

February 13, 1973
Telegram from Beijing to Bucharest, SECRET,
Urgent, No. 059.139

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Summary:

Gavrilescu speculates the possibilities that DPRK Foreign Minister Heo Dam meets Kissinger as well as that the inter-Korean conflict is raised as a major issue in Sino-American negotiations.

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No.: 059.139

To: Comrade Ad Interim Director Lucian Petrescu

With respect to the visit made by Heo Dam [Ho Tam], North Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the People's Republic of China, we would like to inform you about the following matters:

In diplomatic circles, the visit is seen as an expression of the good relations existing between China and Korea.

The fact that the visit was made shortly after that of the Chinese Foreign Minister, Ji Pengfei, to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is interpreted in diplomatic and journalistic circles as being tightly connected to the evolution of the situation in Southeast Asia.

If the fact that Heo Dam chose his visit to China to be the first in his subsequent tour, which takes him to Pakistan and Algeria, is seen as normal, the choice of timing is seen as closely connected with the Sino-American talks, brought about by the forthcoming visit of [National Security] Advisor Kissinger to Beijing.

Consequently, it is not to be ruled out that Heo Dam meets Kissinger. This belief is based on the things mentioned in the speech given by Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei at the February 9th reception, namely that:

□□ No solution was found to the Korean problem, although 28 years have passed since the end of the Second World War;

□□

□□ The division of the country is one of the main factors generating tensions in Asia;

□□

□□ It is presently very urgently needed to guarantee favorable conditions for the peaceful unification of Korea, without any interference from the outside into internal affairs, which is why it is being requested to withdraw American troops from South Korea, as well as to cease the activity of the so-called UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea.

□□

The fact that the Chinese government is linking the relaxation of tensions in Asia, a premise of the Sino-American rapprochement, clearly mentioned in the February 1972 Shanghai Communiqué, and the withdrawal of American troops in South Korea, is given a special meaning.

Therefore, it is expected that during Kissinger's talks in Beijing, in case a Kissinger-Heo Dam meeting is impossible, on top of discussing issues related to Indochina, to the Paris conference on Vietnam, as well as to Sino-American relations, the Korean problem will be given a prominent spot, in the sense that [the Chinese will try to] persuade the Americans to accept direct tripartite negotiations so that the process of détente between the two Koreas, and in the Far East in general, is consolidated.

The Chilean ambassador stressed on one of the significant details of the conversation between Kim Il Sung and Foreign Minister Clodomiro Almeyda Medina, namely on the firm decision of the North Korean government to consolidate the process of the large diplomatic opening it started in 1972 through the consistent advancement of a more flexible foreign policy both in its rapports with South Korea as well as towards Japan and the United States. As an immediate premise for the development of détente from Southeast Asia to the entire Far East, Kim Il Sung expressed his desire to abolish the presence of American troops in South Korea, the peaceful unification of the country being conceived as a long-term step-by-step process, without any interference from the outside.

Signed: N. Gavrilesco