

Crying for the Moon: The Security Dilemma Surrounding the Korean Peninsula

KIM Kwangwook *

As the Japanese government often pointed out when it established its military legislation, security assurance in Japan is deeply connected to a potential emergency on the Korean Peninsula. There tends to be different views between what Japanese and Korean people think regarding this security assurance because each country prioritizes its own security and security policies, and it is therefore natural that different perspectives exist in each nation's respective security stance. The House of Representatives and the Upper House in Japan established these security policies in order to effectively protect their people.

Since World War II, Japan and South Korea have maintained security by forming military alliances with the United States. However, both Japan and South Korea have failed to form a strong military solidarity with each other and instead have maintained a passive system of sharing military information. On the other hand, South Korea has shared military information with China, and tried to keep a balance between Japan, the United States, and China.

South Korea intends to avoid repeating the past because it experienced repeated invasions on its national sovereignty in the late nineteenth century. It may therefore be difficult for Korea to fully repair its relationship with Japan unless both countries share the same historical recognition. This is why, although they share many ideas regarding democratic values and liberalism, they have not fully cooperated in communicating and maintaining order in East Asia. However, there was a huge turning point when the Japanese government acknowledged their involvement and responsibility regarding the issue of the comfort women and concluded an agreement in December 2015.

* Kim Kwangwook is an Adjunct Lecturer in the Department of Public Policy, Gifu Keizai University. This article is a revised version of a paper presented at the Symposium of the Center for American Studies, Nanzan University, entitled "Forecasting the Post-Obama U.S. Policy on the Japan-Korea-U.S. Trilateral Relationship," on November 12, 2016. I would like to express my appreciation for the comments made by Professors Hida Susumu and Umekawa Masami.

Two elements that affect the security situation in Korea include changes in security-related issues surrounding the Korean Peninsula after the Cold War, and responses toward China's economic growth. South Korea has tried to improve its relationship with Russia and China, especially when attempting to alleviate military threats from North Korea. Both Russia and China have partnerships with North Korea via economic exchange with China.

The conflict against North Korea means that it is important for South Korea to strengthen its relationships with surrounding nations. This paper will analyze three issues: changes in the security policy surrounding the Korean Peninsula based on the two elements mentioned above; the security environment in East Asia; and ways of improving the situation.

1. Changes in National Security after the Cold War

After the Cold War, among the changes in security policy on the Korean Peninsula that have taken place, the most obvious one has been the weakening indirect triangle alliance between Japan and South Korea, maintained by the United States. The United States has requested that Japan and South Korea improve their relationship with each other in several ways. After Japan and South Korea reached an agreement regarding the comfort women issue on December 28, 2015, the United States expected an improvement in relations between Japan and South Korea.

When the Cold War was almost over, the South Korean government developed more flexible diplomatic policies toward the communist bloc in order to reduce the tension that existed at the time. The South Korean government wanted to remove the burden and anxiety of confronting communist countries, including North Korea. With the establishment of diplomatic relations with China in 1992 and the Soviet Union in 1990, South Korea increased trade with communist nations in order to improve its relationships with them. As a result, the need for a bulwark against communist countries has been declining.

What does "national security" mean? Walter Lippmann defined national security as follows: A nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war, and if challenged, to maintain them by war. It is important to have bargaining power to avoid war, but at the same time also important to have the ability to go to war. And national security has the ability to maintain economic relations with the rest of the world based on reasonable terms; to preserve its nature, institution, and governance for disruption from outside; and to control its borders.¹

Since the end of the Cold War, the tension between the two Koreas has

1. Walter Lippmann, *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* (Boston: Little Brown, 1943), 5.

decreased slightly, but there are still military threats from North Korea. South Korea has established economic stability through active economic exchanges with communist countries, and has tried to bring about political peace as a result. In particular, they have placed high expectations on trade with China.

The trade volume between South Korea and China at the time when diplomatic relations were first established in 1992 amounted to \$6.4 billion; this reached \$211.2 billion in 2016, which is 33 times larger. In South Korea's overall volume of trade, China accounted for 2.1 percent in 1990 and 25.1 percent in 2016. Recently, representatives from both countries have forged stronger ties. China has been South Korea's largest trading partner since 2004. South Korea is China's fourth-largest trading partner.

