

**October 10, 1988**

**Note about a Conversation with the DPRK  
Ambassador to the GDR, Comrade Pak Yeong-chan,  
on 10 October 1988 in Berlin**

**Citation:**

"Note about a Conversation with the DPRK Ambassador to the GDR, Comrade Pak Yeong-chan, on 10 October 1988 in Berlin", October 10, 1988, Wilson Center Digital Archive, BStU, ZA, HA X, 245, pp. 149-152. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/114992>

**Summary:**

DPRK Ambassador Pak Yeong-chan discusses Hungary's decision to recognize the South Korean government, East German-North Korean relations, and procedures for North Korean citizens traveling to West Berlin.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

**Original Language:**

German

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Top Secret!

N O T E

About a Conversation with the DPRK Ambassador to the GDR, Comrade Pak Yeong-chan [Pak Yong Chan], on 10 October 1988 in Berlin

(The meeting was arranged following a request by Comrade Ambassador).

Comrade Ambassador Pak thanked for the chance to meet. He said he wants to provide an information and submit a request.

As it is certainly known to the GDR [Pak stated], the People's Republic [PR] of Hungary has recently established bilateral relations with South Korea without informing the DPRK in advance.

This step has been declared by the DPRK to be "treason to socialism". The PR Hungary initially sold this step as a measure in the context of developing economic relations, and as an opportunity to support the DPRK in establishing contacts and talks with South Korea. Yet this step stands in full contrast to DPRK policy on unification of the country. Precondition for any such unification is the withdrawal of U.S. occupational forces. For that reason, the DPRK considers this step by the PR Hungary as sabotaging DPRK policy and as incompatible with policy to be expected from a "socialist brother".

The DPRK has officially protested against this decision by the PR Hungary and laid out its position in the central organ "Rodong Sinmun" (the ambassador handed over a German translation of this article).

The Marxist party in South Korea has also issued an according statement.

Comrade Ambassador remarked how he had stated his position already to the GDR Deputy Foreign Minister and the GDR Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade. The Deputy Foreign Minister assured him that the GDR does not plan such a step [like the Hungarians].

This information by Comrade Ambassador was noted without comment.

Comrade Ambassador also asked to check whether it is possible to grant DPRK citizens (including members of diplomatic and administrative-technical embassy staff) the permission to exit for travel to West Berlin only when presenting a certificate issued by the DPRK Embassy.

A review was promised to Comrade Ambassador. However, it was noted that the DPRK is the only country [having diplomatic relations with the GDR] that ever came up with such a request.

The meeting was conducted in a calm and productive atmosphere.

(signed) Damm  
Major General

A d d i t i o n to Note from 10 October 1988

☐☐☐ Comrade [State Security] Minister [Erich Mielke] was informed about the content of the meeting.

☐☐

The information about the Hungarian issue was noted. This is considered business concerning only PR Hungary and DPRK.

Concerning border crossings by diplomatic DPRK personnel: The DPRK request ought to be fulfilled.

☐☐☐ Check with Major General Vogel, Main Department IV.

☐☐

The DPRK would be the only country [granted such a procedure]. However, if there are higher political interests at stake, we will do so accordingly.

☐☐☐ Another meeting was held with Comrade Ambassador [Pak] on 12 October 1988 and the following message conveyed:

☐☐

Although the DPRK is the only country having such a request, the GDR will agree to it in the interest of good relations between our states.

Preconditions are as following:

☐☐☐

☐☐☐ Members of DPRK diplomatic personnel have to present the embassy certificate at border crossings in a visible manner, and without waiting to get asked for it.

. The DPRK Embassy issues a written note to the GDR Foreign Ministry repeating the request by referring to an instruction from above. Once the note is received there will be immediate instructions going out to GDR passport control organs at the border.

☐☐☐☐

☐☐☐ Comrade Vogel, Main Department for Consular Affairs [in the GDR Foreign Ministry] was informed about the content of agreements on 13 October 1988 and asked to inform the Ministry for State Security [MfS] as soon as the DPRK Embassy note has arrived.

☐☐

(signed) Damm  
Major General