

## **The Transnational Collective Memory of National Liberation Struggles in the State Formation of North Korea and African Countries**

### **Introduction**

North Korea's full-scale diplomatic engagement with Africa dates back to October 1964, when it sent a government delegation to African countries with the help of Mao Zedong following the Asian Economic Seminar in June 1964. Regarding North Korea's diplomacy with the Third World, Gills states that the solidarity between North Korea and Cuba, which was based on support for Vietnam, was directed towards the Third World as a national liberation struggle.<sup>1</sup> This suggests that the solidarity between North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba was framed within the context of the national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Indeed, during the latter part of the 1960s, the term "solidarity" was commonly employed in North Korea to emphasize the importance of bolstering the cohesion of socialist nations and promoting internationalism in the fight against imperialism.

Before the mid-1960s, diplomatic activities of North Korea and African countries were conducted at the level of people's diplomacy, which is non-governmental exchanges led by civic organization and individuals. Since the mid-1960s, this relationship subsequently developed at the bilateral state-to-state level. The objective of North Korea's Third World diplomacy was to increase the number of votes in favor of a resolution supporting North Korea on the Korean Question at the United Nations General Assembly, which has been discussed in the United Nations General Assembly since the 1950s.

The Solidarity between North Korea and African countries developed within the context of national liberation. Featherstone described solidarity as a bond forged through political struggles against oppression. His study regarded it as essential to the efforts of radical social and political movements and suggested that it could function as a means of politicization. Conversely, D.C. Thomas observed that solidarity in the Third World initially emerged as a racial phenomenon and later evolved into a shared objective that avoided formal alliance formation to maintain national autonomy. Drawing on these perspectives, this study argues that North Korea's anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, and national liberation efforts since the 1960s shared strong affinities with those of African countries, thereby establishing solidarity.

The unique aspect of North Korea's diplomacy with Africa in the 1960s and 1970s was its effort to establish diplomatic relations not only with African countries belonging to the socialist camp and with radical neutralist countries, but also with countries aligned with the Western camp. This was largely due to environmental factors that led to the outbreak of ethnic conflicts, changes in national systems due to political upheavals, and the division of countries after African countries gained

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<sup>1</sup> Gills, Barry "*Korea versus Korea, A case of contested Legitimacy*," (London: Routledge, 1996), pp.107-108

independence from their colonial powers in the 1960s. This was also a significant factor that encouraged North Korea to pursue Diplomacy beyond ideological division. This diplomatic strategy achieved a certain degree of success, as North Korea's anti-colonialist struggle for national liberation resonated with the aspirations of African countries.

North Korea invoked the rhetoric of anti-colonialism and the national liberation struggle in its diplomatic outreach to African nations. This slogan resonated with African countries, garnering their sympathy. Leveraging this ideological alignment, North Korea played a role in the decolonization process of African nations by influencing political ideology and also supported their national development economically. North Korea's relations with Africa in the second half of the 1960s are often discussed in terms of economic, technological, and military assistance. However, I will analyze the impact of North Korea's economic aid, based on anti-colonialism and national liberation, on the nation-building of African countries. This paper explores North Korea's diplomatic efforts towards African countries from the late 1960s to the 1970s, focusing on its contributions to the national development of these nations. Section 1 outlines North Korea's diplomatic efforts in Africa starting from 1964 and analyzes the evolution of its diplomatic approach in response to changing relationships with both major and middle powers. Section 2 examines the relationship between Algeria, a major non-aligned country, and its neighbour, Mauritania. Section 3 focuses on the bilateral relations between Tanzania and Mali, both of which played a leading role in supporting North Korea on the Korean Question at the United Nations General Assembly. Section 4 analyzes the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic as examples of countries that have diplomatic ties with both North and South Korea.

