

# **KIM IL SUNG**

## **On the Three Principles of National Reunification**

Conversations with the South Korean Delegates to the High-Level Political  
Talks  
between North and South Korea  
May 3 and November 3, 1972

(Excerpt)

### **1. On the Three Principles of National Reunification**

I am glad to meet you today.

I am highly delighted and also deeply moved that we, fellow countrymen, have met after a long separation because of the division of the nation.

You say that you have come to discuss the question of national reunification in spite of everything. Your action is very courageous and daring. It is very gratifying that the south Korean authorities have decided to participate in north-south political talks and have sent you to represent them. We warmly welcome this step.

In my speech of August 6 last year, I made it clear that we are ready to make contact with all political parties including the Democratic Republican Party, social organizations and individuals of south Korea at any time. A few days after my speech, the south Korean side responded, agreeing to hold north-south Red Cross talks.

Thus began the preliminary talks between the Red Cross organizations of the north and the south, which led to the high-level north-south political discussion.

The doors for contacts and dialogues have now been opened between the north and the south, which have stood alienated from

each other for a long time and it has become possible for high-level representatives to meet and exchange views with an open mind. This is a tremendous step towards the solution of the reunification question.

At present the whole nation desires the reunification of the country. Today nothing is more urgent for the Korean people than national reunification. If we fail to reunify the country as soon as possible and allow national division to continue, our nation may become a plaything of the great powers and be divided into two for ever.

The most important factor which characterizes a nation is the community of language and culture. Even people of the same descent cannot be regarded as belonging to the same nation if they use different spoken and written languages and their cultures and customs differ. Now, because our country has been divided for a long time, the language, as well as the culture and way of life, is already changing in the north and the south. The longer the division of the nation, the greater the difference in the language and way of life will be.

After liberation some people in the northern half of the country insisted that the Korean alphabet should be reformed.

But I opposed it. If we carry out an alphabet reform when the country is not reunified, the Korean people will be divided in two for ever. So I told the linguists at the time that if ever an alphabet reform was to be introduced it should be after the reunification of the country, but never before reunification. If either side were to carry out an alphabet reform while the country is divided, the north and the south would come to use different letters. In that case, our nation would be divided into two nations once and for all.

We cannot tolerate that the Korean nation should be split into two for ever. We should reunify the country as soon as possible and hand over a unified country to posterity. If we end national division and achieve reunification, our country can become a powerful state with a population of 50 million, a brilliant national

culture, and a powerful national economy, which no one will dare provoke.

In order to reunify the country, it is necessary to establish the fundamental principles correctly, which can provide the basis for the solution of the reunification question. This is most important. Only when there are fundamental principles agreed upon by the north and the south, can the two sides make joint efforts for reunification and successfully solve all problems concerning it.

I believe that our reunification question should on all accounts be settled independently without foreign interference and peacefully on the principle of promoting great national unity.

**First, national reunification should be achieved independently without reliance on outside forces and free from their interference.**

Solving the reunification question independently on the principle of self-determination of the people is the principled stand which has always been maintained by the Government of our Republic.

If we depend on outside forces we cannot solve this problem. The question of Korean reunification is entirely an internal affair of our country. If we try to solve this internal affair by relying on outside forces instead of settling it on our own, it is shameful for our nation.

Some people are now trying to solve the reunification problem with guarantees afforded by big powers. This is a great mistake. The imperialist powers do not want to see our country reunified. By nature, they like division and attempt to divide other countries and peoples by all possible means, because it is difficult to rule them when they are united. Therefore, we should on no account rely on the great powers in settling the reunification question. If contacts are established and talks are held within our nation, we can remove distrust and misunderstanding and achieve national unity and reunification. Why then should we ask for the help of great powers?

We should not tolerate foreign interference affairs of Korea under any circumstances. No foreign force has the right to meddle in Korean affairs, and while there is foreign interference the question of national reunification cannot be solved in keeping with the desire and interests of our nation. The reunification of the country should be achieved by the Korean people themselves free from any foreign interference.

