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SEP 07 2006

TO: GEN Burwell B Bell

CC: Gen Pete Pace  
Eric Edelman  
ADM Bill Fallon

FROM: Donald Rumsfeld *DR*

SUBJECT: Results of Ulchi Focus Lens (UFL)

Thanks for your encouraging note about ROK performance during the UFL exercise.

It sounds like your idea of a turnover by 2009 makes military sense, based on what you saw. We will keep the press on from back here. There will continue to be political issues we will need to work through.

Thanks.

Attach. 9/4/06 USFK memo to SD re: US-ROK Presidential Summit and MCM/SCM

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Stavridis, James, VADM, OSD

From: Bell, Burwell GEN [REDACTED]  
Sent: Monday, September 04, 2006 1:58 AM  
To: Pace, Peter GEN (CJCS); Stavridis, Jim VADM (SMA to SecDef)

[REDACTED]

Subject: US-ROK Presidential Summit and MCM/SCM ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~**Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~**

Jim:

Please provide the attached to Secretary Rumsfeld. Thanks.

Respectfully, B. B.

Mr. Secretary and Chairman:

1. ~~(CONF)~~ Sirs. We have just completed our annual warfighting exercise, Ulchi Focus Lens. Given the environment of the upcoming Presidential Summit, and Military / Security Consultative Meetings, I thought it would be useful to provide you with my now better informed assessment of the ROK military's capability to command and control operations at the theater of war level. As you know, there is great public and private debate here in Korea as to when the ROK military will be "ready" to execute independent command of its forces in wartime, with the US in a supporting role. Having now completed both major exercises RSOI and UFL during my tenure at CFC, I think I am in a position to provide a fairly informed assessment.

2. ~~(CONF)~~ Bottom line up front: It's my assessment that the ROK military is capable today of executing high level battle command at the theater of war level, with our support and with access to U.S. bridging capabilities. The current and very loud debate over here in Korea regarding timelines (i.e. "when") is more a question of "will" vice "way." The politics of this issue are visceral in the ROK, but the military assessment is undeniable -- given the nature and readiness of the threat, they can indeed independently defend their country successfully now, with our over the shoulder and complementary help, and with access to selected U.S. battle command / ISR systems.

3. ~~(CONF)~~ During this UFL, I invited the ROK CJCS to imbed senior planners, operators and logisticians in the CFC command structure and they aggressively responded. As such, we had imbedded "right seat ride" JCS flag officers in our Command Post TANGO with us. Additionally, the ROKs manned their national wartime command bunker (B-1 Bunker) with senior governmental and military personnel throughout the exercise. They eavesdropped on all of our collaborative battle command activities and sessions, and from time to time came up on the net with advice, proposals, and help. During two collaborative sessions, we brought

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their JCS in as principal participants and largely they responded effectively. During one theater logistics session, the ROK Chairman, General Lee, Sang Hee, was a principal participant.

4. ~~(S//NF)~~ Importantly, throughout the exercise we allowed the ROK senior members of Combined Forces Command to take a lead role. Also, as a result of his wife's sudden illness (she's recovering well), I removed our C-3, MG John Morgan, from the exercise. As such, the principal Intelligence, Operations and Logistics Officers for CFC were all three ROK officers. The Intelligence and Logistics Officers were particularly impressive, while the stand-in ROK C-3 was adequate and rapidly improved.

More impressively, when given the mission to oversee one day's Master Air Attack Plan approval process, and with the requirement to plan the seizure of Pyongyang as the exercise neared culmination, my deputy and Ground Force Commander, General Lee, Hee Won, demonstrated advanced theater level acumen. While they need more training, exercise opportunities, and governmental support, ROK military leaders have learned well from us over the years and are a heck of a lot better at this craft than perhaps we give them credit.

5. ~~(S//NF)~~ I recommend that during important upcoming political-military engagement opportunities (Summit, MCM, SCM), the United States carefully but firmly move the ROK leaders to a position of taking aboard independent command of their forces in wartime not later than -- again not later than -- 2009. This will give us three years to help them train and exercise, while organizing and readying ourselves also. We should do this to not only recognize their capabilities and inherent national responsibilities, but also to take down the lightning rod for political-military dissent that is Combined Forces Command. In doing this, we must also make change to the mission of the United Nations Command, and move it to a supporting role vice lead role for Armistice Maintenance and Crisis Management. My sense is that this is natural and indeed necessary to put the U.S. in a supporting role to the ROKs in our Alliance.

6. ~~(S//NF)~~ There are many on the "lets not change" side who are good people and indeed great friends of ours. Nonetheless, they will need to shift their emphasis from "don't do this" to "how can we help." We should all encourage them to do so.

7. ~~(S//NF)~~ I hope what I have provided is helpful. If other decisions are made that take us in a bit of a different direction or extend timelines, we will of course positively and fully support. Nonetheless and to position our Alliance for the future, my sense is that 2009 is the latest we should bargain for in making fundamental change to our superb and what I am sure will be lasting Alliance.

Very Respectfully,

B. B.



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