

Notes for interview with RT on Putin's visit to DPRK 19 June, 2024

Here we go

1. Putin arrived to North Korea at around 3 a.m. local time but despite such an early hour Kim Jong Un welcomed the President himself. What does it tell us about the level of relations between the neighbouring countries?

Very warm Xi did not go to the airport

Follow up: This is Vladimir Putin's first visit to North Korea in 24 years, and he will travel to Vietnam afterwards. What does his regional trip signify? Especially to some world powers, closely watching from overseas...

**Russia is back in East Asia. Good strategic relations with the 3 independent countries – China, NK, VN
But Russia must tread carefully with Japan and SK, preserve links and attempt to split from US (China likewise); hence 'not directed at third party'**

2. U.S. State Secretary Anthony Blinken has said that Washington will do anything to cut North Korea's alleged military support to Russia. What measures could Washington potentially resort to? Especially considering that both Russia and North Korea are already two of the most sanctioned countries in the world?

**Another problem for Tony Blinken Most sanctioned but also adjacent so can transport goods free from interdiction and surveillance.
Also the Biden administration is very good at driving its enemies together – Russia and China**

3. The U.S. and South Korea have been sounding the alarm over Vladimir Putin's visit to the Peninsula. Why do you think they're so worried?

Makes both Russia and NK stronger and potentially enhances NK's defences (fighters, SAM)

Follow up: There's been plenty of speculation in the western media about military co-operation between Russia and North Korea. How do you see that side of relations between Moscow and Pyongyang?

Hampered by sanctions but of great mutual benefit. Denied and details contested, but Russia gets shells, missiles etc, NK gets paid in some way, but also gets to test its munitions

4. Russia strongly opposes the Western sanctions on North Korea. What kind of actions might be taken to work around such trade restrictions? How can Russia-North Korean trade relations have an impact on the region's economic situation?

Russia and China are dealing with mistakes made during their period of appeasing the US. The UNSC sanctions are a problem because the UN is a key factor in their multipolar foreign policy, but the US has automatic majority. Sidestep. Deny and ignore

NK is an economic powerhouse in waiting – if it can escape US/US-led sanctions, and less its defence burden there could be very strong and substantial economic growth

Also locations offers great potential benefits to SK and Japan eg Russian gas

5. China is also developing economic and political ties with North Korea and of course Russia. How could all that influence the political dynamic in the region? Do you think we can expect to see any new trilateral projects emerging in the near future?

**Political relations and economic ties between three have increased and will continue to do so
More trilateral cooperation would be a logical development, mirroring the US-led trilateral with SK and Japan**