### **The Expansion of North Korea's African Diplomacy with Chinese Assistance in 1964**

The primary objective of North Korea's engagement with Third World countries was to oppose American Imperialism. Nonetheless, these connections were confined to exchanges among progressive leftist groups, companies, and organizations. The international development that initially broke the deadlock was the Asian Economic Seminar held in Pyongyang in the summer of 1964. China played a significant role in facilitating the event. Many of the delegations from African countries that attended were composed of diplomats stationed in Beijing, and the event primarily focused on criticizing the Soviet Union.

The full-scale development of North Korea's diplomacy toward Africa was made possible with the support of Mao Zedong. Before embarking on his tour of Asia and Africa, Choe Yong-gon, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, engaged in talk with Mao Zedong. On October 7, 1964, during a meeting with the North Korean delegation, Mao facilitated the coordination of Choe Yong-gon's trip itinerary to several nations, such as Mali and Cambodia. The

visit of Modibo Keita, President of Mali (1960-1968), was scheduled to take place before Choe's visit to Asian and African countries from November to December 1964.

Two weeks after the initial meeting, Mali's President visited North Korea. Following his visit from October 23 to 28, 1964, Indonesia's President Sukarno also made a trip to North Korea. These visits by leaders from Asia-Africa countries offered North Korea a chance to call for solidarity among countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin American countries.

Following Keita's visit, Choe Yong-gon embarked on a tour across Asia and Africa from November to December, marking the first official trip by a North Korean leader beyond the socialist bloc, which garnered considerable attention. The Czechoslovak embassy in Pyongyang noted that this visit represented the height of pro-China diplomacy, yet it also played a vital role in boosting North Korea's international prestige among Third World countries.

The initial destination was the United Arab Republic(UAR), where the Second Non-Aligned Summit took place in October 1964. During this visit, the two nations decided to strengthen their diplomatic ties by establishing embassy-level relations.<sup>2</sup> In an interview with MENA, the UAR's official news agency, Choe Yong-gon expressed that it was time to conclude the discussions of the Korean Question at the UNGA that were complicating the resolution. Subsequently, the delegation then visited Mali from December 2 to 6, and then Guinea from December 6 to 10. However, the planned visit to Ghana was canceled due to "unexpected reasons."<sup>3</sup>

The concept of positive neutrality, highlighted in the declaration from Second Non-Aligned Summit in UAR, held considerable significance, as demonstrated by the following events. During his trip to Algeria, Che Yong-gon endorsed "positive neutrality," a concept not only emphasized in Nasser's declaration at the Second Non-Aligned Summit but also in the joint statement released during Sukarno's visit to North Korea. This joint statement also mentioned the upcoming Second Asia-Africa Conference set for March 1965 in Algeria and expressed high hopes for its outcomes. In light of North Korea's shift in stance, a report from the Czechoslovak embassy in Pyongyang described Choe's visit to Asia and Africa as a "major success in foreign policy," noting that it showcased North Korea's efforts to bolster its presence in the Asia-Africa region from 1965 onwards. The communiqués between North Korea and Indonesia, as well as those between North Korea and Algeria, indicate a change in North Korea's diplomatic approach. In other words, early signs of North Korea's independent diplomatic strategy were already apparent at this point.

The swift enhancement of relations between North Korea and China was driven by the objective of securing a mediating role to broaden diplomatic ties with Asian and African nations.

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<sup>2</sup> The North Korean delegation, led by Choe Yong-gon, left on a special Soviet II-18 plane, stopping in Kiev before arriving at UAR.

<sup>3</sup> Following that, the delegation stopped in Rangoon on December 14 while on the way to Cambodia and had lunch with Ne Win (1962–1974), Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the Union of Burma and Prime Minister of Burma.

Beyond its relationship with China, North Korea aimed to strengthen its cooperative relations with non-aligned Third World countries, such as Indonesia, to establish its standing in the international community.

