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NORTH KOREA INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTATION PROJECT

E-DOSSIER #7

East German Documents on Kim Il Sung's Trip to Beijing in April 1975

May 2012

NKIDP



EAST GERMAN DOCUMENTS ON KIM IL SUNG’S APRIL 1975 TRIP TO BEIJING
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by Ria Chae

The spring of 1975 was a turning point in the Cold War in Asia. Beginning in March, the Vietnam People's Army launched a series of successful campaigns against South Vietnam, which culminated in the fall of Saigon on April 30. Two weeks earlier, on April 17, the Khmer Rouge had captured the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh. Although the fall of these two capital cities to revolutionary forces was part of long-term military conflicts in Indochina, these victories came unexpectedly quick. These developments tilted the balance between the communist and liberal camps in Asia in favor of the former. They also strained the prospects for peaceful competition which had been opened by the rapprochement between the United States and the People's Republic of China in the early 1970s.

In 1975, the atmosphere of détente on the Korean Peninsula was waning as well. Secretly started in 1971, negotiations between North and South Korea developed into a series of exchange visits of high-level officials in Seoul and Pyongyang and led to the signing of the historic Joint Statement on July 4, 1972. However, subsequent discussions on the concrete steps towards unification rapidly deteriorated as the stark differences in how Park Chung Hee and Kim Il Sung envisioned the path toward a unified Korea were exposed.¹ While the South Korean government adopted a step-by-step program in which it intended to start with economic and people-to-people exchanges, the North demanded the immediate resolution of military and political issues. Pyongyang hoped that such a bold approach would increase political contradictions in South Korea and spark opposition to Park Chung Hee, resulting in the overthrow of his regime. Contrary to Pyongyang's expectations, however, Park Chung Hee only strengthened his grip on the country during the course of the South-North negotiations and successfully dispersed the opposition forces. Neither Pyongyang nor Seoul were willing to accommodate the counterpart's proposals and, by late 1973, the bilateral talks at the government level came to a halt. The two regimes then elevated the inter-Korean competition to the international stage, redoubling their efforts to seek recognition and support from abroad.

How did the failure of Pyongyang's unification policy, particularly in the context of the communist movement's victories in Indochina, affect Kim Il Sung? In the immediate wake of the revolutionary victories in Vietnam and Cambodia, Kim had made a hurried trip to China during which he reportedly asked for Beijing's assistance in liberating the South through a renewed military campaign. However, the Chinese leadership rejected the North Korean leader's request. Despite the apparent significance of the 1975 visit, very little information about it has been available to historians. According to a United States cable dated April 16, 1975, the Chinese prepared "an unusually large welcome" for the North Korean President.² However, both Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai were in poor health when Kim Il Sung came to see them on April 19 and 20, respectively, so the conversations with these Chinese leaders were brief and took place in Mao's residence in the first case and in a hospital in the second. There are reports that the minutes of the conversation between Kim and Mao are stowed away in Chinese archives, but this document has not been de-classified and is thus unavailable, at least to foreign scholars.³ The

¹ Christian F. Ostermann and James F. Person, eds., *The Rise and Fall of Détente on the Korean Peninsula, 1970-1974* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2011),

² Telegram from the US Legation Office in Peking to the Secretary of State, "Peking Prepares Big Welcome for Kim Il-Sung," April 16, 1975, in *ibid.*, 355-356.

³ Ostermann and Person, eds., *The Rise and Fall of Détente on the Korean Peninsula, 1970-1974*, 67-68.

North Korean leader likely held more substantial discussions on the international situation and on North Korea's strategy with Deng Xiaoping, though we do not possess any documents from these meetings.⁴ Some of the only available Chinese sources about the state visit are the speeches made by Kim Il Sung and Deng Xiaoping at the banquet which the CCP Central Committee and the PRC State Council organized for the occasion.⁵

In a June 1975 conversation with Bulgaria's Todor Zhivkov, Kim Il Sung claimed that his policy of peaceful reunification with the South remained unchanged. According to the North Korean leader, Pyongyang's alleged plan to attack the South in light of the positive situation in Indochina was a rumor concocted by the American and Japanese militarists and the South Korean puppets, who sought to justify a stronger foreign military presence and an expanded crackdown on opposition forces in South Korea.⁶

Because of the paucity of information in China on this visit, this set of documents from the German Democratic Republic (GDR), or East Germany, which contains telegrams written by diplomats stationed in Pyongyang, is of particular importance. Rather than merely repeat the official statements from China and North Korea, the German diplomats attempted to analyze the event, gather supporting data, and offer evaluations of Kim Il Sung's visit to Beijing. While three of the telegrams are from late April and mid-May 1975 and provide early assessments, the fourth document included in this e-Dossier is a report written in 1977 which assesses the development of the PRC-DPRK relations in the years following Kim's trip. The documents contradict Kim Il Sung's June 1975 statement to Todor Zhivkov and reveal several important points concerning North Korean policy toward South Korea as well as Sino-DPRK relations. They indicate that the purpose of the visit was in fact for the North Korean leader to coordinate his South Korean policy with China. Inspired by victories in Indochina, Kim had in mind an aggressive, revolutionary strategy toward Seoul, but his militant proposals were rebuffed by the Chinese side. Beijing was unwilling to undertake any steps which could have jeopardized rapprochement with the United States. Instead, Beijing reiterated its support for the continuation of the dialogue between North and South Korea and the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the southern half of the peninsula. The PRC also promised more economic and technological aid to its North Korean ally and confirmed that they would not establish relations with the South Korean regime. Beijing condemned Park Chung Hee's attempt to create "two Koreas." East German diplomats emphasized that behind the veneer of the official communiqué—which stated that a "complete congruence of opinions" was achieved during Kim Il Sung's visit to Beijing—lay profound disagreements between the two states on détente in Korea and on policies toward the Soviet Union, other socialist states, the U.S., and Japan.

The final document included in this collection suggests that, even in 1977, East German diplomats continued to negatively assess Kim's visit to Beijing. China had rejected Kim's request to achieve Korean unification through war and failed to deliver its promised aid to North Korea. The German diplomats concluded that Beijing's insincere attitude toward Korea may have

⁴ See April 18-April 26, 1975, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Deng Xiaoping nianpu, 1975-1997* (Chronology of Deng Xiaoping, 1975-1997), vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2004). See also Ezra Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 116-117.

⁵ "Kim Il-song Banquet Speech" and "Teng Banquet Speech," Xinhua (FBIS-CHI-75-077), April 18, 1975, in *After Détente: The Korean Peninsula, 1973-1976*, 357-364.

⁶ Telegram from the GDR Embassy to the People's Republic of Bulgaria, "Information about the Talks between Comrades Todor Zhivkov and Kim Il Sung," June 18, 1975, in *After Détente: The Korean Peninsula, 1973-1976* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 2011), 423-425.

pushed Kim Il Sung to rebalance his position in the triangular relationship with the PRC and the Soviet Union in the late 1970s.

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DOCUMENT NO. 1

Report from the GDR Foreign Ministry, "On the Visit of a DPRK Party and Government Delegation Headed by Kim Il Sung to the PR China from 18 to 26 April 1975," 29 April 1975

[Source: PolA, MfAA, 300/78. Translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer.]

