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Telegram from the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 16, 1980, 057022, Secret

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Summary:

A report on North Korea's increasing interest in restarting dialogue with South Korea, especially to address the Korean reunification issue.

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To Comrade Constantin Oancea, Deputy Minister,

We report an increased interest in starting a dialogue with the South in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea after the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea in December 1979. The dialogue will lead to a rapprochement between the two sides of Korea and will create favorable conditions for tackling the reunification problem realistically.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's wish to put an end to the division of the country has been observed during the recent discussions and in the mass media. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea insists on the fact that "the unification is a task that can no longer be delayed" and that "it's necessary to find and agree on a way" that will lead to the reunification.

After proposing to form a joint team comprised of North and South Koreans to participate in the Olympic Games in Moscow, and reconnecting the direct phone line between Pyongyang and Seoul, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a new ample initiative.

Prime Minister Ri Jeong-ok [Li Jong Ok] sent a letter to the prime minister of South Korea. Kim Il sent other letters as the vice-president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as the secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers Party of Korea and as the president of the Committee for the Unification of the Country, to other dignitaries in South Korea, including the presidents of the Republican Democratic Party, the New Democratic Party, the Democratic Party for Reunification, the United Socialist Party and the General of Staff of the South Korean Army.

By analyzing the contents of the letters we noticed a few elements that are different from the position and the choice of words used before.

In this respect, we noticed the use of the official name of the South - the Republic of Korea - as well as the use of the official functions of the recipients. On previous occasions the press and the radio referred to the South as South Korea.

The emphasis is put on attracting the recipients in a dialogue and collaboration for solving the Korean problems and excluding any external interference.

In the same time, there are no references to the presence of United Nations and United States troops in South Korea and their withdrawal is not requested.

In some letters, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea openly admits that there were misunderstandings and a mutual distrust (between North and South Korea) and expresses its desire to leave the past behind and to stop looking for someone to blame. From this point of view, we can also explain why the Democratic People's Republic of Korea avoids criticizing the South Korean authorities.

We also noticed a particularly malleable attitude and that the location for the meeting could be any place the South Korean side prefers.

An official reply from South Korea to the proposals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea hasn't been received yet. South Korean radio stations present these proposals as a part of a peaceful offensive of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that seeks to stop the normalization of the situation in South Korea after the assassination of Park Chung Hee and the coup d'état attempt on December 12, 1979.