

# From Pyongyang to Havana.



Thursday, August 8, 2013

## Proletarian Internationalism of North Korea

The phrase "to be internationalist is to settle our own debt to humanity, whoever is not capable of fighting for others will never be able to fight for himself" could well define what proletarian internationalism is, solidarity among working people. It was pronounced by Fidel Castro in 1988 when the island was an internationalist with Angola. From this moment, many people began to know the internationalism of Cuba with other countries, internationalism that still stands today. However, with Korea the opposite happened, even though Kim il-sung pronounced in 1967 the phrase "It is an internationalist duty for every revolutionary people to fight to defend the victories of the Cuban Revolution" ( \* ), that leads us to ask several questions, is not North Korea an internationalist country? Maybe it was but not anymore? Is their internationalism unknown?



Unfortunately, to start talking about this issue, we have to go back to the past, to a tragic event that affected North Korea. It happened a few months ago and several media echoed the news, where we can read the following headline: "Three North Korean doctors, beheaded in the northeast of Nigeria."

<http://www.abc.es/internacional/20130211/abci-nigeria-corea-201302102106.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/nigeria-islamists-behead-north-korean-doctors-8488969.html>

As we can see, it is a really tragic news where there are, people who were cruelly murdered by the noble fact of helping others in exchange for nothing, simply atrocious. Now, despite the tragic news, many people will think, what were 3 North Korean doctors doing in Nigeria?

### SUBMISSION OF DOCTORS TO POOR COUNTRIES

Before starting with this section, we must first talk about how health in North Korea is,

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given that in case the health system is deficient, it would be of little use to send doctors all over the world. Luckily, this is not the case. And I do not say it myself or says Korea itself, says the World Health Organization, who said in 2010, to deny a report previously made by Amnesty International, "North Korea's health is the envy of many countries developed ", to which he added that" he has no shortage of doctors or nurses ". ( \* )

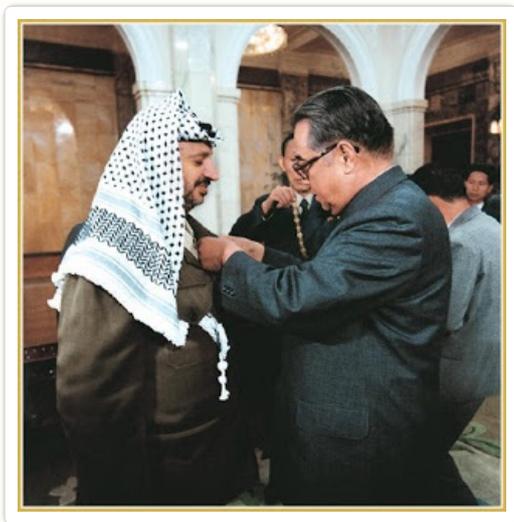


*North Korean doctor in Africa.*

That said, North Korea sends doctors anywhere in the world where they are needed, it does not matter whether countries are capitalist or not, Korea cares only for solidarity with oppressed people around the world. This is why North Korea sends doctors to countries such as Sri Lanka, Angola, Mexico, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Mozambique, etc. ( \* ) ( \* ) ( \* ) ( \* ). Moreover, during the "Libyan War of 2011", while Western countries sent weapons, bombed territory and even, mysteriously attacked the North Korean embassy ( \* ), the DPRK had doctors in hospitals to cure all the injured ( \* )

#### **SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE.**

North Korea is one of the 19 countries in the world that it does not recognize Israel as a state, always naming it as an "imperialist satellite". The only state in that area whose recognition it has of the DPRK is Palestine, including the territory currently belonging to Israel.



*Kim il-sung and Yasser Arafat*

Relations between North Korea and Palestine began in 1970, and since then, they have not been modified one iota. The DPRK from the first day supported Palestine in its struggle to recover its territory, saying at the UN that: "North Korea fully supports the struggle of the Palestinians to expel the Israeli aggressors from their territory and regain their right to self-determination. "

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#### **Followers**

In addition to discourse, North Korea has helped Palestine in many areas, such as maternity or education. It is known the case of Jindallae Safarini, a Palestinian girl who was born in North Korea thanks to the health advances of the country. His parents, for various reasons and after losing a baby during pregnancy, could not get to have more children. After many failed attempts, they finally went to North Korea, where after applying a long process, they got Jindallae's mother to become pregnant (\*).