[GDR Foreign Ministry]
Far Eastern Department
Berlin, 29 April 1975

On the Visit of a DPRK Party and Government Delegation Headed by Kim Il Sung to the PR China from 18 to 26 April 1975

A party and government delegation headed by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' Party and President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kim Il Sung, visited the PR [People's Republic] China from 18 to 26 April, 1975. The delegation consisted of high-ranking officials from the army and others concerned with foreign affairs and foreign trade.

The actual date of the visit was apparently decided on short notice based on the context of current developments in Cambodia and South Vietnam, although such a visit had certainly been in the making for a long time. This was Kim Il Sung's first official visit [abroad] since he had visited the USSR and China in 1961 and Indonesia in 1965.

Kim Il Sung was received upon his arrival by the Deputy Chairman of the CCP Central Committee and Deputy Prime Minister, Deng Xiaoping, and by other members of the PRC party and state leadership. Shortly after his arrival Kim had a meeting with Mao Zedong and later met with Zhou Enlai at a hospital.

Intensive negotiations were conducted between the DPRK delegation and the PRC delegation headed by Deng Xiaoping. According to the Communiqué, "issues of further strengthening and expanding the fighting alliance and revolutionary unity between the two parties and states, as well as questions of the current international situation and problems of joint interest to both sides" were discussed in "a cordial atmosphere of revolutionary friendship." A "complete agreement of positions" was reached on "all issues discussed," which left "both sides completely satisfied."

The main concern of the Korean side during this visit was to apparently coordinate its future policy towards South Korea with the PRC. Various indicators point to the direction that based on developments in Indochina, the DPRK leadership apparently made an assessment of how pressure placed on the United States might force them to give up their positions in South Korea. During his first public appearance in Beijing, Kim Il Sung accordingly made extremely aggressive statements on the liberation of South Korea. First he listed the well-known demands for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea: the ending of all American interference [in Korean affairs]; and for the overthrow of the Park Chung Hee regime in South Korea as

preconditions for peaceful reunification without external force. Then he stated, among other things, that the DPRK will rush to offer assistance in the case of a “revolution” in South Korea. The Korean people “have only a demarcation line to lose but reunification to gain.” It is up to the United States themselves “whether there will be a war in Korea or not.”

From the beginning, the Chinese side stated its support for the DPRK’s policy of peaceful reunification without foreign interference. The Chinese side demanded the withdrawal of U.S. forces and condemned the terror of the Park Chung Hee regime. It also declared that reunification must be achieved on the basis of the three principles outlined in 1972 by Kim Il Sung himself (peaceful, without foreign interference, establish national unity irrespectively of different ideologies and social systems) and the DPRK’s Five-Point-Proposal of 1973 (détente, disarmament, rejection of the two-Korea policy, confederation, etc.). The Chinese side expressed its preference for the continuation of dialogue between North and South Korea that began in 1972 but had been stagnant since mid-1973. This shows that the Chinese are presently not interested in the DPRK’s policy of confrontation with the United States and South Korea, which, due to the unstable situation in Korea, could easily lead to hard-to-calculate risks for the PR China and jeopardize the PRC’s rapprochement with the U.S. and Japan.

In fact, the Communiqué unilaterally represents the position of the PR China. The three principles mentioned above and the Five-Point-Proposal are defined as “the correct path towards the solution of the question of Korea’s reunification.” Still, Kim Il Sung’s posturing during the end of the visit was much more moderate than at its beginning. However, it cannot be excluded that, during negotiations, joint foreign policy measures and steps were discussed in order to increase pressure on the United States.

The Chinese side intended for this visit to commit the DPRK and Kim Il Sung, based on their similar ideological and political outlines, as far as possible to anti-Soviet positions, to tie the DPRK even closer to China, and to steer it away from the community of socialist states. In particular, it might have done so because Kim Il Sung, according to yet unconfirmed information, is planning to accept the invitation from the USSR—pending for many years already—for a visit during the current year.

At the welcoming banquet Deng Xiaoping talked about “modern revisionism,” the “struggle of the superpowers for world hegemony,” and so on. Apparently due to Korean requests, the Chinese side did not undertake any direct name-calling attacks against the Soviet Union. Yet both sides strongly emphasized the “unbreakable friendship and closeness, sealed with blood, initiated by Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung themselves.” The Communiqué states that this matches with the “basic interests of the Chinese and Korean people.” After praising the successes of the DPRK and its policy—whereby those aspects of DPRK policy of interest to the PR China are highlighted—the Korean side offers an extraordinarily enthusiastic praise of the PRC and Mao Zedong.

The Chinese side made massive attempts to influence the DPRK against the policies of détente as they are pursued by the Soviet Union and the other states of the socialist community. During the first day of the visit, Deng Xiaoping accused the “superpowers” of warmongering and declared that, “not the so-called irreversible process of détente, but the growing danger of a new

global war is the predominant trend of our times.” Though the Communiqué defines the international situation in a favorable light for the revolutionary peoples and unfavorably for imperialism, the conclusion drawn from the crisis of imperialism is said to be the danger of a new global war.

While at the beginning of his visit Kim Il Sung still referred to a close connection between the struggle of the socialist states and the “third world” against imperialism, the Communiqué exclusively recognizes the “third world” as a power force in the global revolutionary process.

Materials published do not support the conclusion that there was complete agreement on all issues, despite that it was explicitly emphasized this way. To the contrary, both sides seem to have stuck to their positions. Aside from the South Korea issue, this also seems to apply to issues not mentioned in the Communiqué at all; for instance, the policy towards the Soviet Union and the other socialist states, but also policies towards U.S. imperialism and Japan.

Despite lengthy negotiations, the Communiqué does not contain any concrete results for bilateral relations (there also is no return invitation mentioned). However, one cannot exclude Chinese promises for further aid. This might in particular apply to arms and equipment, but also to economic aid given the precarious foreign trade situation of the DPRK (high obligations of debt towards both socialist and capitalist states).

Although Kim Il Sung was apparently unable to move the PRC towards a full and unconditional support for the DPRK's South Korea policy and more long-term differences in opinion remain, it is to be expected that this visit will further develop the already close party and state relations between the DPRK and the PR China.

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DOCUMENT NO. 2

Report from the GDR Embassy in the PRC, “Summarized Evaluation of Kim Il Sung’s Visit to the PR China (18 to 26 April 1975),” 6 May 1975

[Source: PolA, MfAA, C 6857. Translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer.]

GDR Embassy to the PR China
Beijing, 6 May 1975

Summarized Evaluation of Kim Il Sung’s Visit to the PR China (18 to 26 April 1975)

1. The General Secretary of the KWP Central Committee and President of the DPRK, Comrade Kim Il Sung stayed for an official state visit in the PR China as head of a DPRK party and government delegation between 18 and 26 April 1975. During their stay the Korean delegation visited Beijing and Nanjing. They visited factories, people’s communes and topographical and historic attractions. There are no reports about visits of army units.

