

**January 28, 1978**

**TELEGRAM 066.531 from the Romanian Embassy in  
Pyongyang to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign  
Affairs**

**Citation:**

"TELEGRAM 066.531 from the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs", January 28, 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.drivingcreative.com/document/116485>

**Summary:**

Popa reports on the level of the delegation which the Soviets sent to Pyongyang and how North Korea reacted to the delegation's arrival.

**Credits:**

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

**Original Language:**

Romanian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

TELEGRAM 066.531

To: the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (comrade Director Ion Ciubotaru; First Directorate)

From: the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang

Date: January 28th, 1978

Classification: Secret

During a recent meeting with Ambassador Dumitru Popa, Kim Gil-hyeon, the Deputy Head of the International Section of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, discussing the visit to the DPRK of a Soviet delegation led by D. Kunaev - the first secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, and member of the CPSU Politburo, recounted how during the Korean-Soviet talks (the Korean delegation was led by Pak Seong-cheol, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, Vice-President of the DPRK, the two delegations talked about the construction of socialism in the two countries and bilateral relations.

'Given the divergent views of the two parties on some key matters, my interlocutor added, [the two delegations] avoided tackling such topics on, which [meant] that the talks unfolded without any impediments.'

Kim Gil-hyeon pointed out that this delegation was supposed to come to the DPRK on the occasion of the anniversary of the Great Socialist Revolution in October, but the Soviets sent another delegation, at an inferior level, on November 7th. Although the two countries have exchanged delegations on the occasion of November 7th, 1977, the Soviets requested that the aforementioned delegation visit the DPRK. 'The [North] Koreans, Kim Gil-hyeon added, thought that, if [the Soviets] requested, then this delegation must be received accordingly.'

Referring to the Lenin order awarded by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to President Kim Il Sung on the occasion of his 60th birthday, the [North Korean] interlocutor said: 'the decision was taken 6 years ago. But since then, there have been no high-level official visits to the DPRK.'

Now the Soviets decided that the aforementioned delegation gives President Kim Il Sung the order in question. We had to accept so that they did not return with it to the USSR.'

At [Ambassador Popa's] question whether the visit of D. Kunaev is regarded as a response to Pak Seong-cheol's invitation (Pak Seong-cheol visited the USSR in January 1977), Kim Gil-hyeon said that 'we appreciate that the head of the Soviet delegation is, first and foremost, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Kazakhstan and then a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU.'

[Judging by the articles published] in the North Korean press, which released many materials about the visit, it could be noticed the official, reserved tone of [North Korea's] assessment of the unfolding and content of the visit.

In conclusion, we can say that the [North] Koreans were unsatisfied with the level of the delegation, as well as with the fact that [the visit] did not tackle [any] special problems which could influence in any way the dynamics of Korean-Soviet relations.

Signed

Dumitru Popa

□