The effort to strengthen ties with Indonesia across political, economic, military, and sports domains was part of a broader strategy aimed at fostering relations for Third World diplomacy. Sukarno's proposed "Jakarta-Phnom Penh-Hanoi-Beijing-Pyongyang axis", an anti-US Asian alliance, was envisioned as a foundation for engaging with the Third World. Consequently, the fall of President Sukarno was a setback for North Korea. Additionally, in 1965, following Indonesia, a wave of coups d'etat swept across Africa. A coup took place in the Congo in November, followed by coups in Dahomey in December, and in the Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, and Syria in January 1966. This led to a significant reduction in personnel exchanges and visits by politicians between North Korea and pro-Chinese Asian and African countries that established diplomatic relations with North Korea through Chinese mediation after 1964. Furthermore, the deterioration of North Korea-China relations due to China's entry into the Cultural Revolution in May 1966, coupled with the resulting increase in North Korea's military spending, strained the domestic economy. This made it challenging to establish relationships with Asian and African countries based on economic aid.

This series of events temporarily stalled North Korea's pro-China-oriented diplomatic expansion towards the Third World, which had been centered on China. However, with the support of the Soviet Union-whose relations with North Korea had improved by mid-1965—North Korea was able to revive its ties with Asian and African countries in the fields of commerce, culture, and public relations. North Korea sent parliamentary delegations to Congo, Somalia, Iraq, and Syria and established diplomatic and consular relations with Syria and Iraq. For the Soviet Union, which had lagged behind China in both the "Jakarta-Phnom Penh-Hanoi-Beijing-Pyongyang Axis" concept and in supporting North Korea's Third World diplomacy, this may have been an opportunity to regain influence. In addition, North Korea also resumed human exchanges- with activists, journalists, and scientists and hosted a visit by Somali parliamentarians. Polish Ambassador to North Korea, Napieraj, has pointed out that South Korea's lobbying efforts in the Third World intensified the diplomatic rivalry between North and South Korea in Africa, promoting a "counteroffensive" by North Korea.

Drawing from the lessons of diplomatic failures during a series of coups in Asia and Africa around 1965, North Korea embarked on a multi-layered diplomatic strategy following the September 30 incident, aiming to establish economic ties even when political relations could not be formed.

Instead of the anti-U.S. Asian solidarity axis comprising "Jakarta-Phnom Penh-Hanoi-Beijing-Pyongyang Axis", a new solidarity of smaller countries emerged, uniting North Korea, North Vietnam, and Cuba. This small state solidarity, which professed support for Vietnam and adopted the slogan "unity among socialist countries for Vietnam and strengthening of the international communist

movement,” was indeed aimed at resolving internal conflicts within the camp. In this context, Gills observes that North Korea took advantage the Vietnam War as a symbol of solidarity with the Third World. In any case, North Korea’s focus shifted from establishing a regional anti-American front in Asia to creating a transregional anti-American front.

North Korea and African countries shared A mutual understanding of liberation struggles, progressive Movements, and the importance of strengthening solidarity with African countries. One of North Korea’s active efforts to forge diplomatic ties with the Third World was its participation in the First Conference of the Peoples of the Three Continents, organized by the Organization of People of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, held in Havana, Cuba, in January 1966. North Korea advocated for stronger connections with African nations by reinforcing solidarity with liberation struggles, progressive movements, and governments in Africa. Additionally, North Korea continued its diplomatic endeavors to build relationships with African countries. During a visit by a delegation from the Supreme People’s Assembly of North Korea to Burundi, Zambia, Yemen, and Somalia from March to April 1967, diplomatic relations were established at the ambassadorial level with Burundi and Somalia. Relations with Algeria, Congo-Brazzaville, Mali, the United Arab Republic, Somalia, Tanzania, and Burundi were also strengthened.

In their quest to garner support within the UN, both North and South Korea were acutely aware of which African nations would align with them diplomatically, sparking a competitive dynamic between two Korea. According to the French Embassy in Liberia, in August 1968, a North Korean delegation, led by the North Korean ambassador to Guinea, visited Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, and held discussions with President William Tuman(1944-1971). Upon being informed of this, the South Korean ambassador to Liberia, who had been stationed in France, promptly had led a South Korean delegation to visit Liberia,

Meanwhile, Miroslav Holub, the North Korean ambassador to Czechoslovakia, reported that North Korea disappointed when Lesotho established contact with South Korea. In this context, both Koreas were closely observing each other’s actions while advancing their diplomatic efforts in Africa.

