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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Regional Department IV
Memorandum on Korea

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Sent to: Comrade Puja
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M e m o r a n d u m

Subject: resuming the repatriation of
Koreans living in Japan

After an interval of some three years the repatriation of Koreans living in Japan was resumed. /Up to the end of 1967 altogether 88 thousand Koreans living in Japan returned to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea./

Mostly due to the measure taken – under American and South Korean pressure – by the Japanese authorities, repatriation was suspended at the end of 1967. Later, negotiations were conducted several times on resuming the repatriation but with no success until an agreement in Moscow was made.

After the agreement between the Red Cross organizations of the two countries made in Moscow the first repatriated group, the 156th group since the beginning of the repatriation process, arrived in DPRK on May 16, 1971. On this occasion all the central Korean newspapers, including the daily paper of the CC of the Korean Worker's party, published an editorial.

It is to be noted that the repatriation, resumed despite the pressure of the governments of the USA and South Korea and influential Japanese right-wing circles, is a great political success for DPRK and a defeat for Pak Chon Hi's regime. This is further supported by the fact that repatriation is going on concurrently with the elections in South Korea and that Koreans living in Japan continue to go back home to the socialist DPRK rather than to South Korea.

In recent years DPRK has requested and has been awarded significant aid from socialist countries that have diplomatic relations with Japan to support the repatriation process. It is worth noting, however, that the Korean papers – although they have given a detailed account of this kind of support before – do not even mention the assistance provided by the socialist countries and attribute the success achieved in repatriation exclusively to Comrade Kim Il Sung and “the progressive Japanese forces supporting his Juche ideas and political line”.

Budapest, May 29, 1970.