You say that the south Korean authorities are also opposed to foreign interference and intend to settle the question of national reunification independently without US and Japanese involvement, and pledge that you will never become a stooge of the United States or Japan. If this is true, it is excellent.

If we are to reject foreign intervention and reunify the country independently, we must categorically oppose flunkeyism towards great powers.

I always tell our officials that, if a man takes to flunkeyism, he will become a fool; if a nation falls into flunkeyism, the country will be ruined; and if a party adopted flunkeyism, it will make a mess of the revolution and construction. If a man wants to be an independent being, he must never adopt flunkeyism which means worshipping others blindly.

As our country is geographically located in the midst of big countries, flunkeyism has played a great part in the history of our people. It hampered the advance of our people in building a new society after liberation. So we have fought tirelessly against it.

Let me take an example from the days after liberation. Immediately after liberation there were quite a few people who had been affected with flunkeyism even amongst those who called themselves communists. In Seoul at that time, a fellow, Pak Hon Yong by name, claimed that he would make our country a member republic of another country. This had a very bad influence on the south Korean people and greatly hindered the settlement of the reunification question. On hearing his words, some people were afraid that our country was going to be subjugated again to a foreign country. In my speech before the

people, therefore, I said that we would build a democratic society of a Korean type, not a Soviet or American type, in the interests of the Korean nation.

When we advanced the policy of agricultural cooperativization in the postwar years, a number of people tried to discredit it. Some asked how we could cooperativize agriculture when our industry had been devastated, claiming that European countries with developed industries had not yet undertaken full-scale agricultural cooperativization. Since flunkeyists used to accept willingly what people from large countries said, I refuted their argument with the words of Lenin. Lenin had said that a communal economy established by a simple merger of peasants' lands and farm implements would be superior to a private economy. So I said that our Party's policy of agricultural cooperativization was in accord with Leninism and was to meet the requirement of our particular situation. I asked them how it could be that agricultural cooperativization after industrialization was the only correct way. In the end, they admitted that our view was correct.

At that time, the circumstances of our peasants, in fact, were such that they were unable to survive unless they united their efforts through cooperativization. The war had devastated agriculture, and the peasants were short of draught cattle and farm implements. This was also true of rich farmers. In this context, we ensured that peasants organized cooperatives on the principle of voluntary membership and ran them by their united efforts. Basically, we Koreans like to pool our efforts and help one another. Traditionally, our people have good customs. For instance, if a neighbour has a wedding, the whole village offers the family contributions and various other kinds of aid, calling on them to congratulate them and pass a pleasant time with them. In the postwar years, there were not many modern farm machines in our country. But we were able to cooperativize agriculture rather smoothly in a short time because life itself urgently demanded it and the peasants supported the cooperative policy actively.

In establishing economic relations with other countries, we have thoroughly rejected flunkeyist tendencies and held fast to an independent stand.

We have not tolerated any relations which could result in our economic dependence on other countries. We have established and developed economic relations with them on the principle of defending the national economy thoroughly, on the principle of complete equality. In our trade with developed socialist countries, we have made sure that we give them raw materials they need only when they give us those which we need, and that we buy their machines only on condition that they buy ours. If this principle was not maintained in our economic relations with developed countries when our technology is not yet very highly developed, we would have to keep supplying raw materials to them and buying manufactured goods. This would end in leaving only empty mountains riddled with holes in our country. We cannot hand down such mountains to our posterity, can we?

We worked hard not to be economically subordinated to another country, that is, to be self-supporting in the economy. If a people do not achieve economic independence through the building of an independent national economy, they cannot hope to raise the external authority of their country and to have a say in the international arena. Since we have pursued an independent policy in the sphere of economic construction and built an independent national economy, nobody dare apply pressure on us.

In the past the worship of great powers was most obvious in the field of literature and the arts, and we waged a resolute fight against this.

