

accepted these assurances. The commanders then agreed to the designation of areas in the proposed demilitarized zone where prisoners not directly repatriated would be turned over to the custody of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission.

The Korean Armistice Agreement was signed on July 27 (Korean time) and the cease-fire took effect 12 hours later.

Under the Agreement, a military demarcation line was fixed from which both sides would withdraw two kilometers to prevent the occurrence of incidents. It generally followed the line of battle and was near the 38th parallel. Neither side might reinforce its establishment in Korea, but provision was made for the maintenance of existing manpower and matériel.

The Agreement established a Military Armistice Commission of five senior officers from each side and a Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission composed of two senior officers appointed by Sweden and Switzerland and two by Poland and Czechoslovakia. "Neutral nations" were defined as those nations whose combatant forces have not participated in the hostilities in Korea. The Military Armistice Commission, which was to be assisted by ten Joint Observer Teams, had the general mission of supervising the implementation of the Agreement and negotiating settlement of any violations. The functions of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (which was provided with twenty Neutral Nations inspection teams under its sole control) included inspection and supervision of the permitted replacements of men and matériel and the investigation at the request of the Military Armistice Commission of reported truce violations outside the demilitarized zone.

Machinery was established to co-ordinate the plans for repatriating prisoners of war, Joint Red Cross teams were provided for to oversee the welfare of prisoners, and displaced civilians who wished to return to their pre-war homes across the demarcation line were to be assisted to do so.

Finally the commanders agreed to recommend to the governments concerned on both sides "that, within three months after the Armistice Agreement is signed and becomes effective a political conference of a higher level of both sides be held by representatives appointed respectively to settle through negotiation the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, etc."

The President of the General Assembly, in a statement delivered when the armistice was signed, termed it the first step toward a peaceful settlement in Korea. He said the next step was "to call the United Nations General Assembly back into session to prepare the way for calling the political conference recommended in the armistice terms" and announced that the Assembly would reconvene in New York on August 17.