On 19, 20, 21, and 25 April, negotiations were held in Beijing between the party and government delegations of the DPRK and PRC. Delegations were chaired by Deng Xiaoping and Kim Il Sung respectively (see delegation list in appendix 2 [not included in this translation]). On 26 April 1975, a “Joint Communiqué” was agreed upon and then published on 28 April.

The Communiqué and speeches from both sides praised in identical language Kim Il Sung’s China visit as “a great event of historical importance” in the history of relations between the parties, states, and peoples of China and Korea. According to the Communiqué, political negotiations were held in “a cordial atmosphere of revolutionary friendship.” On all issues discussed a “complete congruence of opinions was achieved.”

There was no return invitation issued for a visit by a Chinese party and government delegation to the DPRK.

2. The Chinese hosts made extraordinarily large efforts to stage the Kim Il Sung visit. This was demonstrated primarily by the extraordinarily high attention to protocol for Kim Il Sung and the Korean guests, the pompous reception at the Beijing train station, the colorful line up of Chinese people (for the first time in many years), the organized welcomes at every location where the delegation traveled, and finally by the meetings with the PR China’s top leadership.

Everything was clearly staged for a targeted appreciation of Kim Il Sung the person. Among other things, he was called “a time-tested great leader of the Korean people” who applies the “general truth of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete reality of the Korean revolution.” He was called a “wise leader” with “glorious merits for the cause of revolution” and a “true friend and closest comrade in arms of the Chinese people.”

During his visit to China, Kim Il Sung met almost the entire active top Chinese leadership. In particular, the meetings with Mao Zedong and Zhu De on 19 April and with Zhou Enlai on 20 April reveal the importance attributed to Kim Il Sung’s visit for China’s foreign and domestic

policy by the Chinese leadership. Kim Il Sung was the highest ranking guest from a socialist country since the visit by Comrade Ceausescu in June 1971.

Apparently the meetings by the Chinese top leadership with the DPRK delegation did not fail in their explicit intention to appreciate Kim Il Sung. Kim Il Sung felt very honored. For instance, he commented on his upcoming meeting with Mao right after his arrival in Beijing that he was “delighted about this special treatment.”

The Kim Il Sung visit was featured in the Chinese press with extensive and prominent coverage. This demonstrated in particular the great importance of this event in terms of domestic policy. On the other hand, the Chinese press featured very few aspects about the Kim Il Sung visit from the DRPK press (excerpts from editorials in “Rodong Sinmun” and two other newspapers, see also appendix 3 [not included in this translation]).

The Cambodian leadership residing in Beijing was present for all of the official events. Members of the DPRK delegation headed by Kim Il Sung met twice with Prince [Norodom] Sihanouk and Penn Nouth for talks. Judging by the visible joint appearances from both sides, their relations can be considered as good.

3. Speeches and the Joint Communiqué focused very strongly on bilateral issues. The intense and high praise for the “correctness” of both sides’ policies,” always focused on the personalities of Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung, is especially significant.

It was repeatedly asserted that the CCP and KWP are “fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties,” the PRC and DPRK are “closest socialist neighboring countries,” and the people of China and Korea are “comrades in arms and members of one family.” Friendship, as established by Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung, is based on Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism and is unbreakable. Kim Il Sung talked on 19 April about a “fighting alliance between class brothers.”

Moreover, the Chinese side portrayed the DPRK as the first country to have defeated the armed aggression of U.S. imperialism following World War II and thus given a shining example for the anti-imperialist struggle. At the same time, the great domestic policy successes of the DPRK were praised, especially the Chollima movement and the so-called Three Great Revolutions achieved by the DPRK’s own force and its own defense.

The DPRK side fully has recognized and broadly appreciated Chinese domestic policies in recent years. Special emphasis was given to: great success in socialist revolution and socialist construction; a “revolutionary spirit of independence, sovereignty, and self-confidence;” the “Cultural Revolution” and the “Campaign against Confucius and Lin Biao” had “consolidated the dictatorship of the proletariat in China;” the “strength of the economy and the country’s defense” has increased; the “intellectual and moral potential of the people” was renewed; wish for even more successes “in creating a powerful socialist state;” support for the policy to liberate Taiwan.

4. It is all but apparent that this visit by the DPRK party and government delegation to the PR China was arranged on very short notice (supported by e.g. the rather uncommon fact here in

Beijing that two high ranking foreign delegations are visiting the PRC at the same time, Kim Il Sung and the Belgian Prime Minister Leo Tindemans). The background for Kim Il Sung's visit in China is in all likelihood the new situation in Asia created by the great victories of the peoples of Indochina during recent weeks. The DPRK leadership was confronted by the question how to proceed with its policy towards South Korea.

Thus the Korea question was probably one of the most important issues in talks between the Chinese leadership and in political negotiations between both delegations. This is reflected in speeches and the Communiqué in different ways (see appendix 1, chapter 3).

The remarks of the Chinese side were consistent from the beginning and there was a firm official convention of speech in place. China especially emphasized that Kim Il Sung "has defined the correct policy for the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea" and the DPRK government "repeatedly made correct and reasonable proposals for the peaceful reunification of the fatherland." It was always referred to the three principles [of the 4 July 1972 declaration] and the [1973 DPRK] Five-Point Proposal. In addition, the Chinese side supported the DPRK demand for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea and condemned the Park [Chung Hee] clique's policy and its attempt to create "two Koreas."

The DPRK referred extensively to the issue of Korean unification only in Kim Il Sung's speech of 19 April. In the speech, Korean reunification was called "an important link in the chain of the global anti-imperialist liberation struggle." Kim Il Sung struck an extremely militant tone. His remarks culminated in the statement that in "a war (if started by the enemies, added by this author's evaluation) we only lose the line of demarcation but will gain the reunification of the fatherland."

The Communiqué of 26 April only contains the extensive Chinese positions on Korean reunification. The DPRK position is not represented there. Also the DPRK did not repeat its own proposals and it also did not express thanks to the Chinese side for its support of proposals and policy of the DPRK (as Kim Il Sung had done in his speech on 19 April).

We think that this analysis demonstrates that there apparently was no "complete congruence of positions" on this issue. It can be assumed the Chinese leaders were not prepared, given their foreign and domestic policy interests and intentions, to let themselves dragged into an unwelcome military confrontation in Korea—and thus used to extend their influence to moderate Kim Il Sung.

5. During Kim Il Sung's visit to the PR China, statements were also made on some important international issues. The Chinese side (see Deng Xiaoping's speech on 19 April) forcefully outlined some foundations of its current foreign policy: the "superpower" thesis with its clear line of attack against the USSR, the role of the "Third World," the thesis about the growing danger of a new world war.

Apparently, the results of talks on foreign policy issues differ to certain extent. There were probably similar positions on the role of the "Third World." However, the Korean side did not adopt the Chinese phrase that the "Third World is the main force in the struggle against

imperialism, colonialism, and hegemonism.”

On the other hand, the Chinese side did not accept Kim Il Sung's words from his 19 April speech according to which “in our epoch ... the peoples of the socialist countries and the Third World act as the masters in the international arena.” The Joint Communiqué talks about the “Third World” as a “great force to drive the history of humankind toward progress.”