Some of the writers and artists worshipped European literature and art and produced works which were neither to the liking of the Koreans nor understandable to them. Once there were poets who worshipped Pushkin and musicians who adored Tchaikovsky. In creating an opera, these people patterned it on Italian ones. Flunkeyism was so rampant that some artists drew foreign landscapes instead of our beautiful mountains and rivers.

During the Fatherland Liberation War I visited a hospital where I found a picture of a Siberian landscape. It showed a bear crawling about the snow-covered ground under a large tree. So, I severely criticized the people concerned. I told them, “There are many renowned mountains such as Mts. Kumgang and Myohyang. Why did you hang that kind of picture instead of a beautiful Korean landscape? What is the good of hanging such a picture in educating our people?”

The Korean people have a brilliant culture and have lived in the beautiful land of three thousand *ri* for a long time. They will live in our beautiful homeland in the future, too.

They cannot live in Siberia or in Europe. Therefore, our literature and art should, on all accounts, serve the education of our people in patriotic spirit. Internationalism cannot exist apart from patriotism. He who does not love his own country cannot be true to internationalism. Koreans do not like European artistic works. They do not want to see artistic works which are not to their liking. We do not need works which Koreans do not like and which are not congenial with their national feeling. That is why I defined literature and art of socialist realism as being national in form and socialist in content.

We conducted the struggle against flunkeyism by means of ideological struggle, theoretical struggle to root out flunkeyist ideas which remained in the minds of people. Through many years of struggle against flunkeyism, we were able to eradicate it completely and hold fast to independence in all spheres of the revolution and construction.

In our attempts to solve the question of national reunification, we must strongly oppose the tendency of flunkeyism to rely on foreigners, rather than believing in the strength of our own nation. We must reunify the country independently by the united efforts of the Korean nation.

**Secondly, great national unity should be promoted by transcending the differences in ideas, ideals and systems.**

The question of our country's reunification is not one of who prevails over whom. It is one of attaining the unity of a nation which has been divided by an outside force and achieving national sovereignty. In order to reunify the country, therefore, it is essential to proceed from endeavours to achieve unity between the north and south and promote great national unity.

In order to promote this, the north and the south must transcend their ideas and systems and refrain from pursuing hostile policies towards each other.

At present different ideas and systems exist in the two parts of our country. In this situation, the north and the south should not try to impose their ideas and systems upon each other. We do not intend to impose the socialist system and communist ideology on south Korea. Neither should the south Korean authorities insist on "reunification by prevailing over communism" nor demand that we desist from communism. In other words, they should discard their "anti-communist" slogans.

The north and the south should discard hostile policies which obstruct unity, and combine their efforts to find common ground. If each side does not endeavour to find common ground but opposes the other side and argues about things of the past in an attempt to justify itself, the gap between the two sides will grow wider and wider and the reunification of the country will be delayed still further. This would be a grave crime against the country and the nation.

In our opinion, it is quite possible to find a common ground if the north and the south work together, basing themselves on a sincere desire for unity. We have worked hard to discover this common ground in order to hasten the country's reunification.

Recently, the south Korean authorities have been talking about "self-help", "self-reliance" and "self-defence". We consider that it is possible to find some common factors here. We think that their "self-help", "self-reliance" and "self-defence" may have some points in common with the independent policies of our Party and the Government of the Republic. The country's reunification will



be hastened if the north and the south discover, one by one, what common grounds exist between them and achieve their unity on this basis.

In achieving the great unity of the nation it is important to remove misunderstanding and mistrust between north and south.

Our country has been divided for so long that there are a number of points on which the north and the south differ from each other and misunderstand and mistrust each other. As long as the two sides misunderstand and distrust each other, there cannot be genuine national unity. A family cannot be formed without deep trust between husband and wife. Even in the case of husband and wife, if they do not trust each other, they cannot live together and, in the long run, they will have to divorce. The north and the south should strive to eliminate mutual misunderstanding and mistrust.