Lazaro Vigoa, the Cuban ambassador to Pyongyang highlighted that North Korea was attempting to nullify South Korea’s diplomatic efforts in Africa. However, these efforts were occasionally obstructed by US interference. A notable instance of this interference was in North Korea’s sports diplomacy in Somalia. According to a political report from the Czechoslovak embassy in North Korea, a North Korean delegation denied entry when they visited Somalia in 1966. The Czechoslovak ambassador to North Korea, Holub, reported that the United States exerted pressure on Somalia during an African embassy conference. Furthermore, there are allegations that the US played a role in the dismissal of Burundi’s foreign minister, Alphonse Niyongabo (1965-1966), following his engagement with North Korea. In 1968, a North Korean delegation faced denial of entry into Senegal during their visit to Niger and Senegal. This highlights how the major powers actively intervened in

the Cold War on the Korean Peninsula and drew Third World African countries into the conflict.

#### (1) Algeria and Mauritania

In contrast to the socialist countries of Europe, which were skeptical of the role of small countries, North Korea and the newly independent African countries shared a common view of small countries as anti-imperialist and colonial struggles based on their experience of colonial rule. In particular, Algeria, a leading country in Third World and a middle power in Africa, and a neighbor of Mauritania-- played a pivotal role in North Korea's diplomatic relations with Africa.

Algeria's relations with North Korea date back to 1958, when the Algerian National Liberation Front set up a provisional government in Cairo. In 1959, during the Algerian war, the Korean Red Cross donated 50 tons of rice through the Algerian Red Crescent. In May 1960, Krim Belkacem (1958-1967), vice president and Minister of Defense of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Algeria, visited North Korea and established friendly relations.

Algeria gained independence from France in 1962 and, under the Ben Bella government, joined the Non-Aligned Movement in 1964, emphasizing its unity with the radical faction. On June 19, 1965, a military coup d'état led by Houari Boumedienne established his regime, resulting in the indefinite postponement of the Second Asian-African Solidarity Conference that had been scheduled to take place in Algiers. Meanwhile, through its participation in the Second Afro-Asian Economic Conference held just before the coup and the Preparatory Committee for the Second Asian-African Conference held immediately after, Algeria consolidated its position as a leading nation among the radical factions in the Third World and continued to maintain its radical ideological stance. North Korea and Algeria shared a radical foreign policy based on anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, and national liberation movements. Algeria's leadership in Arab and African regions was an important factor in North Korea's diplomatic expansion into Africa.

Algeria played an important role in the deliberations on the Pueblo incident in 1968 when it was first elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 1968-1969 term. When the US attempted to introduce a condemnation resolution at the UN Security Council, Algeria, alongside the Soviet Union and Hungary, defended North Korea, placing the US in a disadvantageous position.

In the late 1960s, relations between the two countries developed in economic and cultural fields. In 1969, a cultural exchange program was signed, and a trade agreement was established for the special administrative region. As a result, non-ferrous metals, steel materials, various machinery, chemical products, etc. were exported from North Korea to the special administrative region of Algeria, and oil, cotton, nylon, etc. were imported from the special administrative region of Algeria to North Korea.

Between Algeria, a middle power in the Maghreb region, and a small socialist country in Asia, a certain sense of empathy had developed. Jean Basdevant, the French ambassador to Algeria, conveyed the following information as relayed to him by the head of the Algerian Foreign Ministry. The Algerian side recognized North Korea as a country that asserted its sovereignty and independence against China and the Soviet Union, and they showed respect and sympathy for this. North Korea's independent diplomacy, which sought to pursue its own path by excluding interference from the major powers, was probably easy for newly independent countries that were trying to break away from their former colonial powers to sympathize with.