Both sides did not state, as the Chinese leaders had done many times before, that China or the DPRK belong to the “Third World.”

Concerning the danger of a new global war, both sides seem to agree on their positions regarding an actual aggravation of international contradictions. However, it looks like there are far-reaching differences with regard to their causes: The Chinese side views the “struggle of the superpowers,” i.e. the Soviet Union, as the reason behind these developments. The DPRK primarily refers to contradictions within imperialism, as well as between imperialism on one hand and the socialist states and the “Third World” on the other (though this is camouflaged by the definition of our times as the epoch of “permanent struggle between the old forces and the newly emerging forces”).

Of special relevance is the fact that Kim Il Sung did not accept the massive anti-Sovietism (without explicit mentioning) contained in Deng Xiaoping's speech on 19 April, and that he requested to refrain from such in the context of his visit to China. In subsequent Chinese speeches as well as in the welcoming editorials, there is only a line that the DPRK is leading a decisive struggle “against imperialism and modern revisionism.” We think it represents compromise language when the Communiqué states “contradictions within imperialism are on the rise.” The Chinese side interprets this line as “contradictions between imperialisms,” i.e. “between imperialism and social-imperialism” (refer to the Communiqué's English translation which says “between imperialisms”).

In the speeches as well as in the Joint Communiqué there are references to the struggle of different peoples and respective support is declared: Cambodia, South Vietnam, Middle East, South of Africa, Latin America.

It looks like the phrasing of those passages was comparatively easy due to the well-known positions held by both sides. Yet here as well the Chinese had to refrain from anti-Soviet remarks.

No references were made in the Communiqué to a number of important geopolitical issues. This applies, among other things, to the decisive role of the socialist states for the history of the current world, the relations among the socialist states, the role of the Italian Communist Party and relations between communist and workers parties, the developments in Europe, the Chinese-American relations, the positions on Japan and India.

Apparently both sides were not interested in stating their positions on some of these issues. On other questions the actual policy on both sides precluded a public statement (e.g. relations with the socialist states, relations with the United States and Japan).

6. Though the bilateral relationship was drummed up by both sides, neither in the speeches nor in the Communiqué substantial statements were made about actual party relations and concrete bilateral relations. The Communiqué states only very generally how the visit was “a great success” and made “an important contribution to the further strengthening of the comrade-in-arms friendship and the great unity between both parties, both states, and the peoples.”

There are no hints whatsoever regarding concrete agreements reached during Kim Il Sung’s visit to the PR China about the further development of relations. The comparatively long period of negotiations (the delegations met altogether four times), and the fact that the Ministers for Foreign Trade and for Foreign Economic Relations stayed behind in Beijing while the DPRK delegation traveled to Nanjing, might invite the conclusion that issues of bilateral, in particular economic relations, played no subordinate role during negotiations.

For instance, according to rumors, the DPRK asked for Chinese support in planning and construction. So far we and other fraternal socialist embassies were unable to receive further information from the DPRK Embassy.

7. Concluding Remarks

The visit by the high-ranking DPRK party and government delegation headed by Kim Il Sung to the PR China evidently holds important relevance for future relations between both parties and states. In particular the extraordinary praise for Kim Il Sung personally is supposed to bear favorable results for Chinese-Korean relations. It also is noteworthy here that Kim Il Sung visited the PR China before the other visits planned for the current year.

At the time, the visit showed that different positions and unresolved problems continue to exist on matters of importance between the leaderships of PRC and DPRK. This might offer good points of contact for a targeted policy by the socialist community of states towards the DPRK.

[Signature]
Wittik
Ambassador

Appendixes

CC:
Comrade Axen
Comrade Markowski
Comrade Moldt
Comrade Liebermann
Embassy Pyongyang
Political Department
Information Department

Appendix 1

Statements on various issues during the Kim Il Sung visit to the PR China

1. Statements by the Chinese side, respectively from the Communiqué, on the international situation and policy:

- Welcome editorial in “Renmin Ribao”:

“True to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, the Korean Workers’ Party, the government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, and the Korean people fight decisively against imperialism and the modern revisionism. They support with determination the just struggle of the peoples from all countries, especially the struggle by the peoples of the countries in the Third World to gain national liberation, respectively national independence and state sovereignty.”

- Speech by Deng Xiaoping on 19 April, 1975, during the banquet:

“The current international situation is characterized by great disorder under heaven. All the basic contradictions in the world are growing. Factors leading towards revolution as well as to war are on the rise. The struggle of the superpowers for world domination becomes fiercer than ever. The fight is not just over continents but also over oceans. The further they stretch out their hands, and the more territories fall under their hegemony, the heavier their burden and the greater resistance they encounter by the peoples of all countries [...]. Lenin is teaching us: ‘World domination’ is the content of imperialist policy, and its sequel is the imperialist war.’ As long as imperialism does exist in the world, its social system will generate war. This is independent from the will of the people. What we are seeing right now is by no means a so-called irreversible process of detente but the increasing danger of a new world war. The superpowers are talking about ‘detente’ and ‘peace,’ but in reality they prepare for a war with all they have. We must not relax in our vigilance. Neither a nuclear war nor a conventional war can save imperialism and hegemonism from its demise. Instead they will create a new upsurge of revolutionary struggles by the peoples of the world”.

- Speech by Peng Chong (Chair of the Party Committee of Jiangsu Province) on 22 April:

“Comrade Peng Chong praised the heroic Korean people. Under the wise leadership of President Kim Il Sung and the KWP, it consequently preserves the course of Marxism-Leninism, holds high the three great banners (ideology, technology, culture), achieves great successes in the revolution and socialist construction. It makes a great contribution towards the struggle against imperialism and modern revisionism, as well as to the just struggles of the peoples.”

- Speech by Deng Xiaoping at the concluding banquet:

... no direct references ...

- Xinhua News Agency Correspondence in “Renmin Ribao” on 27 April on the visit of Kim Il Sung:

“The KWP, the government of the DPRK, and the Korean people led by President Kim Il Sung have steadfastly stood with proletarian internationalism. They have fought against imperialism and modern revisionism and made a great contribution to the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples all over the world.”

- The “Joint Communiqué” of 28 April states:

“Both sides agree in their opinion that the current international situation is developing even further towards the advantage of the world’s revolutionary peoples and to the disadvantage of imperialism and the old and new colonialism. The old economic order built in colonialist and imperialist foundations is currently confronted with heavy destruction and blows on a daily basis. World capitalism is sliding towards an economic crisis which aggravates daily. Contradictions within imperialism escalate ever further [GDR Embassy insert: “English translation: between imperialisms”]. Wherever in the world imperialism does exist, the social order serves as fertile ground for war. Currently imperialism uses the cover of “peace” to move on with aggression and bellicose actions. The danger of a new world war is increasing. Peoples of all countries must raise their vigilance and make preparations accordingly. If imperialism will dare to launch a new war, the demise of imperialism will inevitably accelerate and bring about new victories for the world revolution. Both sides express their conviction that perspectives for the world are bright and clear, no matter whether a war creates the revolution or the revolution stems the war.”

