - and may you find the key to reaching the public and increasing its confidence in what you do.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield

May 2, 2000

Mr. Jong Shin Kim, Director
Kori Nuclear Power Division
Korea Electric Power Corporation
216 Kori
Jangan-eup, Kijang-gun
Pusan 619-711
Republic of Korea

Dear Mr. Kim:

Having returned now to my office, I wanted to thank you again for the many preparations made and the efforts expended to accommodate my delegation's March 16 visit to the Kori Nuclear Generating Station. I particularly appreciated the overview briefings which we received from you and your senior managers both before and during our tours of the Kori Exhibition Hall; the Kori Unit 4 backup turbine generator room, spent fuel pool, main control room, turbine hall, and diesel generator room; and the Kori low-level radioactive waste storage building. I found them to be both interesting and informative, substantially boosting my understanding of what we later saw. I would like to compliment you for what appeared to be a very clean, orderly, well-run, and well-maintained station with conscientious, professional operators. You should be proud of what you have achieved.

I also enjoyed and was pleased you had scheduled an open exchange with plant personnel to conclude the formal portion of our visit. This allowed us to focus on your experience with the Kori Unit 1 steam generator replacement as well as the use of your Level 1 probabilistic safety assessment in plant operations. Their thoughts and comments proved to be very informative and useful.

In closing, I would like to extend my best wishes to you and the entire staff of the Kori Nuclear Generating Station. May you continue to operate safely and successfully.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jeffrey S. Merrifield