*Palestinian girl studying in North Korea.*

Finally, North Korea has also helped fight for the sovereignty of Palestine, not with words, but with deeds. The DPRK financed and handed arms to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. (\*)



*Embassy of Palestine in Pyongyang.*

#### **SOLIDARITY WITH THE WESTERN SAHARA.**

The Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic proclaimed itself as a sovereign and independent state on February 27, 1976. It was recognized by North Korea on March 16 of the same year, being the 8th country in the world to recognize it and the 1st non-African country in the world in recognizing it. Today and despite the invasion by Morocco, the situation has not changed, North Korea continues to recognize Western Sahara as an independent state. (\*)

#### **SOLIDARITY WITH JAPAN.**

Although Japan does not recognize North Korea as a state, and relations between the two countries are worse than those it has, for example, with South Korea, it is not a reason for the DPRK not to show solidarity with this country. After the 2011 tsunami, and despite the difficulties in obtaining foreign currency, North Korea sent two aid packages, a first of \$ 100,000, and a second of 500,000 to Japan ( \* ) ( \* ). In addition to this, North Korea gave asylum to several political prisoners of the Red Army of Japan.

#### SOLIDARITY WITH SYRIA.

Since the creation of present-day Syria, North Korea has shown great solidarity with the country, especially on two issues of great importance, the first, the development of agriculture, lending all its heavy agricultural technology on the state lands of Syria ( \* ), and second, in the development of energy. The latter could not be completed due to an attack by Israel on the facilities, which will be discussed below.



The story is simple, Syria was building a nuclear power plant with the help of North Korea. This, it seems, did not please Israel very much, so with US authorization, it launched an air strike on Syrian sovereign land, destroying the power station. In this attack, 10 North Korean workers died ( \* ). Imagine if it had been the other way around, if North Korea had bombed a nuclear facility in another country, the one that had been set up, right?



*Members of the North Korean embassy sympathize with wounded caused by terrorists.*

Currently, Syria is suffering an imperialist aggression camouflaged as a "revolution" ( \* ) ( \* ) ( \* ), a fact in which North Korea has expressed at all times against, giving its full support to the government and the Syrian people . The DPRK, whenever it has the opportunity to speak before the whole world at the UN, has expressed its support for Syria, condemning foreign forces and calling for the expulsion of the country.

Not only this, but also North Korea, as with Palestine, is not left alone in the world. For this reason, the DPRK sent generals to lead the Syrian Army against the terrorists of Al-Qaeda ( \* ) ( \* ). It is curious that right after this fact occurred, Al Assad began to recover a large part of the lost ground ( \* ) ( \* ).

### **SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTH AFRICA.**

First, while apartheid existed in South Africa, North Korea had no relationship with the country. After its fall, the DPRK began to establish diplomatic relations.

Another gesture of solidarity came before the 2010 World Cup that was played in South Africa, where the stadiums where the championship was going were not going at the expected pace, so the time ran against them. This motive was decisive for North Korea to send 1,000 workers for the completion of these ( \* ).

### **SOLIDARITY WITH VIETNAM.**

As everyone knows, or everyone should know, before Vietnam was divided into two parts as is currently the case with Korea, the North under communist control, and the South under capitalist control. Everything was fine in the North, but in the South the thing was very different because a communist guerrilla, the Viet Cong, controlled 40% of the country. Due to these events, and fearing that Vietnam would reunify under the red flag of communism, in 1965, the US It attacked the North of the country, beginning the famous Vietnam War. This imperialist fact could not be left unanswered by North Korea.

During the war, North Korea sent especially air support, so many fighters and pilots marched to Vietnam to alleviate the US dominance in that matter. On this, a Vietnamese official spoke in 2001, who wrote in his book the following words: "In 1967, a number of Korean People's Army pilots were sent to provide us with the training and benefit of their experience and to participate in operations of combat with the pilots of the Vietnamese People's Army, a large number of flights by the Korean People's Army were victorious for the downing of several American aircraft "( \* ).



