

## MALAYSIA DEEPLY REGRETS THE DPRK'S DECISION TO SEVER TIES 19 MARCH 2021

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Malaysia deeply regrets the 19 March 2021 decision by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to sever diplomatic ties with Malaysia. Malaysia denounces the decision as unfriendly and unconstructive, disrespecting the spirit of mutual respect and good neighbourly relations among members of the international community.

Malaysia had always considered the DPRK as a close partner since the establishment of the diplomatic relations in 1973. Malaysia was among the earliest to have done so, and continued to support the DPRK during their difficult times. Malaysia had been persistent in pursuing concrete efforts to strengthen our relations with the DPRK even after the deplorable assassination of Kim Jong Nam in 2017. In this respect, the DPRK's unilateral decision is clearly unwarranted, disproportionate and certainly disruptive towards the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity of our region.

As a country which upholds the principles of justice, rule of law and independence of judiciary, Malaysia has ensured that the extradition of the DPRK national, Mun Chol Myong, was conducted in accordance with those principles. On the same premise, the Government of Malaysia had to put aside a series of the DPRK's demarches for the Malaysian Executive to intervene in our Judiciary and legal system. The extradition was only carried out after the due legal process had been exhausted. The rights of Mun Chol Myong while in custody in Malaysia were also guaranteed and fulfilled, including his access to his own defence counsel, as well as to consular assistance and visits by his family.

Mun Chol Myong was detained by the Malaysian authority on 14 May 2019 pursuant to the provisional arrest warrant issued under Section 13 (1) (b) of the Extradition Act 1992 following allegations of conspiracy to launder money and money laundering, as well as violating United Nations sanctions. Such acts are also offences under the laws of Malaysia. He appeared before the Sessions Court of Kuala Lumpur on 13 December 2019 where the Court allowed committal against him. His application for the writ of habeas corpus at the High Court of Kuala Lumpur on 29 December 2019 and his appeal at the Federal Court on 8 October 2020 were dismissed, as the Courts found that his application and appeal were unjustified and failed to meet the requirements under the aforementioned Extradition Act.

Malaysia reserves our every right to respond to the decision of the DPRK in order to protect our sovereignty and to safeguard our national interest. Malaysia believes that our stance on this unfortunate development will be fully appreciated and understood by our friends and partners who commit to the principles of justice, rule of law, as well as to peaceful coexistence among nations.

The Government of Malaysia is now compelled by the decision of the DPRK to close the Embassy of Malaysia in Pyongyang which operation had already been suspended since 2017. At the same time, the Government will issue an order for all the diplomatic staff and their dependents at the Embassy of the DPRK in Kuala Lumpur to leave Malaysia within 48 hours from today, 19 March 2021.

**PUTRAJAYA**  
**19 MARCH 2021**