To this end, the authorities and many personages of the two parts of the country should make frequent contact with each other and hold dialogues in good faith. If they get together and discuss any matters frankly and seriously, misunderstanding will be removed and mutual trust will be deepened.

Through our dialogue with you on this occasion, the misunderstanding between the north and the south has already been alleviated to a considerable extent. The dialogue between the north and the south should have been held earlier.

We thought that the south Korean authorities were going to be lackeys of US imperialism and Japanese militarism and sell out the country. But you say that this will never be the case. You also say that the south Korean authorities will neither bring Japanese militarists into south Korea again nor sell out the country as the lackeys of the United States and Japan, and request us over and over again to believe it. So we can believe you and eliminate our past distrust.

The south Korean authorities say that they have had the misconception that we are going to “invade the south” and “communize” south Korea. But we have no intention of doing

these things. We have declared on many occasions that we have no intention of “invading the south”. We reaffirm this to you today. As for ”communization”, we do not intend to “communize” south Korea nor could it be “communized” even if we tried to. Therefore, I think that you can now dispel the misunderstanding you have had because of the alleged “invasion of the south” and “communization”. If we remove our misunderstanding and deepen trust through contacts and dialogues in this way, we shall be able to achieve great national unity regardless of the differences in idea and ideals, systems and religious beliefs.

Another important factor in achieving great national unity is that the north and the south should refrain from abusing and slandering each other.

To achieve unity and cooperation, both sides should respect each other rather than resort to abuse and slander. If they continue abusing and slandering each other as they do now, the north and the south will not get on close terms but, instead, the gap will widen. That is why they should first stop abusing and slandering each other.

Achieving economic cooperation between the north and the south is also very important in attaining great national unity.

The northern half of the Republic is rich in natural resources and has a developed heavy industry. South Korea has some foundations of light industry from the past. If the north and the south effect economic cooperation and meet each other’s needs, they will be better able to solve immediate economic problems, and develop the national economy rapidly by their own efforts without introducing foreign capital. If the national economy is developed through north-south cooperation, our nation will be better off than Japan or any other countries that are said to be developed.

The north and the south should advance jointly in external relations, too. Only then will we be able to demonstrate the unity of our nation.

We consider that the north and the south will be able to promote great national unity in spite of the differences in their ideas and systems, political views and religious beliefs, if they all take a patriotic attitude and stand for national reunification. At present, even those countries and nations which have different ideas and systems, are on friendly terms and get along well together. And there is no reason why the differences in ideas and systems should prevent our nation, which is of the same blood, from uniting and cooperating.

Whether one believes in communism, nationalism or capitalism must not be an obstacle to great national unity. We are not opposed to the nationalists and capitalists in south Korea. The majority of the south Korean capitalists are national capitalists. We have been pursuing a policy of protecting national capitalists. For the sake of national reunification, we will unite and cooperate with the people of all backgrounds in south Korea including nationalists and national capitalists.

**Thirdly, national reunification should be achieved by peaceful means without resorting to arms.**

The north and the south, one and the same nation, must not fight against each other. We must reunify the divided country peacefully without fail. If peaceful reunification fails and another war breaks out in Korea, our nation will suffer catastrophes.

At present the great powers of the world want to get on well with one another, refraining from quarrelling. Some time ago US President Nixon visited China and said that it would be desirable to abstain from quarrelling with each other and maintain peace for the space of one generation. After inspecting the Great Wall of China, he even said that no barrier should divide the people of the world. In the joint statement of China, the United States published as a result of Nixon's visit to China, the United States approved the five principles of peace which it had so far refused to recognize. It is good that the United States approved these principles. Needless to say, we shall have to wait and see how the Americans will put their words into action. More often than not

the imperialists go back on their words. So there is no knowing clearly if Nixon spoke sincerely or not in China.

Commenting on Nixon's trip to China, our *Rodong Sinmun* wrote. "If Nixon's words uttered after inspecting the Great Wall are serious, why does he not make efforts to remove the Military Demarcation Line which runs across the central part of our country and to withdraw the US soldiers who are swaggering about, wearing steel-helmets with the inscribed "MP"?" I think this comment is valid.

