

= 6th Congress of the Workers ' Party of Korea =

The 6th Congress of the Workers ' Party of Korea (WPK) was held in the February 8 House of Culture in Pyongyang , North Korea , from 10 ? 14 October 1980 . The congress is the highest organ of the party , and is stipulated to be held every four years . 3 @, @ 062 delegates represented the party 's membership ; 117 foreign delegates attended the congress , without the right to speak . The congress saw the reappointment of Kim Il @-@ sung as WPK General Secretary and the Presidium of the Politburo established as the highest organ of the party between congresses .

At this congress , Kim Il @-@ sung designated his son Kim Jong @-@ il as his successor . The move was criticized by the South Korean media and ruling communist parties of the socialist states in Eastern Europe and Asia because it was considered nepotist . The congress also saw the WPK and North Korea move away from orthodox communism by emphasizing the Juche idea over Marxism ? Leninism , giving the party a nationalistic bent . The next party congress was not convened before 2016 , despite party rules that stipulated that a congress had to be held every fifth year .

= = Preparations = =

Little is known about the preparations for the 6th Congress . It was convened a decade after the 5th WPK Congress (in 1970) , outside the party norm of a quadrennial meeting . There was no official reason for its postponement , but it was probably due to the fact that WPK General Secretary Kim Il @-@ sung spent much of the 1970s gathering support (and creating an independent power base) for his son and planned successor Kim Jong @-@ il . In addition , a great deal of time was spent restructuring party organizations and functions . The primary reason for the 6th Congress was to formalize Kim Jong @-@ il as Kim Il @-@ sung 's chosen successor .

= = Delegates and attendees = =

The 6th Congress was attended by 3 @, @ 062 delegates with voting rights and 158 without them ; this marked an increase of 1 @, @ 349 voting and 137 non @-@ voting delegates from the 5th Congress . The increase indicates a growth in membership . The 6th Congress is significant for its large number of delegations : 177 delegations from 118 countries were represented . While communist and workers ' parties customarily invite " fraternal parties " to party congresses , the WPK had taken the unusual step of not inviting foreign delegations to the 1st , 2nd and 5th congresses . Among those invited this time were the Communist Party of China and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union . The WPK leadership also invited a number of non @-@ communist parties and organizations to the congress . The official report said that 155 foreign organizations from 105 countries attended the congress , indicating that 22 delegations remained incognito . For unknown reasons , no foreign delegates spoke at the congress .

= = The Congress = =

The 6th Congress was held at the February 8 House of Culture from 10 ? 14 October 1980 , with a recess on 11 October . Compared to its predecessor , the 6th Congress was fairly short . It began with opening addresses by Kim Il @-@ sung , the Executive Bureau , the Secretariat and the Credentials Committee . After the opening remarks , the congress ' agenda was decided : " (1) Summing up the work of the Party Central Committee ; (2) Evaluation of the work of the Party Central Auditing Committee ; (3) Revision of the Party Rules and (4) Election of the central leading agencies of the Party . " This was followed by a report on the Central Committee 's performance since the 5th Congress . The 6th Congress was adjourned on 11 October , and 12 October began with the election of a committee to draft congressional decisions . Lee Nak @-@ bin then delivered a report on the work of the Central Auditing Committee since the 5th Congress . The rest of the day was spent discussing the Central Committee report . 13 October was devoted to

debates and congratulatory speeches , and on 14 October the congress elected the 6th Central Committee and the 6th Central Auditing Committee .

Significant at the 6th Congress was the generational shift within the WPK , with Kim Il @-@ sung planning to formalize the position of Kim Jong @-@ il . 248 members were elected to the 6th Central Committee : 145 full members and 103 candidate members . This was an increase of 76 members from the 5th Central Committee , which had 172 members . The expansion of the Central Committee is a sign of an expanding party , since one Central Committee member represents 10 @,@ 000 party members . Of the 248 members , " 139 (60 full members and 79 candidate members) " were new to the Central Committee . However , compared to previous Central Committees the replacement rate was relatively low (41 @.@ 4 % , compared with 72 @.@ 2 % at the 5th Congress) . Only two members have sat on the Central Committee since the 1st Central Committee : Kim il @-@ sung and Kim Il . The cause of the high Central Committee replacement rate had been intra @-@ party conflict , and the Yanan , South Korean , domestic and Soviet @-@ Korean factions (as well as ideological opponents of hereditary succession) had been purged from the Central Committee at previous congresses . Amendments to Party rules changed the name of the Political Committee back to its original name (the Politburo) , and created a Presidium within the Politburo to further centralize the power of the ruling elite .