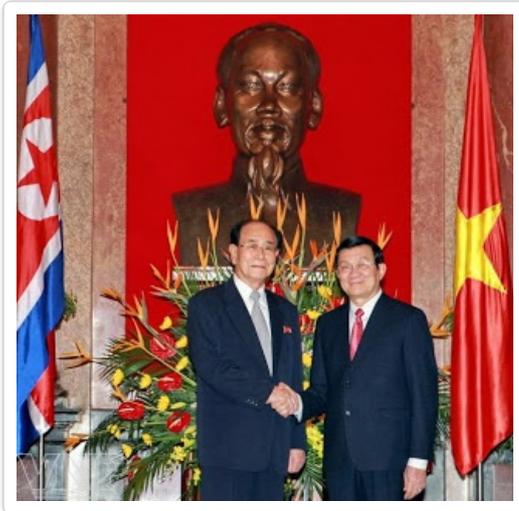
*North Korean pilots with Ho Chi Minh.*

Such was the success and gratitude on the part of Vietnam, that Ho Chi Minh himself photographed himself with them. In addition to air support, the DPRK sent approximately 100 experts in tunnel excavations, with which a large part of lives, equipment, weapons and ammunition could be saved from the continuous bombings ( \* ) ( \* ) ( \* ).



*North Korean pilots in Vietnam .*

In addition, and before the war, North Korea showed solidarity by giving free education to many North Vietnamese in their own territory (\*). Currently between both countries there are scientific, medical and cultural cooperation agreements, among others.



#### **SOLIDARITY WITH OPPRESSED COUNTRIES.**

A curious and at the same time solidary aspect on the part of North Korea, is that it has never had diplomatic relations with countries in which its population was oppressed. It is known by many countries, that in order to look at their own economic benefits, establish diplomatic and economic relations with this type of countries, regardless of the suffering to which the people are subjected. For this reason, North Korea never had relations with Franco's Spain, with the Argentine Dictatorship, with the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile or with the apartheid of South Africa, among others. When these regimes disappeared, relations began, as in the case of South Africa, or resumed, as in the case of Argentina or Chile.

On the contrary, South Korea began its diplomatic relations with Franco's Spain in 1950, did not suspend them since Videla's coup d'état or began its relations with the apartheid of South Africa (\*).

#### **SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA.**

Currently, Cuba and North Korea are the only two remaining socialist countries in the world, therefore, the solidarity between them is much greater than with other countries. The proletarian internationalism of North Korea with Cuba began in 1964, a few years after the Cuban Revolution triumphed. That year, the DPRK sent a body composed of more than 200 technicians to help the socialist construction of the town in the Caribbean country. Later, in January 1969, the Cuban government asked that more technicians be sent to the island, a gesture that was obviously accepted (\*)(\*).

Later, in 1980, when the USSR was already a revisionist, he told Cuba that if the US attacked the island, they could not help them and they would have to defend themselves. Faced with this fear, Cuba had to arm itself to be able to defend the conquests of its revolution, so they asked for help from North Korea and they offered them nothing more and nothing less than 100,000 AK rifles, completely free of charge. Fidel Castro said the following words about this: "We decided to ask other friends for enough weapons to count on one million Cuban fighters. Comrade Kim Il-sung, a veteran and impeccable fighter, sent us 100,000 AK rifles and their corresponding ammunition park without charging a penny"(\*).

*The Voice of Korea (radio of the DPRK), on the friendship between North Korea and Cuba.*

At present, the relations between both countries remain intact, in solidarity with each other whenever they have the chance. For this reason, there are Cuban children studying in North Korea (\*), tributes to the 8 medical students killed by Spanish troops during colonization on the island (\*), meetings between Cubans and Koreans (\*), or solidarity farms with the Caribbean country, such as the DPRK-Cuba Friendship Farming Farm of Pyongyang (\*) or the Hwasong Friendship Korea-Cuba Vegetable Farm (\*). In addition to all this, the Korean Committee of Solidarity with Cuba (\*) is formed.



*Korean Committee of Solidarity with Cuba.*

*Cuban singers singing to Kim Jong-il.*

But this is not all, North Korea also sympathizes with issues of greater importance such as the economic blockade and the freedom of the Cuban Five antiterrorists. Regarding the first point, the DPRK is sharp, is totally against and whenever it has had the opportunity, it has demanded that the blockade that has lashed the island for more than 50 years be lifted. For example, at the last general assembly of the UN, the representative of the DPRK spoke clearly on this issue:

Regarding the 2nd point, North Korea has always been in solidarity with the 5 anti-terrorist prisoners who were imprisoned in the US for defending their country. Therefore, in the Asian country there have been several solidarity events, such as voluntary work where members of the Embassy of Cuba and centers of solidarity with the island in Korea perform joint work in the Friendship Farms between the DPRK and Cuba "(\*)", or concerts in tribute to the Five Heroes ( \* ). Further, there is also the Committee for the Liberation of the Five in the DPRK ( \* ).



