

In recent times, the strengthening relationship between North Korea and Ethiopia has appeared in an unusually spectacular form. For days on, the television shows the film about Mengistu's extremely spectacular reception in Korea in sequels. On his way home, the president was accompanied by the Korean vice-president, who since then has been visiting various facilities in the companionship of Mengistu. This delegation, composed of a high number of members, will stay here until the CC [Coordinating Committee, a.k.a. Derg] session that is expected to be held in early December.

The Koreans provide assistance on a very wide scale:

A high number of small-scale irrigation facilities, a larger hydropower station, geological surveys, military equipment, marine fishing, and so on. From an interest-free loan of six million dollars, they are constructing a shipbuilding factory. The Soviet experts in the Ministry of Agriculture have been largely replaced by Koreans. These contacts reinforce the cult around Mengistu; in my view, it is not the ideological and political identification [with North Korea] that is important for the Ethiopian side but the fact that they regard the development of this country, which is comparable to theirs, as a model applicable [to their own conditions], and that they really receive great assistance. Of course, this might also open a way for an increasing political influence.