

stamped: confidential office mail

## - Short Information -

## On new aspects of negotiations between DPRK and Japan

between January and May 1969 on issues concerning Koreans living in Japan

## I.

The available material does not allow any conclusion that there actually were any negotiations between the DPRK and Japan held during that time period. However, there was an exchange of telegrams, and on the DPRK side repeatedly declarations were issued in favor of continuing the negotiations on repatriation, and on dealing with repatriation procedures of Koreans living in Japan.

As it is well known, the fundamental difference in points of view is the fact that the DPRK assumes the repatriation agreement to be still in force while the Japanese declared it null and void from the end of 1967. (At a cabinet meeting on 23 August 1966 the Japanese government decided to cancel the agreement by 12 November 1967). The DPRK assumes: The agreement clearly stipulates that a bilateral agreement cannot be annulled high-handedly by one of the two sides. Therefore the annulment should be considered illegal. (The actual text of the agreement on repatriation is not available to us.) Therefore the DPRK regarded it as its main task that both sides still accept the existence of the agreement, and resume and continue negotiations on this basis (that is: enforce the existing legal character of the agreement).

From DPRK publications only hesitantly providing concrete facts, the following picture emerged step by step: During negotiations between the two Red Cross societies in Colombo in 1967 no agreement was reached on a simplification of immigration procedures as had been asked for by the DPRK. However, the Japanese delegation assured that they would enter into consultations with their government upon returning and engage in finding a solution for this problem.

In return, the Japanese side asked the DPRK delegation in Colombo continuously to come back on their suggestion to continue repatriation of those 17,000 people who (until the closing of the repatriation offices in Japan) had filed an application for repatriation.

The DPRK rejected this suggestion since Japan this way attempted to solve this problem separately, unilaterally canceled the existing repatriation agreement, and deceived public opinion to the effect as if all obligations for repatriation were complied with; Japan was said to do so by continuing repatriation efforts using the term "settlement of the issues remaining after the cancellation of the agreement" (see: declaration of the Central Committee of the DPRK Red Cross of 3 April 1969).

Between early and mid-February DPRK demonstrators demanded in rallies new talks on repatriation between the Japanese and the Korean Red Cross and the actual beginning of repatriations. In early March, a socialist member of the Japanese parliament condemned secret talks on repatriation held between the Japanese and the South Korean government.

In a telegram of 3 March 1969, the Japanese Red Cross suggested to its partner from the DPRK that they ought to approach the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva about immigration procedures to Japan. This suggestion was rejected by a telegram of the Central Committee of the Red Cross of the DPRK since it did not indicate a facilitation of immigration procedures for the DPRK Red Cross delegation aboard the repatriation ship, as it had been promised [by the Japanese side] in Colombo and in a letter of 23 September 1968.

The Japanese partner is asked to give up its destructive position as it expressed in its telegram of 3 March 1969 in order to resume repatriation as soon as possible. It would be an absurd attempt to get a "third party" involved in negotiations, as this would only complicate matters. The only remaining issue in the context of immigration is a simplification of the procedure for the DPRK [Red Cross] delegation. The Koreans living in Japan immediately supported these demands.

Since the Japanese Red Cross failed to respond, the Central Committee of the DPRK Red Cross issued a declaration on 3 April 1969 where issues demanded in the telegram of 10 March 1969 were repeated. The DPRK delegation had boarded the repatriation ship in Niigata 155 times within a period of 8 years, and never had there been any need to involve a third party. Repatriation would concern only the two countries of DPRK and Japan and procedures were only to be addressed by Japanese officials. In order to solve the question of repatriation in a satisfying manner, the suggestion was made that Red Cross delegations of both countries should meet again at the earliest time convenient at a location both sides will have to agree to.

It represented a striking fact that neither the Koreans living in Japan nor the DPRK press brought up the problem of repatriation after this declaration was issued. It was only after 7 May 1969 that demands for talks and the acceptance of proposals made by the DPRK was reiterated.

## II.

1. According to official statements by the DPRK, there were no talks within the first five months of 1969 between the Korean and Japanese Red Cross about repatriation of the Koreans living in Japan.
2. The DPRK has undertaken efforts – especially through its declaration of 3 April 1969 – to submit new proposals to enter into negotiations.
3. The Red Cross of the DPRK still considers it as its main task to get the partner to accept the repatriation agreement as being in effect, as can be concluded from the declarations and articles in the press.
4. The Japanese government apparently does not intend to solve the problem of repatriations by way of a treaty from 1965 between Japan and South Korea, according to which officially all Koreans living in Japan hold South Korean citizenship.
5. The period of silence on repatriation between 3 April and 7 May [1969] might indicate that either talks have been taking place at a third location on which nothing has been reported, or that a reply from the Japanese partner was received - to which the DPRK replied with another proposal in return.
6. In order not to place a burden on the relationship with South Korea, the Japanese side cannot be expected to resume activities for repatriation any time soon. Only pressure exerted on Japan by the international democratic public will be able to enforce that.
7. The Permanent Committee of the General Association of the Koreans living in Japan is certainly correct when they expect a worsening of fighting conditions for their compatriots in general, as well as for repatriation as such through the draft of an "Immigration and Emigration Control Law" to be passed in [Japanese] parliament. This law stipulates, among other provisions, the control of political activities by foreigners in Japan and threatens them with legal consequences and deportation.

CC:

2x Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dep. Far East

1x Central Committee, Dep. IV

1x Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (Dep. illegible)

1x Embassy

signed: Hermann

Third Secretary