

April 22, 1974

**Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, SECRET,
Urgent, No. 060.180**

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Summary:

Heo Dam seeks to replace the armistice with a peace treaty and establish direct contact with the United States to remove American troops from the peninsula.

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To: Comrade C. Pacoste

In a conversation with the Romanian Ambassador Dumitru Popa, Vice-Premier Heo Dam [Ho Tam], the North Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs, referred to the meaning of the recent proposal made by the Supreme People's Assembly regarding the initiation of direct contacts with the United States of America, and the replacement of the current armistice with a peace treaty.

He underlined the idea that the recent move of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, initiated and prepared under the direct command of President Kim Il Sung, aims at the creation of fertile premises for the continuation of the process of unification of the country with the Koreans' own forces.

Hinting at the fact that the new North Korean initiative was interpreted abroad as a diminution of the principle of solving the Korean problem independently, a principle which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea promoted until now, Heo Dam noted that the dialogue with the United States of America did not target the entire problem of the unification of the country, but only the first phase of this process—the withdrawal of American troops from the Peninsula, after which the unification would be achieved by the Koreans themselves.

Heo Dam added that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to promote the North-South dialogue according to the three principles of the July 1972 Joint Declaration.

With respect to the echo of the letter addressed to the US Congress, the North Korean Vice-Premier said that, judging from the declarations of certain American officials, the North Korean move was taken into account and analyzed with care. The US authorities are, however, in a tough spot: accepting the proposal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would affect their relations with Park Chung Hee, and refusing to accept the proposal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would expose them in front of the world public opinion.

Although Heo Dam reassumed the old position that either response from the United States would suit the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, his brief revealed this time a keener desire that the United States accepted the initiative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

He expressed his thanks to the government of the Socialist Republic of Romania for the consistent support granted to the solution for the unification of country proposed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Signed: Dumitru Popa