2. On the Role of the “Third World”:

- Speech by Deng Xiaoping on 19 April:

“The revolutionary struggles by the peoples of all countries move ahead victoriously in the midst of all upheaval. Now everybody can see that the international situation has massively changed in favor of the peoples of all countries. The Third World, the main force in the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, and hegemonism is rising.”

- Speech by Kim Il Sung on 19 April:

“Our epoch is characterized by a permanent struggle between the old forces and the newly emerging forces. It is a new historical era where the general crises of imperialism aggravate and the peoples of the socialist countries and the Third World appear in the international arena as the masters.

Since the economic crises in the capitalist world worsen, and the political crises and social contradictions there escalate, the imperialists look for a way out and seek refuge in a policy of war, threats, and blackmail. However, on the other side, the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples from the socialist countries and the Third World and the international working class

become ever more powerful on a global level. [...]

Due to the joint experiences in situations past and the identity of their current struggle, the Korean people stand firmly on the side of the peoples from the Third World at the same front. It fights with them in close coordination. [...]

The Third World, created through struggle, is a powerful anti-imperialist revolutionary force of our time. It is a great force that presses ahead the history of humankind. [...]

- “Joint Communiqué”:

“Both sides forcefully state: The awareness and strength of a great number of states from the Third World is an outstanding characteristic of the current excellent international situation. For a long time, the countries of the Third World were subject to colonialist and imperialist repression and exploitation. They more than ever increase their solidarity in the struggle for the gain and preservation of national independence, for the defense of state sovereignty, and for the development of their national economy and the protection of national resources. They constitute a strong and vital fighting force and play an ever growing role in international affairs. Peoples of the vast mass of Third World countries have already become a mighty force for the progress of mankind’s history and a powerful anti-imperialist revolutionary force.”

3. On Korean Reunification

- Speech by Deng Xiaoping on 19 April:

“Under the leadership of the Korean Workers’ Party the Korean people conduct an indefatigable struggle to turn into reality their noble strive towards reunification of the fatherland. The government of the DPRK repeatedly made correct and reasonable proposals for the peaceful reunification of the fatherland. In particular the Three Principles for the independent and peaceful reunification of the fatherland and the Five-Point-Proposal for the prevention of national division and the reunification of the fatherland, both of them proposed by President Kim Il Sung, fully represent Korea’s national interests. They were met with the determined backing by the entire Korean people and great international support.”

- Speech by Kim Il Sung on 19 April:

“The current struggle of our people for the reunification of their divided fatherland is an important link in the chain of the global anti-imperialist national liberation struggle. [...]

If revolution breaks out in South Korea we, being members of the same nation, will not stand by idle keeping our arms folded, but we will energetically support the South Korean population.

If the enemy recklessly launches a war, we will decisively respond with war and destroy the aggressors completely.

In this struggle we will only lose the military demarcation line but gain the reunification of the

fatherland.

Peace or war in today's Korea ultimately depends on the position of the United States. It is them who hold the power in South Korea in their hands and view themselves as the masters of the country. [...]

If the U.S. forces withdraw from South Korea and a democratic individual with national conscience comes to power—as the South Korean population so desires,—we will have a firm guarantee for a permanent peace in Korea and can successfully resolve the question of Korean reunification in a peaceful manner and among us, Koreans. [...]

- Speeches at the concluding banquet on 25 April:

Only brief general statements

- “Joint Communiqué”

The Chinese side unilaterally states its positions in similar fashion as done in Deng Xiaoping's speech of 19 April.

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DOCUMENT NO. 3

Report from the GDR Embassy in the DPRK, "Note concerning a Conversation between Ambassador Comrade Everhartz with the Head of Department II in the DPRK Foreign Ministry, Comrade Choe Sang-muk [Choe Sang Muk], on 7 May 1975 about the Visit by Comrade Kim Il Sung to the PR China," 12 May 1975

[Source: PoIA, MfAA, C 6857. Translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer.]

GDR Embassy to the DPRK
Pyongyang, 12 May 1975

N o t e

Concerning a conversation between Ambassador Comrade Everhartz with the Head of Department II in the DPRK Foreign Ministry, Comrade Choe Sang-muk, on 7 May, 1975, about the Visit by Comrade Kim Il Sung to the PR China

The meeting was arranged upon the initiative of the DPRK Foreign Ministry.

Comrade Choe Sang-muk explained that the visit took place between 18 and 26 April in the PR China. The last visit by Comrade Kim Il Sung to the PRC was said to have taken place more than 10 years ago.

The DPRK mostly attributed a protocol character to the visit, while its great importance lies in demonstrating, in certain situations, to the capitalist world how relations between the DPRK and PRC are moving along well. Since the newspapers have reported extensively about Comrade Kim Il Sung's journey and its results, he [Choe] just wanted to provide additional information on some issues which go somewhat beyond the general public coverage.

At both meetings with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, an exchange of opinions was held about current political problems. The center of the talks was on the situation in Asia, in particular the newly emerging situation in Cambodia and South Vietnam and its impact on developments in South Korea. With other officials from the PRC, the same issues were discussed, in addition to the development of socialist construction in the respective countries as well as issues of Korean unification and Taiwan's alignment with China.

With regard to the situation in Cambodia and South Vietnam, there was mutual agreement to continue the assistance to those peoples.

Comrade Choe Sang-muk stated that Comrade Kim Il Sung alerted the Chinese side to attempts by the U.S. imperialists to continue their occupation of South Korea and to cement the existence of two Koreas in collaboration with Park Chung Hee. The Chinese side commented that it continues to recognize as correct the Three Principles for the reunification of the country from 1972, as well as the Five-Point Proposal of Comrade Kim Il Sung. The Chinese stated those should serve as the basis for the unification of the country. The Chinese side condemned the attempts by U.S. imperialism to fabricate two Koreas as well as Park Chung Hee's terror against

the South Korean population. The PRC is convinced that such a policy will suffer defeat.

The Chinese side wants to launch further efforts and initiatives to remove the U.N. mandate from the U.S. forces and achieve their withdrawal from South Korea. China will continue to fully support the DPRK's peace offensive for the unification of the country.

When analyzing the situation of the countries of In the context of Park Chung Hee's attempts to establish contacts with socialist countries, the Chinese side stated it will not establish relations with this regime and is going to continue to fight for the isolation of the Park Chung Hee clique. When analyzing the situation of the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Kim Il Sung emphasized the need for increased cooperation with the states of the "Third World" in order to achieve larger support for the DPRK on issues concerning reunification of the country. The Chinese side stated its willingness to collaborate with the DPRK on this matter in the context of the "Third World."

Both sides conducted negotiations about the expansion of economic relations. It was agreed to realize the mutual exchange of products for 1975 in full and in compliance with trade agreements signed.

Given the fact that the DPRK's Six-Year Plan will be fulfilled one year earlier than scheduled, there was an agreement to have negotiations on short notice about future cooperation in the context of scientific-technological collaboration and trade. There is the intention to extend economic relations in a systematic manner.

