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**Liaison Report from the Romanian Embassy in
Pyongyang to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Second Division Liaison, September 19th 1954,
4262/1954**

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Summary:

The report concerns the various meetings of Romanian charge d'affairs Alexenco between the dates of 30 May and 20 August (not told in chronological order). The topics range from the cultural arts of North Korea such as ballet, the quality of healthcare and hospitals, to the status of construction of the new Romanian embassy.

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On May 30th, together with other members of the diplomatic corps, I attended the Bulgarian Ambassador's departure. On the occasion, I found out that three Bulgarian specialists arrived in the DPRK.

On May 30th, we also attended the festive meeting celebrating the International Children's Day. The Korean comrades requested all diplomatic missions to appoint someone to deliver a speech on the occasion. We assigned Comrade Stirbu Lucretia (Ciocan Lucretia), who spoke on behalf of the Romanian women in the DPRK. On this occasion, we had a meeting with the Chairman of the Pyongyang City People's Assembly, the former Ambassador to Romania, and the Secretary of the Party Committee for Pyongyang, Comrade Go Bong-gi. Given that I have addressed the Foreign Ministry three times with the request to evacuate the citizens currently living on the plot of land where our Embassy will be built, I inquired whether there are difficulties with the evacuation. He said no and that the evacuation could commence whenever we wanted. I deduced from the manner in which he responded that he was not at all aware of this issue. I told him we would like the people to be evacuated until the rainy season begins, since it would be more difficult for them to build houses afterwards.

A group of Soviet artists arrived on June 1st. Members of the diplomatic corps were also invited to greet them.

On May 25th, the Ministry of Culture and Propaganda's Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries organized a Hungarian film gala also attended by members of the diplomatic corps. The film's cinematography was good, however both focused on the struggle against the enemies seeking to sabotage the development of socialism in the People's Republic of Hungary, leaving the impression that Hungary is full of saboteurs.

On June 2nd, following a request made to the Korean Foreign Ministry to organize a visit to the Ministry of Construction in order to discuss certain issues related to the construction of the fence surrounding our Embassy building, we met with the Ministry's Head of the Construction Division. After presenting the aim of the visit, asking for his opinion and suggestion in the matter, he deemed it a good idea to build a fence given that this was the main building. After informing him how we would like this done, he said they lacked iron and could commit to building the wall.

On June 5th, the State Circus in Pyongyang performed for the diplomatic corps and specialists from partner countries. Although the artists are young, the performance, mostly stunt based, was beautiful.

On June 6th, the Soviet artists, who had arrived in the DPRK, were welcomed at the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' Party. Members of government, cultural leaders, party and state activists, specialists from partner countries and members of the diplomatic corps attended the reception. After the welcome speeches and the artists' thank you speeches, a gala also attended by Comrade Kim Il Sung took place. The program was varied and beautiful, comprising of music, dance and stage performances.

On June 8th, I visited the Soviet chargé d'affaires. Following some unimportant discussions, I informed him that our medical staff would arrive soon and that we required certain materials needed for the expansion of the hospital to 450 beds. He inquired whether the team had a fixed arrival date and for how long we would continue to send medical personnel. I told him that the Korean comrades had requested our government to continue sending medical staff, but without specifying the duration. He noted that Soviet doctors also continued to work without knowing for how long. Regarding the replacement of the teams, he mentioned that the personnel was gradually interchanged so as to ensure the continuity of the work flow, which

they considered to be very good. I informed him that a military attaché was also expected to arrive shortly. I asked his opinion regarding the issue of organizing a small reception on the occasion of replacing the medical staff. Last year, we invited embassy representatives, but since now they are further away, we are thinking of not inviting them this year. He claimed that, since this was not a national holiday, it was not necessary to invite embassy representatives.