On the other hand, Mauritania, which was in dispute with Morocco over the sovereignty of Western Sahara, shared the memory of "division" with North Korea. The establishment of relations between North Korea and Mauritania dates back to November 1964, the year after Mauritania asserted its claim to the Western Sahara in 1963. After Mauritania established diplomatic relations with North Korea, South Korea which had formed diplomatic ties with Mauritania in July 1963, decided to sever its relationship with Mauritania.

Following the revision of the Mauritanian Constitution in 1965, which enshrined socialist-oriented policies, the friendship between North Korea and Mauritania was strengthened. When President Moktar Ould Daddah (1960-1978) visited North Korea in October 1967, a commercial and scientific technology agreement was reached. The Cuban embassy in North Korea communicated to Raúl Roa García, who served as the Cuban foreign minister from 1959 to 1976, stating that while the agreement's impact is limited, France wields significant political and economic sway over Mauritania.

North Korea regarded establishing relations with Mauritania as a strategic step toward building connections with France. Given that France effectively manages Mauritania's mineral resources, North Korea aimed to forge ties with Mauritania to facilitate relations with France. In bilateral trade, Mauritania supplied iron ore, copper ore, leather, and wool to North Korea, while North Korea provided industrial machinery, rolled iron and non-ferrous metal products, chemical products, food, textile, daily necessities, and metal products. The relationship was further expanded in 1968 with the promise of the providing tractors and audio equipment free of charge. Roberto Mulet del Valle assessed that the visit to North Korea by the president of a country that previously maintained diplomatic relations with South Korea as a political success in itself.

The Relations expanded from economic ties to cultural cooperation, culminating in an agreement on cultural cooperation. In April of the same year, the Mauritanian-Korean Friendship Association was established Nouakchott, the capital of Mauritania. Although Mauritania had no plans to open an embassy in Pyongyang, North Korea initiated the Friendship Association as a precursor to establishing a diplomatic mission in Mauritania.

## **Solidarity Among African Countries Supporting North Korea on the Korean Question at the UN General Assembly**

North Korea and several African countries developed a mutually advantageous relationship, wherein North Korea offered economic aid in return for diplomatic backing from these African nations. Notably, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and Tanzania actively participated in discussions on the Korean Question at UNGA during the 1960s. These countries provided supplementary support and fostered solidarity, with Mongolia, Hungary, and Cambodia, which taking on leading roles. North Korea extended substantial economic assistance to these nations. For instance, in Mali, a ceramic factory built with North Korean support commenced in 1967. Such economic support from North Korea played a certain role in the nation-building efforts of African countries.

North Korea's promotion of self-reliance had a significant ideological influence on leaders in the Third World, particularly in countries such as Mali. Mali, a supporter of North Korea alongside the Congo, is said to have been committed to the ideology of Kim Il-sung. In the April 8, 1968, edition of 'l'Essor,' the newspaper of the Committee for the Liberation of the National Liberation Army (CMLN), Madeira Keïta, a member of the National Committee for the Defense of the Revolution and Minister of Justice and Labor, praised the efforts to "break free from colonial rule and build an independent national economy," as well as "political independence, economic independence and self-defense in national defense" during an interview with the Korean Central News Agency(KCNA). Pierre Pelen, the French ambassador to Mali, pointed out that President Modibo Keïta (1960-1968), known as a radical, sympathized with the unique socialism that North Korea was pursuing, which was tailored to the historical conditions and the particularity of the country, and aimed to build a nation modeled on North Korea.

In the case of Tanzania, another supporter of North Korea regarding the Korean Question, extensive support was extended in the realms of economy, military, and culture. This assistance notably contributed to nation building through economic aid. Between 1966 to 1969, North Korea sent agricultural experts to a farm in Karenga, Tanzania, where they developed 120 ha of rice paddies. In addition, North Korean military officers provided support to young members of the Tanzanian African National Union (TANU). In March 1970, the Minister of Culture visited Tanzania (March 20–April 4), achieving diplomatic successes such as signing an additional protocol to the cultural agreement and establishing the Tanzanian-North Korean Association.