Nowadays, the big powers of the world are trying to abstain from quarrelling and get on harmoniously with one another. Then why should one and the same nation fall out with itself? As the same nation, we must not quarrel among ourselves. We must reunify the country by peaceful means.

If the country is to be reunified peacefully without conflict between the north and the south, it is imperative, first of all, to reduce the armies of both sides. On several occasions, I have said in my open speeches that the armies of the north and the south ought to be reduced considerably.

Reduction of the armies is the way to ease tension between the two sides and to lessen the military burdens. The present military burdens of the two sides are very heavy.

We must work together to remove the Military Demarcation Line which divides our country into north and south.

The danger of war cannot be removed in the present situation when large armed forces of both sides confront each other across the Military Demarcation Line. In such a situation, if the commander of a regiment or a division stationed in the area along this demarcation line opens fire by mistake at a place, both sides will begin to exchange fire, and this could lead to war. This is very dangerous.

If in the future the north and the south give guarantees against the use of armed forces between them through sincere consultation, and put this into practice, their military equipment and personnel deployed in the areas on the Military Demarcation

Line will become unnecessary and the line itself can be eliminated.

At present, the north and the south say their armies are for self-defence. However, they should not undertake “self-defence” against each other. They must work together to defend themselves against foreign invasion.

The defence of our Republic is always meant to oppose foreign aggression against our nation. We will never tolerate the aggression of outside forces against our country and people.

When the US imperialists sent their armed spy ship Pueblo into the territorial waters of our Republic, the naval forces of our People’s Army captured it. This was a legitimate self-defence measure of our People’s Army whose mission is to defend their country. But instead of apologizing to us, the Americans threatened us by bringing large forces including the aircraft carrier Enterprise to the East Sea. It was a flagrant infringement of and a grave challenge to our nation’s sovereignty. We did not yield to the Americans’ threat and pressure. They attempted to start a war by mobilizing large forces, so we made a firm determination to fight against them. Seeing that we did not succumb to their threat and pressure, they desisted from starting a war and fled. Had they unleashed war at that time our nation would have gone through another war and the authorities of the north and the south could not have met and had a peaceful talk like this one today.

If any foreigners invade our land in the future, the north and the south must unite and repulse the invaders. When all the Korean people unite their strength, they will certainly smash any aggressor.

We must eliminate military confrontation and ease tension between the north and the south by our joint efforts, so that we can prevent another war in Korea and achieve the peaceful reunification of the country.

Through the recent talks we have found important common grounds between the north and the south and reached an agreement regarding the most important problems.

The three principles of realizing independent reunification without outside interference, achieving great national unity by transcending differences in ideas, ideals and systems, and reunifying the divided land by peaceful means without recourse to armed force, are the starting point of and the basis for the solution of our reunification question.

You have agreed to solve the reunification question on the three principles, and you say the highest authorities of south Korea will also agree. So we can say we have reached complete agreement on the three principles of national reunification.

I am very pleased that the three principles of national reunification have been agreed upon between the north and the south in our talks today.

The three principles of national reunification upon which the north and the south agreed through joint consultation are absolutely fair principles which will enable our nation to solve the reunification question in conformity with its aspirations and demand. We must reunify our country on these three principles. You have pledged that you will take them as the basis for your future actions. If you do so, other problems concerning the solution of the reunification question can also be settled successfully and our nation's reunification will be achieved at an early date.

Now that the basic principles of reunification have been agreed upon, we must find concrete ways of putting them into effect to unite the whole nation and reunify our country. We must always proceed from the three principles in seeking concrete ways for national reunification. When the north and south consider the matter carefully and sincerely consult each other on the basis of the three principles of independence, great national unity and peaceful reunification, they will be able to find the successful path towards reunification.

To find the reasonable way towards the independent and peaceful reunification of the country, we have to develop further political consultations between the north and the south and carry on contacts and dialogues more actively.