Also on June 8th, I had a meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Comrade Ri Dong-geon [Ri Tong Gon], requesting consent for the appointment of the military attaché and delivering his biography. The Minister will notify the appropriate bodies of the request and will provide a response. I then informed him of a new medical team's arrival in Pyongyang in a few days and asked him to demand an additional car to the Sinuiju-Pyongyang train. He assured me that he would do so. He further inquired whether the old team will remain in Pyongyang for a day or two prior to its departure. I informed him that we would announce the departure details shortly. Discussing construction works in Pyongyang, he mentioned that major construction works were under way. All three-story buildings currently under construction must be completed by August 15th. The Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, the Ministry of Defense and others will be located in three-story buildings and all organizations are mobilized in a constant effort to finalize the works. Office holders and activists carry out volunteer work after 5 PM; people from surrounding towns also volunteer in Pyongyang.

The Koreans are also carrying out an intense activity in sowing rice and a number of office holders and workers have been sent to aid the peasantry in sowing the rice. From the Korean Foreign Ministry, twenty comrades have been sent.

On June 13th, the Chinese chargé d'affaires responded to our invitation and visited our hospital in Nampho. The purpose of the invitation was strengthening bilateral relations. The visit encountered certain difficulties due to an overlap with a decoration ceremony of our medical personnel by the DPRK's Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly. The ceremony commenced at 15.00, whilst the Chinese officials made the visit before lunch and had lunch together afterwards. The Chinese comrades expressed their satisfaction with our hospital's achievements and noted that this represents a great assistance to the Korean people.

On June 16th, I made a short visit to Comrade Ri Dong-geon [Ri Tong Gon]. The aim was to ask him to request Intourist [sic] to provide our medical team with meal tickets on credit since we lacked the money to acquire the tickets to Bucharest, request which has been granted. By making the payments in Korean currency, 150,000,000 renmibi [sic] worth of savings have been made.

On June 17th, I made another visit to Comrade Ri Dong-geon [Ri Tong Gon], notifying him of the Romanian Government's request to approve Comrade Tatu Jianu's appointment and, thus, I was summoned again to the Ministry. He asked which party and government officials I would like to visit. I responded I would like to consult with the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps regarding the matter, however I would be very glad if he were also able to offer some advice. He will turn to the Protocol Division on the matter and subsequently inform me. He then requested that I notify them of my intended departure date 3-4 days prior to departing. After a series of unimportant discussions, I informed him that our new medical team has a very good anatomic pathologist and coroner, who could teach several Korean students. Knowing that they are seeking to replace the hospital translator, I asked him to find a good translator since our comrades at the hospital are not familiar with Russian. He claimed he has thought about this, also due to a lack of German speaker amongst their youth, however if this is the case, he will analyze it in more detail. He further inquired about the Romanian artists who would arrive in Korea. I told him that our comrades raised the issue for informative purposes, but the comrades had understood that they would arrive.

On June 18th, I made a visit to the USSR's chargé d'affaires. After some unimportant discussions, I told him about my being re-summoned and, since he has been in Korea for a longer period of time, I asked for advice with regard to whom I should visit as part of my departure. He said that a protocol had not been established due to the special situation here, but he believes it appropriate to visit those Korean comrades I have had closer connections to, Comrade Kim Du-bong, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, and even Comrade Kim Il Sung if he is available, and Comrade Nam Il as well. Before parting, he requested that we announce them when I will depart.

Also on June 18th, we made a visit to the Mongolian Ambassador, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, whom I informed about my being re-summoned and I inquired about the conventions here upon departure. He answered there had not been many departures since he became Dean, but believes visits should be made to Comrade Kim Il Sung and the Foreign Ministry. From discussions regarding the Polish comrades' relocation to Pyongyang, I discovered that the DPRK government was preparing a building where the GDR Embassy would be accommodated.

On August 20th, we made a visit to a constructions company with respect to the fence for our future Embassy building. The discussions revealed the firm was not aware of our request. Eventually, it was established that we should address the Cabinet in order to receive approval for the necessary construction materials.

