

April 20, 1962

**Minutes of Conversation between Chen Yi and the
DPRK Ambassador to China Han Ik-su**

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Summary:

The Vice Premier of China, Chen Yi, greets the newly arrived North Korean Ambassador to China, Han Ik-su. The two discuss China and North Korea's deep bonds of friendship and mutual assistance in times of need.

Credits:

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Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Time: 20 April 1962, 9:30AM

Location: State Council

Attending Personnel:

From China: Cao Keqiang and Deputy Department Head Ge Buhai

From [North] Korea: Counselor Ma Dong-san [Ma Tong San] and Kim Gyeong-jun [Kim Kyong Jun]

Translator: Kang Ryong-gu [Kang Ryong Gu]

Recorder: Tang Yingbin

Chen [Yi]: Welcome, Comrade Ambassador, when did you arrive?

Han [Ik-su] [Han Ik Su]: I arrived yesterday. I am very satisfied that Comrade Vice Premier [Chen Yi] came to receive me at this early hour.

Chen: Considering the intimate relationship between both our respective countries and parties, this is the least I could do in order to aid your work. When your last ambassador was here (Ambassador Ri Yeong-ho [Ri Yong Ho]), the cooperation between us [China and North Korea] was excellent.

Han: That is what I have heard—that Ambassador Ri's work produced excellent results. But more importantly, [this is because] the Chinese government has provided us with great hospitality.

Chen: The Chinese Ambassador in Pyongyang is the same. He [Hao Deqing] has received a great deal of support from your country. How is Comrade Premier [Kim Il Sung's] health?

Han: Thank you, his health is fine, but recently his work has been making him somewhat tired and uncomfortable. Though Comrade Premier did want for me to greet Comrade Vice Premier [Chen Yi] on his behalf.

Chen: Thank you. Peng Zhen is going [to North Korea] soon.

Han: Yes, he is arriving in Pyongyang on 23 April [1962].

Chen: We will promptly make arrangements for you to present your credentials.

Han: Thank you.

Chen: Is Comrade Minister of Foreign Affairs [Pak Seong-cheol] well?

Han: Very well, thank you. How is comrade Vice Premier's health?

Chen: Good. Except my mouth has been swollen for the past two days, so I should rest for a few days. However, I must see the Ambassador before I rest, and then later today I will get ready to go to the hospital.

Han: Comrade Vice Premier, you must take care of your health.

Chen: I will not be hospitalized for too long, and when I am discharged from the

hospital, I will treat the Ambassador to a meal. We will be able to talk then. Two days ago, I saw a movie about Pyongyang. The city is different from the time when Premier Zhou visited North Korea in 1958. Even then you could not see the traces of war, but it is different yet again today.

Han: It has been another four years, and I do believe we have been developing rather quickly. If you live in Pyongyang and stay at home for a mere few days, when you step outside you will feel that your surroundings have been transformed. Comrade Vice Premier's constant concern for the pace of our development shows how deeply our Chinese comrades care for us. Here I express our thanks to you. The Chinese comrades have continuously given us support both during the period of our Motherland Liberation War [the Korean War] and during the post-war construction period. Comrade Premier [Kim Il Sung] often talks about the large amount of care and support that we received from our Chinese comrades. He said that the great achievements which we have obtained today are because of the fraternal countries, and especially because of the great support lent by the Chinese people. He often emphasizes that we cannot forget the support which we have received, and we must continue to strengthen the relationship between our two countries. Our people have the same understanding. Comrade Premier still often talks about the time when [North] Korea had difficulties with food provisions, and how even though the Chinese people were facing their own difficulties, the Chinese people still extended their generous assistance to us. If not the Chinese people, who else would be so generous in providing us with so much food?!

Chen: I admire the way Comrade Premier talks. We are all fraternal parties, and it goes without saying that we should care for and help each other. Premier Kim, Minister of Foreign Affairs Pak, and Ambassador Han all participated in the Anti-Japanese struggle in Northeast [China] and shed blood with us together. In the past, a [Chinese] platoon even had Korean comrades as Company Commander and Squad Leader of a Machine Gun Company. They died in combat. When I was in the Jiangxi Military Region, there was a [Korean] Chief of Staff, I believe his Chinese name was Zhang Shijie, he also died later during combat. They were all very good comrades, but the situation, as it was then, prevented them from returning to Korea [and conducting] the struggle [there]. However, they all believed that if China's revolution was successful, then there was certainly hope for Korea's revolution. As soldiers, they were internationalists. We must maintain the will of [these] past martyrs and strengthen cooperation between our two parties and countries. If we speak of the past—of China's contributions to the Korean War and [North Korea's post-war] construction—this was quite small. [Redacted] In the future, we shall closely cooperate, and if there are any issues [which you have], please come directly to see me, or our Vice Minister, or the Secretary of the Second Asia Department—whatever you see fit.

Han: Thank you. I hope that in the future I will receive assistance in my work. At the same time, I believe that I will not encounter very many difficulties.

Chen: I absolutely agree.

Han: Earlier, Comrade Vice Premier said that [China] did not support [North] Korea enough. However, in reality, the Chinese people have sent their most precious sons and daughters to Korea—[they] bled and fought with us side by side. This is something that we will not forget for generations to come. There is no support more valuable than this. [Redacted]

Chen: Good, good.

Han: On the other hand, speaking of people from the [Korean Workers'] Party, there are some factionalists who are unsatisfied with China and want [us] to go to the

Soviet Union. It is inevitable that, in the ranks of our revolution, there will be people like this. What to do! All we can do is [approach] them resolutely, earnestly educating them and handling them strictly. The people who are dissatisfied with China, well they are just horrible people.

Chen: The relationship between our two parties and countries is correct and friendly. Some may want to sabotage our relationship, but it is indestructible. All right! I will immediately arrange for you to present your credentials.

Han: Thank you, Comrade Vice Premier, for promptly arranging this for me.