

March 16, 1972

**Preliminary Meeting between Delegates of North
and South Korea Discussing Official Visits and
Laying the Groundwork for a Meeting between
High-Ranking Officials**

Citation:

"Preliminary Meeting between Delegates of North and South Korea Discussing Official Visits and Laying the Groundwork for a Meeting between High-Ranking Officials", March 16, 1972, Wilson Center Digital Archive, South Korean Foreign Ministry Archive.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/110823>

Summary:

The North presses for Jang Gi-yeong to visit earlier, while announcing that Kim Yeong-ju agrees with the suggestion to meet with Lee Hu-rak.

Original Language:

Korean

Contents:

Translation - English

North: I have accurately delivered Director Lee Hu-rak's message to comrade Kim Yeong-ju, the Director of Organization and Guidance at the Central Committee of the Party. Director Comrade Kim Yeong-ju in principle agrees to the issues you mentioned. We will accept Representative Jang Gi-yeong and his assistant Jeong Tae Yeon according to the process and method you wish. We will also clearly provide a memorandum regarding safety assurance signed by Comrade Director of Organization and Guidance when we greet them. We believe it is preferable that we mutually don't describe detailed positions in the memorandum. You should address the memorandum to Director Kim Yeong-ju and we should address it to Director Lee Hu-rak. The detailed schedule for your delegate and his assistant will be planned with sufficient consideration of your delegate's opinion and we also have no objection that the schedule should be discussed between Mr. Jeong and Kim Deok-hyeon when it is confirmed and whenever changes are made.

Comrade Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju mentioned that people wish that the South and the North reach a peaceful resolution of the South-North issues, and also that it is very important to accelerate the Red Cross meeting. However, our meeting is even more important. The best procedure will be to facilitate conversation first and then solve the nation's issue of peaceful reunification. Comrade Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju, in principle, welcomes your suggestion to send your delegate and his assistant to the North on April 25th, and also mentioned that the dates between April 1st to 11th is more efficient for us. Comrade Director of Organization and Guidance mentioned that we will have a modest celebration for Premier Kim Il Sung's sixtieth birthday. Premier Kim Il Sung prohibits any political event on April 15th. Therefore, we have not invited any visitors from foreign countries and are not expecting any event.

The circumstance is completely different from what it is currently being discussed in the media. In fact, our schedule is expected to be more complex after April 15th. Around April 25th, we have May 1st [event] and are expecting some foreign visitors. Therefore, we will be busier during this period. That is to say, you will be able to meet with Comrade Director Kim Yeong-ju and other comrades if you visit between the dates of April 1st to 11th. I propose we meet tomorrow afternoon or during the morning the day after tomorrow regarding this issue. When we meet, please provide us with a response regarding this. I could directly phone comrade Director Kim Yeong-ju from this location to report [your response] and receive a conclusion. This is the end of the official message.

South: You just mentioned that our meeting is even more important than accelerating the Red Cross meeting. What do you mean by our meeting?

North: It refers to the meetings such as the ones between Mr. Jeong and Kim Deok-hyeon and visits from Representative Jang Gi-yeong. In other words, it refers to our meetings that are processed aside to the Red Cross meeting.

South: What is your response to the issues that I mentioned as personal opinion when we met on the 14th? I assume you have reported my personal opinion to Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju. (Read through notes.)

North: I have indeed reported what you described as your personal opinion to Comrade Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju in person. Kim Yeong-ju, Director of Organization and Guidance welcomed it, mentioning it is as a good idea. He mentioned that he is willing to meet with Director Lee Hu-rak if he is the one with President Park's deepest trust. He mentioned, if so we will be able to solve the issues most quickly through a direct approach. However, regarding the meeting location, he stated we should reconsider since there is no reason to travel to a third country when we have sufficient places that are quiet and appropriate to meet within our country. When the two officials meet, it seems there are sufficient issues to

be discussed.

South: I personally believe it is quite difficult to hold the meeting within the country in terms of maintaining confidentiality. When the high-level officials determine to meet, Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju must visit us or Director Lee Hu-rak must cross over to the North somehow. However, considering the current circumstances, they must pass through Panmunjeom and there are quite a number of hardships in the process in terms of confidentiality. In order to maintain confidentiality, the officials must stop over at a third country to visit Seoul or Pyongyang. In this regard, a third country will be an appropriate location. Anyways, Mr. Kim and I should make cooperative efforts to promote a meeting for the high-level officials. When we move on to discussing it in detail, we could both examine the issue of where to hold the meeting.

North: Did you also report to Director Lee Hu-rak on the statement that you mentioned as your personal opinion?

South: I certainly did. I have reported to him in detail even on the conversations that we discussed as personal opinions along with the official discussions. Director Lee Hu-rak also provided positive remarks regarding the meeting between Director Lee Hu-rak and Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju. Have you reported to Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju on my personal suggestion regarding Mr. Kim and I exchanging visits between Seoul and Pyongyang with permissions from high-level officials?

North: I have not reported regarding the issue [to Director Kim Yeong-ju].

South: Please report to him on the issue and provide us with a response when we meet next time. I believe it will be very helpful if Mr. Kim visits Seoul to meet with Director Lee Hu-rak in person, and also if I visit Pyongyang to meet with Director of Organization and Guidance, Kim Yeong-ju. If we listened to the [high-level] official's messages in person and report to the supervisors in person, it will be very helpful for the high-level officials to meet with each other. President Jang Gi-yeong's visit to the North is only a part of exchanging conversation. The two of us (Kim Deok-hyeon and Jeong Hong-jin) will be able to provide more practical functions.

North: If Mr. Jeong will visit, when would it be?

South: In this case, it can happen much faster. We could enable Mr. Kim and I to visit Seoul and Pyongyang with ease, couldn't we? The reason for us to set President Jang's visit on April 25th was because we considered your schedule but also because we considered President Jang Gi-yeong's health so that he is able to make the visit during the end of April when it is warmer. The date was set as it is also because President Jang Gi-yeong himself needed some time to prepare.

North: Then let's meet tomorrow (17th) again.

South: Let us meet at the Freedom House on the 17th. Since we have the Red Cross working-level meeting tomorrow, I will confirm the time when the meeting finishes. Let us plan on around 13:30 to 14:00 roughly.