Following up on this information I asked the following questions:

- Were issues discussed concerning unity of the communist world movement? If so, which point of view was taken by the Chinese side?

Answer:

As the visit was conducted by a DPRK party and government delegation, respective positions were discussed on this issue as well. The KWP has come up with its own position on the unity of the communist world movement and in particular regarding the socialist states. The leading comrades of the SED and the GDR government are aware of this position, which has not changed.

Comrade Kim Il Sung reiterated this position also in his first speech. A joint communiqué cannot reflect everything that had been said. Yet the DPRK position on this issue is not identical with the Chinese position.

He asked for my understanding not to elaborate further on these questions.

- How does the Chinese side explain its growing relations with the most reactionary representatives of the FRG [Federal Republic of Germany, aka West Germany] monopolistic capitalists, and the shift of PRC policy towards positions directed against the GDR and other fraternal countries?

Answer:

There was no discussion about problems of Europe and the FRG. In its negotiations the DPRK side was mostly guided by commonalities. Questions where differences of opinions exist were deliberately not placed in the center of talks. Consequently, discussions focused mainly on the situation in Indochina and on problems of the "Third World."

- Comrade Kim Il Sung mentioned that in case of a war the DPRK would have only lose a line of demarcation but would gain instead an united Korea. How did the Chinese side comment on that?

Answer:

Comrade Kim Il Sung mostly talked about the situation in the country. He analyzed and explained how the Korean revolution is part of the world revolution. The most important question for the DPRK is the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea. The DPRK is mainly concerned about international solidarity to strengthen its political course.

The Chinese side supported the Three Principles and the Five-Point Proposal of Comrade Kim Il Sung, which simultaneously serves as the DPRK peace program for the solution of the Korea question.

- In speeches and documents both sides talked about the "Third World," but what is the Chinese position on the First and Second World in comparison to the DPRK position?

Answer:

The DPRK holds the opinion that the peace offensive also simultaneously means class struggle. If Park Chung Hee will launch a war, the Korean comrades expect respective support from their class brothers. The latter are primarily defined as the socialist countries and the progressive people of the world.

Most important here are facts such as that the DPRK has a military assistance treaty with both the Soviet Union and the PR China. The DPRK is convinced that in case of war China will assist the DPRK the same way it did during the Patriotic Liberation War between 1950 and 1953.

In his speech Deng Xiaoping stated the PR China will fight shoulder to shoulder with the DPRK for the reunification of the country.

- What is the status of economic relations between DPRK and PR China? What volume is expected for those relations in upcoming future periods?

Answer:

Regarding economic relations, it was reiterated that the trade agreements for 1975 will be mutually fulfilled. This way the [DPRK Foreign Ministry] conversation partner admitted there had been problems in this regard in the past. He claimed to be unable to provide exact figures about trade volumes of the current year and future plans.

- Does information exist about travel intentions of Comrade Kim Il Sung for this year?

Answer:

It was confirmed that another journey is planned for this year. However, he does not know exactly which countries will be included and when the visits are going to take place.

The meeting was open and friendly.

It was evident that the partner was under instructions not to provide more detailed information.

[Signed]

Everhartz
Ambassador

CC:

Comrade Mahlow – Central Committee/ Department IV
Comrade Moldt – Foreign Ministry
Comrade Liebermann – Foreign Ministry, Far East Department
Foreign Ministry/ Central Information
Embassy

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DOCUMENT NO. 4

Report from the GDR Embassy in the DPRK, "On Relations between DPRK and PRC," 17 November 1977

[Source: PolA AA, MfAA C 6857. Translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer.]

GDR Embassy to the DPRK
Pyongyang, 17 November 1977

On Relations between DPRK and PRC

1.0. General Assessment and Interests

1.1. Since their foundation, both states, the DPRK and PRC, have developed friendly relations and close cooperation in various areas. Of major importance was the participation of Chinese volunteers to push back the imperialist aggression against the DPRK between 1950 and 1953 and their sacrifices committed during this undertaking.

The development of relations, however, was not continuous. With the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in the PRC during the mid-Sixties relations drastically worsened at times. Reasons for this were attempts by the Chinese leaders to interfere into internal matters of the DPRK and apply pressure in order to move the DPRK towards a broad acceptance of Maoist positions and principles. Only with [PRC Premier] Zhou Enlai's visit to the DPRK in 1970 relations returned to normal, and they gradually improved until the current situation. The most important event for building up relations in recent years was Kim Il Sung's visit to the PRC in 1975. It was the first official foreign trip of Kim Il Sung for many years and opened a series of visits to other countries. In 1976 relations stagnated due to the volatile domestic situation in China and the resulting uncertainties of the DPRK. In addition, during the Kim Il Sung [1975] visit China had denied his request for supporting a military solution to the problem of Korean unification. Then promised economic aid turned out to fall well below DPRK expectations.

1.2. The DPRK interest in close and friendly relations with the PRC represents a long-term strategy. In its pursuit of such the DPRK is guided by the following factors and goals:

- Geographical proximity and a long common border (DPRK – PRC: 1,336 kilometers; DPRK – Soviet Union: 16 kilometers), as well as the political, economic and military potential of the PRC;
- Aspirations to secure the maximum political and, if necessary, military support of the PRC in the DPRK's conflict with the U.S. and South Korea;
- Maintaining the strong DPRK economic ties to the PRC, in particular the major dependency of the DPRK on vital supplies (coke coal, coke, oil); as well as continuing DPRK efforts to receive economic, financial, and scientific-technological aid.

In addition, there are factors at work like the traditional ties between both Chinese and Korean peoples, the multi-year struggle by Korean partisans against the Japanese in

Northeastern China, the important political-ideological influence by the CCP on the careers of leading Korean comrades in the 1930s, and the support of the DPRK for a united front of the “revolutionary peoples in Asia.”

1.3. The PRC also has a major interest in close relations with the DPRK. The latter belongs to the small number of states China can count to a certain extent as an ally. This carries some weight for China after the distancing by the Socialist People’s Republic of Albania, and in consideration of the development of Chinese-Vietnamese relations. Also the Chinese leadership is concerned about an improvement of relations between the DPRK on one hand and the Soviet Union and other socialist states on the other hand. For that reason the PRC currently undertakes major efforts to move the DPRK further away from the socialist fraternal states, or at least keep it in a “neutral” position in this regard. In the long run, the PRC has not changed its goal to include the DPRK in its big power chauvinist, anti-Soviet policy. Based on respective DPRK interests, the Chinese leadership uses the DPRK as its ally in the Non-Aligned Movement and towards developing countries, and it supports the DPRK in a focused way in its policy towards those states. Learning from the experiences during the “Cultural Revolution,” the PRC is acting in a sensitive manner to give the DPRK the feeling it is treated by China as an equal partner.