On the other hand, the relationship between South Korea and North Korea has turned critical after maintaining a kind of pseudo-peace since the Korean War. The battle on the west coast between North Korea and South Korea in November 2009, the sinking of the *Cheonan* in March 2010, and the North's shelling of Yeongpyeongdo in the same year resulted in the collapse of mutual trust. These military confrontations resulted in South Korea strengthening their policies against North Korea with increased military power.²

One of the main reasons for the increasing tension on the Korean Peninsula is North Korea's development of nuclear weapons. North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in 2006 and the second in May 2009. In the following month, The United Nations Security Council condemned the 25 May 2009 nuclear test by North Korea and tightened sanctions against it by blocking funding for nuclear, missile and proliferation activities through targeted sanctions on additional goods, persons and entities, widening the ban on arms imports-exports by Security Council Resolution 1874.³ North Korea's armed provocation was intended to paralyze the UN's decision by taking the stance of a country armed with nuclear power.

Even though the relationship between South Korea and North Korea is maintained by dialogue, albeit under enormous tension, South Korea has tried to continue trading in the limited North Korean economy and has expressed the intention to cooperate with North Korea, as both sides fully realize the catastrophic damage that would occur if a war was to break out.

Economic cooperation has been seen in the Kaesong Industrial Region and tours to Mt. Geumgang. Tours to Geumgangsan have remained closed since a tourist died there in July 2008. Therefore, the Kaesong Industrial Region has been recognized as a symbol of economic cooperation with the North. Since 2011, products made in the Kaesong Industrial Region have accounted for more than 99

2. Kim Kwangwook, "Security and Count-terrorism in South Korea," in *Hikaku Anzenhosyou* [Comparative National Security], (Tokyo: Seibundo, 2013), 227.

3. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2009/sc9679.doc.htm>.

percent of the trade between the two countries. In May 24, 2010, following the sinking of the Cheonan ship in March 2010, trade between the two Koreas was limited to the Kaesong Industrial Region by South Korea's response. Afterward, the Lee Myung Bak administration no longer wanted to expand or make new investments in the Kaesong Industrial Region and took sanctions against North Korea. Following this negative policy, he approved of only limited regions for trade, including Kaesong Industrial Region. Because of this, trade with the North has become extremely limited. Opposition parties, civic groups, and businesses have opposed economic sanctions against North Korea.

The scale of intra-Korean trade depends on the inter-Korean political and economic situation, which is strongly influenced by international economic sanctions imposed on North Korea following their nuclear weapons tests. After the third nuclear weapon test was conducted in 2013, intra-Korean trade decreased from \$197 million in 2012 to \$113 million in 2013. This trade recovered in 2014 and 2015, but after the fourth nuclear weapon test in 2016, the scale of intra-Korean trade decreased dramatically.⁴

With regard to the Six-Party Talks, China and Russia supported North Korea's position. However, Japan, the U.S., and South Korea insisted that North Korea stop their nuclear program and invite IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) inspectors to monitor the suspension. Japan, the U.S., and South Korea made it a prerequisite for North Korea to observe the agreement between the U.S. and North Korea, which was made on February 29, 2012. Failure to observe the agreement would lead to mistrust between the two Koreas and the U.S. and North Korea, and would hinder the resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

2. Political and Economic Cooperation between China and South Korea

In Beijing in November 2014, trade ministers from China and South Korea signed the China-Republic of Korea FTA (free trade agreement). Through fourteen rounds of negotiations, the two countries agreed to open their markets for products and services and created product-specific rules. The trust shown by the two countries was an important factor in making this FTA. The first negotiations were held in May 2012 following a private partnership agreement in 2004. In Beijing on December 9, 2015, after thirty months of negotiations, the two countries exchanged a document confirming the validity of the FTA, and on December 20th, the China-Republic of Korea FTA became effective. Through the FTA, South Korea can access domestic markets in China, its biggest and closest export market. Specifically, owing to the FTA, customs duty on 958 export products amounting to \$8.7 billion was abolished. On top of this, customs duty