I think that political consultations have already begun through the meetings and talks held on this occasion between the high-ranking representatives of the north and the south. North-south political consultations having been started, we must develop them so as to bear good fruit.

You have come to Pyongyang first, so I should like to send our representatives to Seoul in return. I think that if mutual trust increases and various conditions mature in the process of frequent visits of representatives from the north and the south, summit talks will also become possible.

In the future representatives of the north and the south must exchange frequent visits and hold a great many talks.

The misunderstanding and distrust created between the north and the south during the nearly 30 year-long division after liberation cannot be eliminated through one or two contacts and dialogues. One or two meetings and consultations will not be enough to discover all the concrete ways for the solution of the reunification question. Through these talks we have solved fundamental problems upon which the north and the south misunderstood each other and have found important common grounds, but many problems are yet to be solved to reunify the country. These problems can be solved only through frequent contacts and sincere consultations between representatives of both sides.

In the north-south negotiations and consultations, the points of mutual misunderstanding and all other problems concerning national reunification must be discussed. Any dissenting opinions must be aired frankly for discussion. If they are kept to oneself, the differences cannot be solved. Any misunderstanding, however insignificant, must be discussed openly and settled promptly.

North-south negotiations must proceed from the principle of deepening mutual understanding, finding common points and increasing their unity. Our representatives and yours may advance different views in seeking the path to national reunification. So they may argue for the justness of their own views. But the arguments should always be intended for finding common grounds and achieving unity and reunification, not for division.

I think it reasonable to organize and run a north-south joint commission or the like in order to coordinate north-south relations correctly and successfully solve various problems regarding the reunification of the country.

Coordinating work should be conducted in practice by organizing a joint commission. If only general talks are held, great progress cannot be made in bringing about national unity and reunification.

The joint commission can be co-chaired by persons in high authority appointed respectively by the authorities of the north and the south and be composed of the necessary members. It takes only a little time to fly between Pyongyang and Seoul. So the commission can be run by you coming over to Pyongyang and our people going to Seoul.

Once the joint commission is formed, there will be many problems to be settled by it. It should quickly discuss and settle various problems arising from the relations between north and south, including the problem of one side refraining from slandering the other side and the problem of preventing military conflicts. At the joint commission one side should not force its will upon the other; problems raised should be discussed seriously until mutual understanding is reached to conform with the purpose of unity.

A direct telephone line may be installed between Pyongyang and Seoul, by which to discuss problems at any time. If even a minor problem which may hamper national reunification or cause misunderstanding between both sides arises, it is necessary to deal with it at once by telephone, talk it over and settle it promptly.



The three principles of national reunification agreed upon this time between north and south serve as a reunification programme to be put into effect jointly by the entire Korean nation. I think it a good idea to make these three principles public, so that the entire Korean people and the world's people will know them.

The publication of the three principles of national reunification is good both for the education of our people and for demonstrating the unity of the Korean nation to the world. If we publish the reunification programme agreed upon between north and south, all compatriots at home and abroad will have a consensus of opinion, being aware that we are going to reunify the divided country independently and peacefully on the principle of great national unity, and all sections of the people will derive great encouragement from it. When we publish the joint reunification programme of the nation, the world's people will know that the Korean people are a great united people and the foreign forces opposed to our country's reunification will clearly understand that they will never be able to divide the Korean nation permanently, however hard they may try.

As for when and how we should publish the three principles of national reunification, it had better be discussed in the course of the forthcoming dialogue. I think it will do to publish it when an agreement is reached at another meeting of the delegates of both sides after the matter is taken up by the south Korean authorities upon your return to Seoul.

Since you took the trouble to come to Pyongyang, you should stay another day and have talks with our officials.

Your visiting us is a patriotic deed. Man should be a patriot, not a quisling. Man should do things which are beneficial to his country and people even if he lives for only a day. Only such a life is glorious and worthwhile.

We can say that the current north-south talks were a success. I hope that you will come to Pyongyang frequently from now on.

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