

TELEGRAM 032.460

To: the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (to comrade Marcel Dinu)

From: the Romanian Embassy in Damascus

Subject: Syrian-North Korean contacts

Date: June 30th, 1978

Classification: Secret

I know from the DPRK Ambassador to Damascus that on June 29th 1978, he sent the proposal of the North Korean to hold on July 19th, 1978 the visit to Syria of Pak Seong-cheol, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, Vice-President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as head of a party and state delegation – the highest-ranking delegation to have ever visited Syria.

Adding that the visit to Damascus of Pak Seong-cheol is the expression of Pyongyang's desire to develop its relations with Syria, [my] interlocutor said that in [Pak Seong-cheol's] discussions with the Syrians, the following issues will be discussed: the entirety of bilateral relations, in the light of the common documents signed on the occasion of the visit to the DPRK of President Assad.

The Syrians agreed in principle with this [liaison work] with Korea.

Note: we would like to note the emphasis added by the Korean diplomat on the 'party and state' nature of the visit to Syria of Pak Seong-cheol's, given that until now, no party visit to Damascus has taken place.

We think that the responsiveness displayed by the Syrians towards the party and state liaison actions with the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reflect Damascus' interest in expanding its sphere of relations with socialist countries and in balancing Syria's relations with these [socialist] countries in Europe and Asia.

Signed

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