*North Koreans and Cubans in Pyongyang.*



*Concert in support of the Five Heroes.*



*Committee for the Liberation of the Five in the DPRK.*

### **SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH KOREA.**

Proletarian internationalism between North Korea and the working class of South Korea has always been linked hand in hand. It all began when, after the separation of the country and the beginning of the War of Liberation of the Fatherland (Korean War), in the South began to commit a genocide against all communist or alleged sympathizer of the ideology. They died in less than three months, nothing more and nothing less than 200,000 people. This is known as the Bodo League Massacre ( \* ). For this reason, when the war ended, one of the conditions on the part of the North was that all the communists of the South who wanted to move to the North would go and live there. And so it happened, some 75,000 political prisoners from the South went to live in North Korea.

Years later, the Revolutionary Party for Reunification was created, a Marxist-Leninist party that was banned as soon as it was born, its members being persecuted and even executed ( \* ), forcing many to act in hiding. Years later, this party merged with the South Korean Strategic Liberation Party, creating the current National Anti-imperialist Democratic Front.



*Symbol of the Anti-imperialist National Democratic Front.*

This party is also outlawed and its members are persecuted. For this reason, many members of this party have had to go into exile in North Korea, where they can act without being persecuted by the National Security Law of South Korea, even having a mission in Pyongyang ( \* ). Until 1970, the radio station of the Revolutionary Party for Reunification was located in North Korea, from where the South Koreans could listen to the Voice of National Salvation, and the Radio of the Democratic National League for the Liberation of Korea. South clandestinely ( \* ).

In 1984, South Korea was hit by major storms that flooded a large part of the country. For this reason, North Korea sent to the part of the town that was affected, 7,500,000 kilograms of rice, 500,000 meters of fabric, 100,000 tons of cement and sufficient medicines, among other aids. According to the estimations that were made, this aid would be to give 250 kilos of rice and about 17 meters of cloth per family, the amount of cement was enough to build some 30,000 houses and medicines to prevent and cure all kinds of diseases that may arise in the areas damaged by floods. It is estimated that the value of this aid amounted to 18,000,000 dollars ( \* ).



Players from both Koreas together.

Later, in 2000, after tough negotiations with South Korea, the North managed to free 63 political prisoners who had been imprisoned for 30 to 45 years in prisons. These prisoners were locked up for political reasons, for supporting the revolution and communism, a support they never regretted. That is why when they were released, they were taken directly to the North of Korea, where they were received as heroes (\*).



Political prisoners of the South enjoying freedom in the North.

Finally, on reunification, North Korea is also an internationalist. One of the conditions for it, apart from the main and most important ones (\*), is that the Communist Party in South Korea is legalized, the National Security Law is eliminated and all political prisoners in the country are freed.

### SOLIDARITY WITH SRI LANKA.

At the beginning of the decade of 1970, Sri Lanka underwent serious economic difficulties, so that the Premier of that country requested the direct aid of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, occasion in which it said that "its request was a test of great hope that he deposited in North Korea." Subsequently, a ship loaded with more than 100 tractors, pumps, water pumps, plows, vinyl pipes of more than 50 thousand meters and other agricultural implements was sent to that country (\*).

### SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF CRIMEA.

After the coup led by NATO and the EU in Ukraine, the Crimea voted for the future of the area with a referendum, in which the majority of the people voted for independence.

North Korea was one of the five countries that recognized the referendum from the start, supporting the decision of the sovereign people.



## SOLIDARITY WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD .

With many countries of the world the same thing happens, for example, from the creation of the country, until January 1984, the DPRK already had more than 30 factories in 22 countries, helped the construction of irrigation in more than 20 countries and provided assistance to the construction of a new company in more than 50 developing countries, sending countless technicians and specialists ( \* ).

During the Yom Kippur War, in which Israel's Zionism was confronted against Syria and Egypt for the defense of Palestine, North Korea sent air support to defend the territory of both countries ( \* ).

During the Angolan War, the Angolan people, who sought independence, fought against apartheid and pro-colonial movements supported by the United States. It was a struggle for the liberation of the country and the total sovereignty of the territory. This fact could not leave indifferent any internationalist, for this reason, North Korea sent 1,500 troops to the country ( \* ). After the liberation, North Korea sent and continues to send doctors to Angola.

The solidarity of North Korea was, is and will continue to be one of the basic pillars of socialism in the country. It does not matter that the country is small, economically blocked, has countless sanctions and is continually threatened by foreign military powers, proletarian internationalism on the part of the DPRK.

A greeting.

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