4. Korea Institute for Industrial Economics and Trade (KIET), *Comprehensive Assessment of North Korean Economy in 2016 and Prospects for 2017* (Sejong, Korea: KIET, 2017), 142.

on export products amounting to \$45.8 billion will be abolished within ten years. The agreement is beneficial even for small Korean companies, who are able to find export partners in China. Having experienced a trade deficit in its trade with South Korea, China expects to strengthen its international and political position in East Asia first before gaining economic benefits.⁵

The South Korean government considered the following extra economic factors in the agreement with China: the establishment of a mutual strategic cooperative relationship through the exchange of personal and material resources; a deepening of the relationship between the two countries; and help in bringing about peace and security in East Asia. This agreement will work positively for the unification of the Korean Peninsula, and will be significant for regional economic cooperation such as the FTA between South Korea, China, and Japan, the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership), RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership), FTAAP (Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific), and for regional integration in East Asia.⁶

The China-Republic of Korea FTA includes not only economic goals but also has both a political and social meaning. South Korea does not consider the agreement biased toward China, because the Korea-U.S. FTA (officially: Free trade agreement between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, also called KORUS FTA) was already effective ahead of the China-Korea FTA. After the KORUS FTA was signed, the China-Republic of Korea FTA was ratified, and so the China-Republic of Korea FTA will not alienate neighboring countries.⁷ Since China and South Korea aim to make a China-Japan-South Korea FTA, the China-Republic of Korea FTA will not alienate Japan.

The Japanese government places strategic priority of its general policy for the Free Trade Agreement on its practical possibilities as well as economic, regional, political, and diplomatic factors. They also see the possibility of establishing an FTA with China for economic cooperation in East Asia based on Japan, China, and South Korea, together with ASEAN. Japan has seriously considered its trade policies with China following China's fulfillment of the WTO agreement, the overall economic situation in China, its general relationship with China, and the intention of making the FTA within countries in Asia.

Referring to its relationship with South Korea, Japan has acknowledged South Korea as politically important for Japan since a favorable relationship was formed after they co-hosted the World Cup in May 2002, and the economic mutual dependence between the two countries was assured. Financiers from both

5. Yunling Zhang and Minghui Shen, *The Status of East Asian Free Trade Agreements*, ADBI Working Paper Series No.282, May 2011, Asian Development Bank Institute, 25.

6. "S. Korea, China strike balance in FTA talks: gov't," *Yonhap News*, November 10, 2014.

7. Kim, *Hikaku*, 263–64.

countries suggested that they would target a broad range of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) and FTA.⁸ There was a time when the possibility of making a Japan-South Korea FTA seemed higher than that of a Japan-China FTA, considering the close economic relationship of the two nations, the regional closeness, and the similarities in political structure. However, there has been no effort to resume negotiations for a Japan-Korea FTA since negotiations broke up in 2004. Since then, the trade environment surrounding the economy of East Asia has rapidly changed. Extra obstacles such as historical recognition and territorial problems have emerged, along with the comfort women issue and compensation for forced labor during the Japanese colonial period. Japan and Korea came to an agreement in December 2015 over the comfort women issue and created a chance to improve relations.

Both Japan and South Korea have tried to conclude FTAs with other countries since they failed in their negotiations for a Japan-Korea FTA. South Korea has concluded FTAs with the U.S., EU, ASEAN, and India, while Japan has made agreements with each country in ASEAN, Mexico, and India. There have been continuous negotiations to create a Japan-Korea FTA and a China-Japan FTA. However, whether these agreements will actually be concluded is unforeseeable.⁹ The suspension of the Japan-China FTA and the Japan-Korea FTA has led to closer ties between China and South Korea and eventually the creation of the China-Republic of Korea FTA. It is natural that China should make more effort in its diplomatic policies with South Korea rather than North Korea considering the increase in exchanges since 1992. China expects its strong economic and political relationship with South Korea will eventually bring advantages in their relationship with the U.S. This will also break the structure of the Cold War during which Japan, the U.S., and South Korea stood against North Korea, China, and Russia. South Korea expects to maintain a balance in its relationship with the U.S. and China. As long as China keeps a cooperative relationship with the U.S., this will not be a cause of stress for South Korea as they try to balance relations with China and the U.S. However, if China and the U.S. confront each other, it will be a huge burden for South Korea politically and diplomatically.