2.0. On Concurring Opinions and Positions

2.1. The basis for close relations between DPRK and PRC is the consent in, or closeness of, opinions of both parties on some basic ideological concepts, on methods of socialist construction, and on international politics. With some gradual differences only, this applies in particular to the following questions (though it is noteworthy that motives vary for certain positions of different kind):

- Definition of the character of the epoch, the main contradiction and the main forces in the course of the global revolutionary process;
- Overexposure of national specifics in the construction of socialism and actual negation of experiences made by the other socialist countries;
- Far-reaching turn away from the principles of proletarian internationalism;
- Overexposure of “independence” and “self-reliance” of the respective parts of the International Communist Workers’ Movement and the socialist states, as well as efforts to establish special relations with those fraternal parties and socialist states that also emphasize in particular “independence” and “self-reliance;”
- Negation of role and function of the socialist community of states in current times and non-participation in collectively designed actions of the fraternal parties and the socialist states;
- The PRC is acting openly against Comecon and socialist economic integration, and the DPRK is extremely reserved against multilateral cooperation;
- The DPRK and PRC tout the “great-powers-theory” and stress the need for struggle against “hegemonism” (PRC) and “dominationism” (DPRK) (yet it is noteworthy that the DPRK apparently counts China as a “great power” and does not share at all the PRC position which considers the Soviet Union in its capacity as a “great power” to be the

- main enemy);
- Overexposure of the role of the Third World (there is no congruence of opinions as far as the “First and the Second World” are concerned);
- Positions on peaceful coexistence and the struggle for détente and disarmament (CSCE [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe], Mutual Balanced Forces Reduction negotiations in Vienna, collective security in Asia).

In general, it must be assessed that current KWP positions on basic theoretical and practical issues are closer to those of the CCP than to those of the Marxist-Leninist fraternal parties.

2.2. The DPRK does not approach the global confrontation of the damaging theories of Maoism, and the PRC’s anti-socialist and anti-Soviet policy, from a class-based position. The DPRK attempts to label these patterns as differences in opinion between the CPSU and CCP and between the USSR and PRC. Among else, this shows when the KWP calls the CCP a “Marxist-Leninist” party.

The DPRK does not endorse the open anti-Sovietism espoused by the Chinese leadership, yet it officially acts from a “neutral” position. In conversations with high-level representatives of other socialist fraternal states, Korean comrades voice criticism of the relentless anti-Soviet policy by the Chinese leadership, in particular as far as the characterization of the Soviet Union as “social-imperialism” and as “main enemy” is concerned. Based on its support for unity and closed ranks of socialist states, as well as looking at its own national interests, the DPRK wants to see a normalization of relations between the USSR and PRC.

3.0. On Differences in Opinions and Issues of Contention

There are some basic differences in interests, theoretical positions, and also in actual policy between the DPRK and PRC and their two respective parties. They might increasingly influence the relations between both sides.

3.1.

- In recent years, the DPRK apparently realized that the PRC does not sincerely support the DPRK struggle for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea. Instead the PRC regarded, in the context of its anti-Soviet policy, the American military presence in Asia as desirable (an implementation of the [current] U.S. withdrawal plans, however, would remove this contentious issue almost completely).
- Based on its anti-imperialist policy, the DPRK does not endorse the unprincipled collusion of the PRC with the U.S. and other imperialist powers in the pursuit of anti-Sovietism. In particular given the U.S. presence in South Korea, the DPRK follows these developments with mistrust.
- In contrast to the PRC, the DPRK cultivates friendly relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist states. The DPRK is interested to further develop these relations and their very beneficial cooperation.

- The DPRK does not endorse the splittist activities of the CCP in the International Communist Workers' Movement and has no relations with Maoist splinter groups in third countries.
- There are also different opinions on policy towards Japan. The DPRK is concerned about Japan's increasing militarization accompanied by the PRC's silent tolerance. Thus the DPRK is very skeptical towards efforts by the PRC to conclude a friendship treaty with Japan.
In contrast to the PRC, the DPRK also argues against a security agreement between the U.S. and Japan.
- The DPRK does not share Chinese positions on NATO, but is right on target when condemning the latter as an aggressive military alliance of imperialist states.
- The PRC's open support for the most reactionary forces of imperialism in the FRG is also not condoned by the DPRK. In spite of its reluctance to support GDR policy vis-à-vis the FRG, which is mostly based on the divergence of this policy with DPRK unification concepts [for Korea], the DPRK embraces in general a class-based position in its assessment of FRG imperialism.
- There are also other current international problems where positions of the DPRK are basically different from those of the PRC, and actually closer to those of the other socialist states. Such concerns, for instance, the cases of Chile, Angola and the assessment of roots of the Middle East conflict. The DPRK does not support the PRC in its condemnations of Soviet policy in Africa.

3.2. Furthermore there are some straight contrasts between the DPRK and PRC that directly affect the interests of both states:

- Claim to improve and develop Marxism-Leninism ("Maoism" – "Juche Ideology"); as the DPRK does not support "Maoism" in general, the PRC also denies its support to "Juche Ideology;"
- Claim for international leadership, in particular in the "Third World" ("Great Chairman Mao" – "Great Leader Kim Il Sung");
- Territorial Issues (it is not known that the PRC officially confirmed Mount Baektusan, which is of special symbolic value to the DPRK, as part of DPRK territory; it is also said there are difference in opinions regarding the continental shelf in the Yellow Sea);
- Question of the Korean minority in the PRC (about 1 million citizens); the DPRK wants their autonomy which the Chinese leadership is not willing to grant;
- Apparently the PRC is no longer willing to tolerate the DPRK's non-compliance with its export commitments, and has therefore moved in 1977 towards a calibration of its exports

to the DPRK which hurts the DPRK economy considerably.

4.0. On the Current State of Relations

4.1. At every occasion, the DPRK and PRC underline the close relationship between parties, states and peoples and emphasize in particular that their friendship “was sealed with blood.” Domestic events in the PRC in recent years, however, created complicated problems for the DPRK. Still, the latter supported all the important campaigns, beginning with the [1976] criticism of Deng Xiaoping (during Kim Il Sung’s visit to the PRC in 1975 Deng was his main partner!) and extending to the struggle against the “Gang of Four” (in September 1975 a CCP delegation led by Zhang Chungqiao had visited the DPRK and was also received by Kim Il Sung!).

From their side, the PRC also fully supports DPRK domestic policy, in particular everything related to the cult of personality.

Mutual propagandistic support in mass media is very extensive and based on the principle of reciprocity.

Since Mao Zedong’s death one can observe DPRK tendencies to become evasive in openly supporting the PRC foreign policy course or resort to very general statements, with the exception of the Taiwan question. Apparently the DPRK follows its own interests in the Non-Aligned Movement. It is also guided by the insight that Chinese foreign policy is compromised in the eyes of the peoples and its open support could be detrimental to the DPRK.

After Mao Zedong’s death, DPRK efforts became obvious to establish a profile as an equal partner and to follow a more independent line towards the PRC.

In contrast to the years before Mao’s death, in current publications of documents from the PRC, anti-Soviet passages are omitted (e.g. in Hua Guofeng’s speech at the XI Congress of the CCP). Here the DPRK exploited the [Chinese] temporary cessation of polemics [against the USSR].

The PRC still supports all tendencies of “independence” and “self-reliance” in DPRK foreign policy. Within the U.N. and other international organizations the PRC actively acts on behalf of the [absent] DPRK.

