

On 23-30 March 1976, Moges Wolde-Michael, the chairman of the Economic Committee of the Ethiopian Provisional Military Administrative Council, paid a friendly visit to the DPRK as the head of a government delegation. During the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie, there had not been diplomatic relations between [the two countries], as Ethiopia was one of the 16 states which sent so-called UN troops to the Korean War on the side of the Americans and the South Koreans. A substantial change could occur only after that in 1974—as Moges Wolde-Michael put it—the Ethiopian people overthrew the rule of the feudal-bourgeois [circles]. Diplomatic relations were established in June 1975.

The fraternal government delegation of the socialist Ethiopia was given special attention. Although the negotiating partner of Moges Wolde-Michael was Deputy Premier Jeong Jun-gi, Vice-President Kang Ryang-uk also attended the receptions. On March 26, head of state Kim Il Sung received the Ethiopian government delegation, and gave a lunch to their honor.

According to the information received from the Foreign Ministry, the Ethiopian government delegation visited the DPRK in order to inform [the North Koreans] about the progress of the Ethiopian revolution, and to ask the DPRK for economic aid. During the negotiations and programs, and in the speeches they made at a mass meeting, they emphasized the significance of the two countries' anti-imperialist struggle and of their membership in the Non-Aligned Movement. On one occasion, Moges Wolde-Michael declared that "The DPRK and Ethiopia fight on the same front against imperialism, colonialism, and Zionism." The Ethiopian government delegation expressed its support to the struggle of the Korean people. Ethiopia supports the struggle for the unification of Korea, and the aforesaid visit "created a firm and eternal basis for the friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries."

In his public speeches, Moges Wolde-Michael generously lavished the kind of praise that is welcomed in Pyongyang. He praised the *juche* idea that had enabled the DPRK to perform miracles, "which is attributable to the genial guidance of President Kim Il Sung, the great and excellent leader, and to the diligent work of the Korean people." He declared that the example of Korea was worth following, and stated that "The political independence and economic self-reliance, which is resolutely defended by the Korean people, is an excellent model for the socialist Ethiopian people."

According to the information we received in the Foreign Ministry, during the confidential talks Moges Wolde-Michael frequently reiterated that the old Ethiopia had committed an indelible crime when it participated in the war against the Korean people. The head of the government delegation emphasized that this had been a crime of the old leadership, for the new government pursued a policy of friendship with the Korean people.

The other main objective of the Ethiopian delegation was to conclude agreements in the field of economic cooperation, and to obtain credit for Ethiopia from the DPRK. Choe Un-ryong, a deputy departmental head of the 1st Main Department of the FM [Foreign Ministry] who provided us with information about this issue in response of our request, said that the Ethiopian delegation handed over a thick volume [that contained the list of their requests]. They ask for the DPRK's assistance to the creation of the new [socialist] villages in Ethiopia, and to the construction of power stations and a wide range of industrial plants.

The DPRK was surprised by this request for such an immense amount of aid. They did not expect such a bulky list of requests. Jeong Jun-gi merely told the Ethiopian delegation that the DPRK would examine the requests, and it would restart talks about those ones whose fulfillment it considered possible.

The delegation headed by Moges Wolde-Michael also included a military delegate, but the Ethiopian delegation made no request of a military nature to the DPRK. This is in contradiction with the news which have spread within the diplomatic corps in Pyongyang.

Ferenc Szabó

ambassador