In 1969, the emergence of left-wing governments in Africa, which championed ethnic liberation and anti-imperialism, provided a significant boost to North Korea's diplomatic efforts on the continent. Notable examples include President Numeiri, who came to power through a military coup in Sudan in May 1969 and subsequently formed a coalition government with the Communist

Party, as well as the Barre regime in Somalia, which embraced communism as state policy following a coup in the same year. Since then, delegations from these countries have actively engaged in mutual visits, which have also led to expressions of support for North Korea in discussions on the Korean Question.

The diplomatic relations between North Korea and African countries were clearly reflected in their voting attitude on resolutions concerning the Korean Question at UNGA. Zambia, Sudan, and South Yemen, which established diplomatic relations in the first half of 1969, along with the Central African Republic, which did so in September, all voted in favor of the North Korean resolution on the Korean Question at the 24th session of the UNGA. Notably, Zambia and South Yemen attracted attention by proposing amendments to the resolution supporting North Korea, underscoring their position as part of the Third World. Although the Korean Question was one of the many issues discussed annually in the UN, in essence, the relationship between these countries not only bolstered support for North Korea but also amplified the voice of small African nations, despite the fact that the Korean Question was merely one of the many issues regularly discussed in the UN.

The diplomatic outcome mirrors the solidarity among African-left countries' domestic political agendas and North Korea's diplomatic policy objectives. Clearly, a sense of nationalist solidarity existed between these nations and North Korea. However, establishing diplomatic relations was not an overnight achievement; it resulted from North Korea's long-term efforts and the acceptance of the target countries. For instance, during an economic mission to Khartoum, Sudan, from April 18 to 24, 1969, an agreement on scientific and technological cooperation was signed between the two countries, and consular relations were established. According to a report from the French Embassy in Sudan, this decision was part of the Sudanese government's policy of reconciliation with communist countries, promoted since 1967, and was a measure that would have been unthinkable under the military regime of President Ibrahim Abboud (1958-1964).

North Korea's engagement in Africa was not merely the outcome of its own diplomatic efforts; it was also significantly supported by Eastern European countries like Romania and Hungary. On January 31, 1970, Ri Dong-son, the North Korean ambassador to Hungary, visited the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During this visit, he pointed out that Central African nations had either opposed or abstained from voting on a resolution in favor of North Korea during discussions on the Korean Question. He urged the Hungarian delegation to address the Korean Question in their forthcoming talks with leaders from the Republic of the Congo and Cameroon. The North Korean delegation's visit to Cameroon on June 30th indicates that Hungary's diplomatic endeavors were successful.

In 1964, Nasser introduced positive neutrality as a guiding principle for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), earning recognition as a leader who balanced extremists and moderates. However, after the defeat in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the UAR's domestic and foreign policies underwent a

significant shift, with a stronger focus on socialism and anti-imperialism. The UAR's prioritization of relations with North Korea after 1967 was part of its strategy to solidify its position within the NAM and bolster anti-imperialist solidarity, aligning with a broader plan to counter US influence following the Arab Israeli War. This strategy was evident in the UAR's 1969 decision to establish an embassy in North Korea and approve the establishment of a consulate general in South Korea, located in Cairo.

Among non-aligned countries, the so-called moderate nations have established diplomatic relations with both North and South Korea. In Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, which already had diplomatic ties with South Korea, the North Korean embassy's opening ceremony took place on May 22, 1970. Subsequently, an economic delegation from the Central African Republic visited North Korea on September 28, and by October 6, a trade agreement and a science and technology cooperation agreement were signed. However, this was an instance of a failed attempt to establish diplomatic relations with the government of Chad. Leftist group that aligned with North Korea's ideology and interest were viewed as reactionary force, leading to the ultimate failure of diplomatic efforts.

When the Republic of the Congo(Brazzaville, later renamed the People's Republic of the Congo in 1969) initiated diplomatic relations with North Korea in December 1964, South Korea, which had previously formed diplomatic ties with Congo (Brazzaville) in August 1961, decided to sever its relationship with Congo, just as it had done in the case of Mauritania.