On October 5, 2015, the TPP was completed at a Cabinet meeting in Atlanta, forming a larger economic bloc, taking up 40 percent of the volume of world trade. The agreement will take effect only after getting approval from the parliaments of each respective country, and therefore it is difficult to predict the exact time and the exact amount of trade. However, the TPP is expected to take

8. Japan's FTA Strategy. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2002; see <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/fta/summary.html>.

9. Kim Kwangwook, "National Security of Korean Peninsula," in *Asia under the Effects of Neoliberalism and Hegemonism*, eds. Fuzita Kazuko and Mun Gyongsu (Kyoto: Minerva, 2016), 46-49.

effect even if the ratification process of some of the participating countries is delayed.

The TPP is meaningful in the sense that Japan and the U.S. set a solid foundation to take leadership in economic negotiations on investment, intellectual property, the environment, and labor as well as trade in the Pacific region. Japan joined it in July 2013. The TPP proposal was signed on February 4, 2016, in New Zealand, and is currently awaiting ratification. On November 20, 2016, Singapore declared that they would amend legislation to bring the TPP into effect. But the next day, on November 21, 2016, the U.S. President-elect, Donald Trump, announced that he planned to withdraw the United States from the TPP when he took office, and on January 23, 2017, President Trump signed a presidential memorandum to withdraw from the TPP.

When the TPP becomes effective, it is expected to cause changes not only in trade or the economy but also in international relationships and security. The TPP could hold in check the economic powers centered on China and support the Asia Pacific countries to join agreement. Thanks to the TPP, the political and economic order centered on China could be influenced by the direction and goals of the Asia Pacific countries that are centered on Japan and the United States. However, since China is also included as a negotiating member of the TPP, it is not easy for Japan and the U.S. to hold back China. For this reason, how China and Korea can be involved in the TPP is considered important.

At the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Ministerial Meeting in November 2014 hosted by China, the President Xi Jinping presented China's economic plans. The areas affected by these plans include the belt areas from the center of China to the west, the west-south, and the south; many areas involved in the TPP are not included. Besides, for the RCEP, the plan is to add six countries—Japan, China, South Korea, India, Australia, and New Zealand—to the ten countries of ASEAN. In the future, when the RCEP takes effect, it will be beneficial for the TPP.

3. The Security Dilemma between China and the United States

In general, a security dilemma indicates a case in which a country pursuing its own security confronts a dangerous situation even though it tries to protect itself. This can be explained as a paradox of security. The paradox of security includes the following two dilemmas. The first is an interpretative issue that cannot be explained: whether or not actions from other countries are made defensively or offensively. The second is the dilemma of response: when a political leader has two choices, whether to resort to military action against an opposing country or pursue policies toward the opposing party based on trust. The security dilemma of the U.S. and China reveals conflicts and military tensions. With the territorial problems surrounding the East China Sea and the South China Sea, the U.S. is involved in conflicts between China and its neighboring countries, and this has

produced more complexity from the Chinese side. The U.S. and China also try to secure mutual profits while maintaining close economic relationships.

China (PRC) and Taiwan (ROC) often clash over who has territorial rights to the South China Sea, within what is known as the nine-dash line. The territorial disputes made over the South China Sea include Indonesia over the Natuna Islands, and the Philippines over Scarborough Shoal, and Vietnam over the Spratly Islands and Parcel Islands. The U.S. has emphasized the importance of freedom of the seas and the peaceful resolution of the disputes over territorial sovereignty.

The PRC argues that the U.S. infringes upon the sovereignty and security of China for the freedom of the seas. In July 2016, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ruled against China's maritime claims in China versus the Philippines. China did not accept the rules and insisted that any resolutions should be made through bilateral negotiations. The ROK opposed China's military acts in the South China Sea that ignored international law.

