

Press Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
on Myanmar's relations with Democratic People's Republic of Korea

After severing diplomatic ties with Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) for over twenty years, the Union of Myanmar decided to re-establish diplomatic relations with DPRK on 26th April 2007 in accordance with its policy of maintaining friendly relations with all countries.

Following the re-establishment of diplomatic relations, Myanmar and DPRK, as independent sovereign states, have been engaging in promoting trade and cooperation between the two countries in the same way Myanmar is dealing with others.

As part of mutually beneficial cooperation, the two sides have rendered mutual assistances and have been making efforts to develop bilateral trade relations. Accordingly Myanmar provided 1500 tons of rice on 17th May 2008 and sold 10000 tons of rice to DPRK which were exported to DPRK in a series of shipments.

At a time when the mutually beneficial trade relations are growing, there had been media reports in June 2009 alleging that a DPRK cargo ship Kang Nam 1 carrying weapons, was heading towards Myanmar. Such reports were proved to be groundless. They were merely news reports based on presumption with the intention to put political pressure on Myanmar.

Again in April this year, when North Korean ship Chong Gen was docking at Myanmar port for loading and unloading normal cargo, an allegation was raised that Myanmar violated UNSC resolution 1874 by allowing shipment of restricted items into Myanmar. In fact, it was normal commercial activities involving importation of cement, an unrestricted item, and exportation of 10,000 tons of rice.

When North Korean cargo ship started sailing from the port of DPRK, no inspection was made by any party along the way although there were ample opportunities for inspections of the vessel. One should not prejudge and make irresponsible accusations that the ship was loaded with weapons and heading towards Myanmar before no one could know for sure of its destination.

Myanmar has been maintaining relations with DPRK in the same way as it has been trying to maintain friendly relations with every nation.

Some countries raised accusations on Myanmar's trade activities with DPRK as violating the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1874. However they are groundless. Myanmar port Authorities had conducted necessary inspection on North Korean Ships and gave permission to berth in accordance the rules and regulations.

Being a member of the United Nations, Myanmar will continue to observe the UNSC resolutions.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw.

Dated. 11 June 2010

* * * * *