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## **“Separation of Politics and Economics” and the Rapprochement between Bulgaria and Republic of Korea in the Second Half of 1980s**

(Abstract)

The Bulgarian archives provide an extremely good opportunity to study the changing international situation in the region of the Korean Peninsula in the second half of the 1980s, which in turn led to a change in relations between the Eastern Bloc countries on the one hand and the Republic of Korea on the other. All this is happening in the context of the last stage of the Cold War. The aim of the article is to shed light on a number of aspects of the process of gradually overcoming ideological contradictions and political opposition between the countries of Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria and the Republic of Korea. The focus of the article will be on Bulgarian policy and approach to the Republic of Korea in this period, called conditionally “separation of politics and economics”, which approach leads to significant convergence between the two countries in the field of trade and economic relations. At the same time, however, the Bulgarian case is not an isolated phenomenon and the documents reveal a much broader picture of rapprochement between Eastern Europe and South Korea in the late

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1980s. The study is based entirely on unpublished primary documents from the Central State Archives of the Republic of Bulgaria. The main funds used are those of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and especially the fund of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations.

**Keywords:** Bulgaria-Republic of Korea relations, PDRK-ROK relations, USSR-RoK rapprochement, Cold war, RoK-Soviet Bloc Rapprochement.