Despite North Korea's active diplomatic initiatives in Africa, its Illegal activities severely hampered its efforts to establish lasting ties with newly independent states. On September 27, 1969, an incident occurred involving Djang Seong Djin, the Ambassador to Brazzaville, along with the first and second secretaries. They were apprehended at a river in Bangui for illegally entering the Central African Republic. The three faced charges of espionage and were subsequently transferred to a military court in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic. The government of the Central African Republic expressed its regret over the incident.

The attitudes of African countries towards the divided nation varied based on each country's specific circumstances and situation. For instance, the Zambian government maintained a neutral stance towards Germany by allowing the establishment of trade representative offices for both East and West Germany. Conversely, in its dealings with China, Zambia permitted a Chinese representative office in Lusaka, but refrained from supporting Taiwan on the issue of Chinese representation rights.

<sup>4</sup> In relation to North and South Korea, when a delegation led by Kim Gyon Ryon, the Minister of Foreign Trade and Commerce, visited Zambia in April 1969, an agreement was reached to establish diplomatic relations at the embassy level. Meanwhile, a report by Albert de Shonen, the French Ambassador to Zambia in April 1969, indicated that the prospect of a technical cooperation agreement

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<sup>4</sup> This decision was partly influenced by Taiwan's open support for the neighboring Rhodesian government, which upheld a policy of racial discrimination.

with South Korea, which had originally been planned, was no longer feasible.

## **Conclusion**

From the above, it is evident that a solidarity has emerged between North Korea and African countries as North Korea expands its diplomatic ties with the African countries. This solidarity is rooted in shared principles of anti-colonialism and national liberation. Several conditions were essential for the formation of this solidarity.

Initially, North Korea, along with Asian and African countries, shared a collective memory of resisting colonial rule. Notably, Kim Il-sung's anti-Japanese armed struggle resonated with African nations grappling with tribal conflicts, fostering a sense of empathy. Both sides rallied under the shared slogan of national liberation against their common adversary. Moreover, among the nations that established diplomatic ties with North Korea, like the leader of Mali, became staunch supporters of Kim Il-sung's ideology. Additionally, students who embraced the Juche ideology, which shares many commonalities with positive neutrality, further illustrate the connection between North Korea and African nationalism.

However, it was challenging to unite the two sides based solely on common interests. Among African nations, those that were able to establish relations with North Korea did so due to environmental factors, such as domestic political leanings towards the left. Furthermore, many African countries that supported North Korea on the Korean Question were considered radical, even among non-aligned nations. By the late 1960s, North Korea had forged diplomatic ties not only with radical countries but also with moderate ones, all of which exhibited a tendency toward a leftward shift in domestic politics.

Alongside these environmental factors, North Korea persisted in its diplomatic endeavors. North Korea's diplomatic strategy toward African countries involved reaching out to nations with ideologies akin to its own, establishing diplomatic relations through trade and other channels. Additionally, North Korea sought to forge connections with countries where South Korea had already established diplomatic ties, utilizing left-wing organizations. In this context, North Korea perceived the leftward shift in African countries as an opportunity to broaden its diplomatic reach. When these factors aligned, North Korea succeeded in establishing diplomatic relations.

Examining the relationship between North Korea and African countries reveals a mutually beneficial dynamic through economic assistance via trade and support for UN diplomacy. Although not specifically detailed in this paper, aid in the construction and agriculture sectors contributed to laying the groundwork for the development of the recipient countries. Further research in this area is anticipated in the future. In this context, a framework was established where one party offered support while the other received it, effectively creating what can be

described as the North Korea mode.

Interestingly, while South Korea cut diplomatic ties with third world countries that established relations with North Korea, the latter did not reciprocate. North Korea's diplomacy beyond its own sphere contributed to the expansion of its diplomatic relations as it did not strictly adhere to ideology or the concept of "One Korea."