Of the 158 delegates with speaking rights , 39 participated in the debates ? much @-@ lower participation than at the 5th Congress , in which 98 of 137 delegates with speaking rights participated . All debate participants were Party bureaucrats and technocrats , making it the first congress at which the " revolutionary generation " was not present . 38 topics were debated : twenty @-@ one focused on the economy , ten on politics , five on social and cultural affairs , one on military affairs and one on possible unification with South Korea . Socialist construction , the designated primary task of the party during the 1980s , was the focal point of the discussions . The 6th Congress ended with Kim Il @-@ sung presenting a summary of what had been decided : " (a) Shining victory of the Three Revolutions ? achievements in ideological , technological and cultural revolutions ; (b) Conversion of entire society along the lines of Juche idea ; (c) Independent and peaceful reunification of the fatherland ; (d) Strengthening of the solidarity with the anti @-@ imperialist self @-@ reliant forces ; (e) strengthening of Party work . "

= = = 1st plenum = = =

The 1st plenum of the 6th Central Committee , to elect the central party leadership , was held immediately after the 6th Congress . 34 members were elected to the 6th Politburo , an increase from 15 in the 5th Politburo . Of these 34 , 19 were full members and 15 candidate members . Five members were elected to the Presidium , and Kim Jong @-@ il was ranked fourth in the hierarchy of the Politburo and the Presidium . The 6th Secretariat was composed of nine members , with Kim Jong @-@ il ranked second . The size of the Secretariat did not change from the 5th Congress , but of its nine members only Kim Il @-@ sung was from the party 's " revolutionary generation " (60 % of the members of the 5th Secretariat came from that generation) . Kim Il @-@ sung and Kim Jung @-@ rin were the only incumbents to be reelected . The elected 6th Central Military Commission (CMC) was composed of 19 members , of which Kim Jong @-@ il ranked third (behind Kim Il @-@ sung and Oh Jin @-@ u) . This marked the first time in the party 's history that the CMC membership was made public . Kim Il @-@ sung and Kim Jong @-@ il became the only officials with seats in all four bodies : the Presidium , Politburo , Secretariat and CMC . While Kim Jong @-@ il was outranked in the Presidium , Politburo and Secretariat , none of the members who outranked him had positions in other bodies (except for Oh Jin @-@ ju , second @-@ ranked member of the CMC) . Below is a list of members (and their respective rankings) of the Presidium , full and candidate members of the Politburo , Secretariat and CMC :

The 1st plenum saw the " revolutionary generation " retire from their executive posts , surrendering them to the new generation of Kim Jong @-@ il ; however , they still controlled the highest organs of power : the Presidium and the Politburo . The plenum saw the disappearance of Kim Yong @-@ ju (Kim Il @-@ sung 's brother , considered his chosen successor before Kim Jong @-@ il) , Kim Dong

@-@ gyu , Ryu Jang @-@ sik and Lee Yong @-@ mu from important party positions . The reason for the purge is unknown , but presumably linked to Kim Il @-@ sung 's time @-@ consuming consolidation of his son 's power base .

= = Policy decisions = =

= = = Kim Jong @-@ il as successor = = =

Kim Yong @-@ ju was believed to be Kim Il @-@ sung 's first choice as successor , and his authority increased until he became co @-@ chairman of the North ? South Coordination Committee . From late 1972 until the 6th Congress , Kim Yong @-@ ju became an increasingly remote figure within the regime ; at the 6th Congress , he lost his seats in the Politburo and on the Central Committee . However , rumors were confirmed that Kim Il @-@ sung began grooming Kim Jong @-@ il in 1966 . From 1974 until the 6th Congress , Kim Jong @-@ il (called the " Party centre " by North Korean media) became the second @-@ most @-@ powerful man in North Korea .

