

January 18, 1980

**Telegram from the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 18, 1980,
057025, Secret**

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Summary:

A summary of South Korean President Choi Kyu-ha's annual conference, regarding the unstable domestic situation after President Park Chung Hee's assassination, diplomatic relations with countries including US, Japan and ASEAN members, as well as North Korea's proposal to discuss the reunification question.

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To Comrade Constantin Oancea, Deputy Minister,

We'd like to inform you that Choi Kyu-hah, the president of South Korea, held the annual conference today, January 18, 1980. It was broadcasted by radio and TV stations in South Korea. We are reporting some of the more significant elements:

1. The internal situation is unstable, in political and economic terms, as a result of the events in the past few months - the assassination of Park Chung Hee and the coup d'état attempt on December 12, 1979 - and the economic difficulties caused by the oil crisis and inflation.

2. This situation was also influenced by the conflict in Indochina, by the complexity of the problems in the Middle East and Iran and the foreign military intervention in Afghanistan.

As a result of the Sino-Japanese treaty and the normalization of Sino-American relations, South Korea noticed an increased rapprochement between the United States of America, the People's Republic of China and Japan, rapprochement that will influence the evolution of the situation on the Korean peninsula.

Externally, South Korea will continue to develop its relations, first of all with the United States of America and Japan. At the same time it will extend its relations with the ASEAN countries and non-aligned countries. It will seek to normalize its relations with countries of other political persuasions.

3. The South Korean president considers that the recent proposals and initiatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to restart the North-South dialogue are part of a false peaceful offensive that seeks to worsen the contradictions between the different factions in South Korea, to create dissensions between the United States of America and South Korea and to distract the American public opinion before the presidential elections.

Pointing out that the unification of the country is a national desideratum, a historical task that must be fulfilled only through 'peaceful means' and after ensuring a lasting peace on the peninsula, President Choi Kyu-hah has reiterated South Korea's previous proposals for restarting the North-South dialogue. It will be done through the representatives of the Red Cross groups and the Coordination Committee, through economic and technical-scientific exchanges as well as starting tripartite negotiations between South Korea, the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The recent letter sent by Ri Jeong-ok [Li Jong Ok], the premier of the Administrative Council of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to the Prime Minister of South Korea was considered to be the "first positive reaction from the North" to the South's proposal for meetings and discussions to take place between the authorized representatives of the two sides.

The president of South Korea declared that he is ready to adopt an active, positive, and serious position in analyzing the letter -which proposes a meeting between prime ministers - and that the South Korean government will deliver an official answer in the next few days.

Signed,
Paul Marinescu.