Also on June 20th, we visited the Ministry of Propaganda. Due to Comrade Ho Chong-suk's illness (Minister of Culture and Propaganda), we were received by Deputy Minister Comrade Cheon Yul. He mentioned from the beginning that they were awaiting the group of Romanian artists. In the attempt to inform him that the matter is purely informative, he mentioned not being aware of the details, however he was instructed by Comrade Kim Il Sung to make preparations for the artists' arrival. To his knowledge, around 100 artists are to arrive, and their Korean counterparts are aware of this and enthusiastic about it, since many of them know each other from the Festival. Towards the end of the meeting, I inquired as to what I should convey to the comrades from the appropriate Ministry on behalf of the Korean Propaganda Ministry. He mentioned among others that he would be happy if he received more compositions from our classic musicians. He also asked whether I had brought vinyl records back home. I told him I intended to and requested our comrades to prepare some.

On June 21st, I paid a visit to the Polish chargé d'affaires. The Polish Embassy had already moved into the new buildings in Pyongyang. What was notable was that I had barely sat down, that he began criticizing the Korean comrades, mentioning they are experiencing so many difficulties in completing the works for their new Embassy building, that only in a capitalist country would he expect to encounter such difficulties. Knowing his outrage was nothing new, I sought to avoid such a discussion and mentioned the comrades probably had big hardships out of their reach given that the entire country had suffered great damages. Changing the topic, I asked how things were going with their hospital. He said assembly works on the five barracks continued, with five more on their way, and they would be able to commence work in the new hospital in March next year. I further inquired whether they had signed any agreement on cultural collaboration with Korea. He said the People's Republic of Poland requested to sign such an agreement, however the Korean comrades responded that they were not yet able to commit to obligations within the framework of an agreement. They continue to exchange films, propaganda materials, exhibits, musical pieces and others.

Also on June 21st, I paid a visit to the Czechoslovak chargé d'affaires. Since he is a newcomer, discussions revolved around several unimportant matters. I discovered that the Czechoslovak representatives from the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission had been replaced a few days before, and the Commission had not been

active during this period.

I also visited the Minister of Foreign Trade. The meeting lasted almost an hour and a half. In the beginning, he noted the aid our country has provided both during and after the war, expressing gratitude to the Romanian government and people. I asked what Korea exported in the past. He answered food products such as fish, and iron ore. He further mentioned that, given the distance between Korea and people's democracies, it would be difficult to export other raw materials in the future and were considering exporting manufactured, semi-fabricated products. I also inquired about the development of cooperatives and about state trade. I learned that cooperatives developed in the country-side only recently; the Koreans have both small-scale manufacturing and fish cooperatives. Before parting, he sent his regards to Comrade Birladeanu and handed me a package containing roots (for medical purposes) to give him. After informing him that Comrade Birladeanu was no longer Minister of Foreign Trade, he also gave me a package for Comrade Marcel Popescu.

On June 22nd, I paid a visit to the Chinese chargé d'affaires, who offered us a meal. After a series of unimportant talks, I informed him about my being re-summoned. He expressed gratitude for the manner in which he had been received at our hospital in Nampho.

On the same day, I visited the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, Comrade Kim Du-bong, who first requested that I transmit the Romanian government the Korean people's gratitude for the assistance they have and continue to provide. Similarly, he requested to send Comrade Petru Groza his regards. A series of unimportant discussions followed.

On June 23rd, I paid a visit to the Minister of Health, with whom I also discussed certain issues related to our hospital. He informed us that the hospital where our medical team had been stationed was the first in the entire Korea and was known not only in the South Pyongan Province, but in other provinces as well. I requested that a specialist in heating systems be sent, if possible, in order to install the boiler for the central heating in the barracks. He assured me that he would take the necessary measures to send the specialist. In regards to the translator for the hospital, he mentioned they intended to send someone who had been in Romania for two years.

In the evening of June 26th, Deputy Foreign Minister Comrade Ri Dong-geon [Ri Tong Gon] organized a dinner party at the restaurant available to foreigners. My wife and I were invited.

