

February 2, 1978
**TELEGRAM 066.566 from the Romanian Embassy in
Pyongyang to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign
Affairs**

Citation:

"TELEGRAM 066.566 from the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs", February 2, 1978, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AMAE), Folder 782/1978, Matter 220/F, Relations between North Korea and Socialist Countries (Czechoslovakia, China, Cuba, GDR, Yugoslavia, USSR), January-December 1978. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Eliza Gheorghe. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/116402>

Summary:

Though China is offering constant support for the DPRK government's position on the reunification issue, North Korea also seeks to improve relations with the Soviet Union.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from ROK Ministry of Unification

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

TELEGRAM 066.566

To: the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (comrade Director Ion Ciubotaru)
From: the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang

Subject: DPRK-PRC relations

Date: February 2nd, 1978
Classification: Secret

The DPRK's relations with the PRC, a neighboring country, with [a record] of cooperation and traditional friendly relations, a great power with influence in the region and in the world [in general], [is given] particular attention in the foreign policy of the Korean government, having a special place in the foreign relations of the DPRK.

[Judging] by the number of delegations, the level and attention with which these delegations are received [reciprocally], the magnitude of celebrations marking historic events and the [achievements] of the peoples of the two countries, mutual promotion, the PRC enjoys one of the top positions in DPRK's foreign relations with other countries.

Six of the approximately 10 Chinese official delegations which visited the DPRK in 1977, among which two were delegations of the Sino-Korean Friendship Association, the delegation of Xinhua [news] agency, the military delegation, the delegation of the telecommunications ministry, etc., were received by President Kim Il Sung (the largest number of delegations received in one year from one single country).

Moreover, several Korean delegations which visited the PRC - the Workers' Party of Korea delegation, led by Kim Gi-nam, member of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, editor-in-chief of Nodong Sinmun, the delegation of the Academy of Science of the DPRK - were received by people in the party and government leadership of the PRC. Such receptions are regarded as reciprocal special attention given to delegations, to relations between the two countries.

The PRC has promptly reacted to DPRK initiatives regarding the reunification of Korea, offering constant support to the Korean government's position on the reunification of the motherland.

Although on average the DPRK pays great attention to its relations with the PRC, we noticed that in its foreign relations, the DPRK seeks to preserve some sort of equilibrium in its relations with the PRC and the USSR, alternatively tilting towards one and the other (a [phenomenon] which can be [measured] in the number of contacts, their level, the attention with which delegations are received, the portrayal of such visits in the media, etc.).

At the same time we noticed that the positive political attitude and appraisal given by the DPRK towards PRC's policies have constant preponderance.

[Judging by] the available information, one can say that, overall, political Korean-Chinese relations are better than Korean-Soviet relations, which Korean-Soviet relations are richer than Korean-Chinese relations in other sectors.

With respect to Sino-Korean economic relations, in a conversation with Ambassador Dumitru Popa, the Chinese Ambassador to Pyongyang, Lü Zhixian stated that these

[economic relations] do not meet the level of political relations between the two countries.

After tedious negotiations, in March 1977, [the DPRK and the PRC] signed a long-term agreement for 1977-1981. The volume of Sino-Korean trade reached approximately 630 million Swiss francs, out of the total 820 million Swiss francs, with China covering 330 million Swiss francs out of the total 400 million Swiss francs it committed to, and the Koreans covering 303 million Swiss francs out of the total 420 million Swiss francs it committed to. Chinese export dues were caused by the hardship [encountered by] China's economy after the 1976 earthquake and the internal economic strife triggered by the actions of the 'Gang of Four.'

Currently, the PRC is granting the DPRK technical assistance with building a refinery with an annual capacity of 1.5 million tons of crude (a quantity annually exported by China to the DPRK).

The Koreans are pushing the Chinese to increase crude exports to the DPRK, but the PRC is not in a position to give an affirmative answer (crude consumption per capita in the DPRK is higher than crude consumption per capita in China).

Currently, negotiations on the signing of the Korean-Chinese commercial protocol for 1978 are being carried out. The main issue is the pricing mechanism.

As far as [the future development] of Korean-Chinese relations are concerned, we believe that as no major changes will occur in the region, these relations will have a normal evolution, in accordance with the past record.

Signed
Dumitru Popa