The choice of Kim Jong @-@ il as Kim Il @-@ sung 's successor met with considerable criticism . Critics accused Kim Il @-@ sung of creating a dynasty , turning North Korea into a feudal state . An anonymous South Korean critic said , " Hereditary succession of power [was an] inevitable consequence of the elder Kim 's irrevocable commitment to the dream of founding a dynasty of his own and of his family " , adding that Kim Jong @-@ il 's rise to power was proof of the " degeneration " of the WPK into a " thoroughly personalized family affair built up around a personality cult . " The Communist Party of the Soviet Union , the Communist Party of China and other ruling parties of socialist states did not approve Kim Jong @-@ il 's appointment as heir apparent . Kim Il @-@ sung 's choice of successor arguably concerned the promotion of revolutionary zeal in the country (taking into account the negative treatment Joseph Stalin received from his successor) .

= = = Korean unification = = =

At the congress , Kim Il @-@ sung stressed the importance of " achieving the goal of the unification of the fatherland which has been the greatest and long @-@ cherished desire of the whole people is the most important revolutionary task facing the Party " . He warned his audience that if Korea remained divided , it might never be unified again because of relations among the big powers . Kim Il @-@ sung called for the establishment of the " Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo " (DCRK) , a national government of North and South Korea . The DCRK would be ruled by a Supreme Confederal National Congress (SCNC) , with an equal number of representatives from North and South Korea . The SCNC representatives would elect a Presidium , which would rule on its behalf . Under this system , South Korea would remain capitalist and North Korea socialist . However , the WPK leadership named three conditions for North Korea to join the DCRK : (1) Social democratization of South Korea , the ouster of its current ruling class , repeal of the Anti @-@ Communist and National Security Laws and replacement of its military regime by a democratic one representing the will of the people ; (2) Reducing tensions with the establishment of a truce and a peace agreement ; (3) Reducing American interference in the region , holding open the possibility of improved relations with the United States if it supported Korean reunification .

= = = From communism to nationalism = = =

The 6th Congress signified a move away from orthodox communism , with the Juche given primacy over Marxism ? Leninism ; in foreign relations , an independent national policy was given primacy over proletarian internationalism . According to political analyst Kim Nam @-@ sik , " They [changes] represent a marked departure from the fundamental principles of communism , and a new orientation for the North Korean future in the 1980s . " In contrast to other ruling communist parties

in socialist states , democratic centralism in the WPK did not hold the leader (the WPK General Secretary) accountable . In many ways it functioned the other way around , with the WPK accountable to the leader . This unusual system is rooted in North Korea 's leader theory .

In contrast to other socialist states (which upheld the orthodox communist belief that the masses are masters of historical development) , WPK ideology asserts that the masses can only initiate revolutionary change through a leader . While other socialist states often emphasized certain historical figures , due weight was still given to the people . The opposite occurred in North Korea , where the party line was " The great revolutionary task of the working class is pioneered and led to victory by the Leader and completed under the leadership of the Leader only . " From this perspective , the revolutionary task given the working class by the other socialist regimes became the sole responsibility of the leader in North Korea . The leader theory supports one @-@ man leadership , since all important tasks can only be accomplished by a great leader it argues . This ideological outlook may explain why Kim Il @-@ sung appointed his son , Kim Jong @-@ il , as his successor . In North Korea , Kim Il @-@ sung was considered a " Great Leader " with a decisive role ; he was cited by official media as the man who established the WPK and founder of the Juche idea . Because of this , Kim Il @-@ sung was not " elected " WPK General Secretary ; the position was bestowed on him by divine right .

While North Korea had already begun to move from a foreign policy based upon proletarian internationalism at the Conference of Party Representatives in 1966 , the WPK leadership had never explicitly broken with proletarian internationalism as it did at the 6th Congress . In theory , a communist party supports policy contributing to the world revolution . Communist regimes rarely lived up to this ideal ; by the 1950s , ideological schisms within the world communist movement made it all but impossible . From 1966 onwards , North Korea strengthened relations with neutral countries in the global Cold War . Proletarian internationalism was replaced with a national , independent foreign policy ; if a socialist and non @-@ socialist country were at war , North Korea could (in theory) support the non @-@ socialist country if it benefited North Korea . At the 6th Congress , Kim Il @-@ sung attached more importance to relations with Third World countries than to unity in the socialist camp . While North Korea argues that independence and proletarian internationalism are not exclusive , in orthodox communist theory they are .