On June 2nd, Comrade Neamu paid a visit to the Assistant Director of the Office for Foreign Missions and requested, if possible, to organize a meeting with a constructions specialist in order to discuss the construction plan for the fence of our future Embassy building. He promised to set up the meeting.

Also on June 2nd, Comrade Neamu made a visit to the Assistant Director of the Korean Foreign Ministry's Third Division in order to:

1. Deliver an envelope to the CC of the Workers' Party of Korea from the CC of the Romanian Workers' Party, regarding the invitation of the 10 activists to spend their holiday in Romania. Comrade Pak guaranteed to forward the envelope immediately.
2. Inquire, for informative purposes, whether they could receive the Romanian orchestra. He will raise the issue with the appropriate bodies.
3. Learn, if possible, whether the DPRK Central News Agency is receiving materials

from the Romanian News Agency. He promised to inform us.

4. Receive, if possible, approval for translating the book 'Korean Folk Tales.' He mentioned the appropriate bodies agreed to the translation and could not issue an official statement without a written request. He promised to give us a list with the books that can be translated without official approval.

On June 13th, Comrade Neamu went to the Foreign Ministry's Protocol Division and requested advice on how to receive approval from the Ministry of Foreign Trade to send the personal luggage of the forth Red Cross medical team.

On June 18th, Comrade Florescu Victor made a visit to the Vice-Chairman of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. The comrade asked whether we could receive a response regarding the contract on documentaries. He responded that conditions were still very difficult, that most films were made in the PRC, but that he would subsequently give us an answer. Comrade Florescu further inquired whether we could receive some works on Korean art, translated into accessible languages. They currently do not have such works, but the Composers' Union will release an anthology of songs in Russian in the near future.

On the same day, the comrade paid a visit to the Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions and requested, if possible, to provide some information regarding Romania's popularization by Korean workers who have spent their vacation in Romania. Comrade Vice-Chairman answered that the Korean workers, who had been to Romania, were happy to be able to tell other workers about the Romanian people's achievements and had been very active in exchanging impressions upon their return from our country. He guaranteed to provide us with all the requested information. Comrade Florescu also informed him that articles requested for the new magazine edited by the Korean GFTU had been sent via the Ministry of Culture and Propaganda.

Comrade Vice-Chairman then requested that we pressure the Romanian General Union of Trade Unions so that the new group of Korean workers to go on vacation in our country can depart directly, without being delayed at our embassies in Beijing and Moscow as before. He also asked to tighten the connections between the embassy and the GFTU, as they also have close ties to the unions in Romania, particularly since the first and second union delegations in the DPRK during the war were from Romania, receiving a lot of assistance from our country. Comrade Florescu assured him to immediately inform Comrade Ambassador of the request.

On June 14th, Comrade Alexenco visited Comrade Pak, the Third Division's Assistant Director, raising the issue of our hospital's translator, whom the Foreign Ministry would like to assign to the German Embassy, i.e. it is imperative that they provide us a translator for our hospital given that our comrades cannot perform their tasks without a translator. Comrade Pak requested from the Central Committee of the Democratic Youth League the League's coat of arms and flag. He then inquired about our proposed film for the Pyongyang Film Festival. Lacking other movies, we proposed the film about the Bucharest Youth Festival.

On June 18th, Comrade Alexenco was summoned at the Foreign Ministry's Protocol Division, where the head of the division informed him of the visits Comrade Stere was scheduled to make prior to the departure. Comrade Kim then requested confirmation of the list of diplomats from our embassy, since they required it in order to create an updated record of the diplomatic corps in the DPRK; the list was confirmed on the spot.

Based on new instructions from the Foreign Ministry, Comrade Alexenco visited the

Korean Consulate, making some verbal clarifications on the matter and delivering 100 questionnaires.

On June 20th, Comrade Alexenco visited the Vice-Chairman of the CC of the GFTU, discussing the issue of sending 25 workers on vacation in Romania; other activists from the Union also took part in the talk. The comrades said they would be ready within 10 to 15 days.

Signed: Chargé d'affaires, S. Alexenco