Yet also the PRC is refraining from unconditional support for DPRK foreign policy, especially when its own interests are directly at stake. So China reacted, for instance, very reserved towards the August 1976 Panmunjom Incident [“axe murders”] since the PRC is not interested in an escalation of tensions on the Korean peninsula.

4.2. In 1976 activities in bilateral relations were somewhat reduced in comparison to 1975. Only one important CCP party delegation visited the DPRK in late 1976. There was no exchange of representative delegations on the state level.

Overall, in 1976 there were 18 DPRK delegation visits to the PRC (1975: 17) and 12 Chinese delegations came to the DPRK (1975: 20). Exchange of those delegations focused on the fields of trade, scientific-technological cooperation, culture, and sports.

Apparently there are no contacts between mass organizations.

However, assessments of delegation exchanges must take into account that mutual delegation visits are not always made public. Thus exchanges might be much more extensive than it can be gleaned from the press.

In 1976, the following contractual agreements were signed:

- Agreement on Postal and Signal Communication
- Protocol about Navigation of Border Rivers
- Trade Protocol for 1976
- Plan for Cooperation of the Academies of Sciences for 1977/1978
- Protocol about Railway Border Traffic

In 1977, activities increased again in political, economic, military and cultural fields. Yet one can still feel a certain restraint in party relations.

Currently there also is a certain unknown number of PRC specialists in the economy and the military present on site in the DPRK.

After Mao Zedong's death, Chinese literature was temporarily unavailable in the DPRK. Only recently the first four volumes of Mao Zedong's works in Korean language have become available again. The fifth volume, which contains anti-Soviet outbursts and the claim of Mao Zedong being the "greatest Marxist-Leninist," is not on sale.

4.3. Negotiations to conclude a new long-term trade agreement for the years between 1977 and 1981 and the trade protocol for 1977, concluded in March 1977, were tedious and complicated.

The PRC rejected the DPRK requests for credits. It only conceded to defer Korean debt repayments until 1980. New rates according to prices on the world market were established for oil and other resources. The long-term "Agreement about the Mutual Delivery of Important Goods for the Years 1977 to 1981" stipulated an increase of trade volume until 1981 by 12 percent. Yet in the 1977 trade protocol they agreed on a volume of 18 percent less compared to the 1977 numbers in the long-term 1977 to 1981 agreement. According to the annual protocol, the volume for 1977 is said to be 820 million Swiss francs, with DPRK exports to the PRC consisting of 420 million and Chinese exports to the DPRK of 400 million. These numbers are considerably lower than the plan for 1976 (975 million Swiss francs) that was fulfilled by the PRC to 86 percent and by the DPRK to only 52 percent.

The main features of the 1977 trade protocol are as follows:

DPRK Exports:

- 2.0 to 2.2 million tons of anthracite
- 1.0 to 1.3 million tons of iron ore
- 140,000 tons of black metal products
- 80,000 tons of zinc
- 1,500 tractors
- 100 trucks (2.5 tons each)
- 500,000 tons of cement
- 1,000 lathes
- 5 million square meters of textiles
-

DPRK Imports:

- 2.2 to 2.5 million tons of coke coal
- 80,000 tons of coke
- 1 million tons of oil
- 200 trucks (4 tons each)
- 10,000 tons of railroad trucks
- 20,000 pairs of tires
- 170,000 tons of salt
- 30,000 tons of soy beans
- 10,000 tons of sugar
- 100,000 tons of fish

Since the DPRK also insufficiently meets its export commitments during 1977, the PRC has moved towards calibrating its own exports in order to achieve a somewhat balanced sheet.

4.4. The PRC Embassy in the DPRK is maintaining very active contacts to various organs of the DPRK. They are extremely eager, in the context of their activities, to avoid anything that could upset the Korean comrades. Special emphasis they put on highlighting equality [between PRC and DPRK].

There exists an agreement between the DPRK and PRC to not permit anti-Soviet attacks by Chinese representatives in the DPRK. In recent years the Chinese Embassy has violated these rules very rarely; thus there is no concern about this embassy within the diplomatic corps. Chinese diplomats are treating representatives of other states in Pyongyang with correctness and politeness.

Contacts by embassies of the fraternal socialist states to the PRC Embassy are basically limited to official diplomatic events.

4.5. According to the Soviet comrades, the DPRK population has the feeling that DPRK-PRC relations are closer and better than DPRK-USSR relations. This is a result of intense reporting on the PRC in DPRK mass media and apparently of internal political-ideological education as well. Yet there exists also a lack of understanding in the population about internal developments in the PRC like, for instance, the open power struggles and the absence of a long-term prepared successor for Mao Zedong, as well as reservations towards

some minor features of Chinese policy.

Overall and to major degree, the feelings of the Korean people are still highly influenced by the participation of Chinese volunteers in the fight against the U.S. and South Korean armies during the war between 1950 and 1953—though the DPRK officially commemorates this only for the occasion of certain bilateral events.

5.0. Conclusions

5.1. In principle, the DPRK will continue its policy of “balancing” between the Soviet Union and the fraternal socialist states on one hand, and the PRC on the other. This will not preclude certain tilts towards one side or the other based on pragmatic considerations. Yet there is no reason to expect in any foreseeable time any substantial changes in relations between the DPRK and PRC.

5.2. The PRC will further undertake major efforts to draw the DPRK closer to China, and to counter developments of friendly relations by the DPRK with the Soviet Union and other socialist fraternal states.

Currently the policy of the Chinese leadership vis-à-vis the DPRK is pretending to bolster the DPRK in its overreaching efforts towards “independence” and “self-reliance.” According to our opinion, the PRC will, however, not succeed in enlisting the DPRK for China’s anti-socialist and anti-Soviet policy. Actual interests and foundations of DPRK ideology and policy will not allow for this.

5.3. Since the death of Mao Zedong, the DPRK has sharpened its profile as an equal partner of the PRC and lessened to certain degree its tilt towards the PRC in the context of its “policy of balance.” Still, there will be a particular continuity in the future: The DPRK approach to certain international issues will take positions of the PRC into consideration.

Ourselves we must continue to monitor closely some recent indications for certain DPRK concerns regarding the PRC. Among other things, those might have been due to results of the recent China visit by U.S. Secretary of State [Cyrus] Vance and China’s cool reactions towards American measures concerning a planned withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea.

5.4. Differences in opinions and issues of contention, as listed above under 3.0, will increasingly influence relations between both states. Especially the strident anti-Soviet course of the Chinese leadership stands in contradiction to DPRK interests, North Korean notions of the enemy [U.S., not USSR], and DPRK goals to achieve unity and cohesiveness among the International Communist Workers’ Parties. Here we have some angles for our efforts to draw the DPRK closer towards the fraternal socialist parties. This makes it imperative for us to expose in appropriate ways, in particular by drawing on concrete examples, the character of the current Chinese leadership’s policy in internal talks with the Korean comrades at high, and at the highest, levels.

Kim Il Sung's April 1975 Trip to Beijing

Steinhofer
Attache

CC:

- Central Committee, Department International Relations
- Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department
- Foreign Ministry, Main Department
- Embassy, Political Department