Could China as a rising power threaten to displace the U.S. as the ruling power in East Asia? The U.S. share of global economic output fell from 22 percent in 1980 to 16 percent today, while China's grew from 2 percent to 18 percent over the same period. Historians know that when a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power, alarms should sound extreme danger ahead.¹⁰

The U.S. has continued to conduct surveillance on China by watching the territorial disputes over the East China Sea, the South China Sea, and also North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles. Is it possible to manage the structural stresses between a rising and a ruling power without war?

China has already become the leading voice in Asia instead of the U.S. The security dilemma between China and the U.S. appears to be cautious at this point. Regional institutions, including unorganized international meetings, in Asia since the millennium are as follows: 2001 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), 2003 Six-Party Talks (SPT), 2005 East Asia Summit (EAS), 2010 Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS), 2012 (RCEP).¹¹

Even though the possibility of war in East Asia has decreased, daily life is threatened by problems of cyberterror, energy security, and climate change.

Cyberwar is typically conceptualized as state-on-state action equivalent to an armed attack or use of force in cyberspace that may trigger a military response with a proportional kinetic use of force. Cyberterrorism can be considered "the premeditated use of disruptive activities, or the threat thereof, against computers or networks, with the intention to cause harm or further social, ideological, religious, political or similar objectives, or to intimidate any persons in furtherance

10. Graham Allison, "How Trump and China's Xi could stumble into war," *The Washington Post*, March 31, 2016, 35.

11. Victor D. Cha, *Powerplay: The Origin of the American Alliance System in Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 211–13.

of such objectives.”¹² Cybercrime includes unauthorized network breaches and theft of intellectual property and other data; it can be financially motivated, and the response is typically under the jurisdiction of law enforcement agencies. Within each of these categories, different motivations as well as the overlapping intent and methods of various actors can complicate response options.

Cyberterror is destructive even if not done with a political motive. With the development of the internet society, a vast amount of data has been electronically stored for military, communications, and financial use. This cyberterror has been notably increasing, and includes hacking, the theft and destruction of data, virus attacks through emails or browsers, and the destruction of networks.

In Japan, China, and Korea, a large number of people use the internet, and preparation for potential cyberattacks is essential, especially as modern society depends on computer systems for electricity, communication, gas, and water as well as for logistics such as transportation, finance, and distribution.

President Xi Jinping discussed these problems with President Obama when he visited the United States. At a press conference on September 25, 2015, both leaders announced that they would not permit cyberterror, especially attacks on intellectual property of businesses.

The National Security Advisor at the time, Susan Rice, visited China in August 2015, and suggested sanctions—in this case the freezing of assets—against twenty-five Chinese companies suspected of cyberattacks. This became an important agreement between China and the U.S. with regard to cyber disputes.¹³

During the Cold War, China had a better understanding of the U.S. and improved their relationship by changing their diplomatic behavior, which resulted in isolating the former Soviet Union and finished the Cold War. After the end of the Cold War, South Korea established diplomatic relations with China and has tried to keep a security balance between the U.S. and China, with its increasing military power buoyed by economic development.

A recent example of this can be shown in the diplomatic disputes on THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense Missile) deployment. The Park Geun-Hye Administration was extremely cautious about the deployment of THAAD, and expressed a policy of No Request, No Consultation, and No Decision because deployment is an issue related to the security dilemma between the United States and China. THAAD is an anti-ballistic missile system developed by the U.S. army. While Korea takes a cautious stance toward THAAD, there have been disputes between the U.S. and China with regard to their deployment.

A question has been raised continuously from China as to the strategic

12. Catherine A. Theohary and John W. Rollins, *Cyberwarfare and Cyberterrorism: In Brief*, Congressional Research Service, March 27, 2015, 2.

13. “U.S. developing sanctions against China over cyberthefts,” *The Washington Post*, August 30, 2015.

significance of the deployment of THAAD in South Korea. Although it is strategically effective, there is a concern that the South Korean government cannot afford it. The United States emphasizes the effectiveness and adequacy of THAAD deployment through various channels and stresses this as their policy. China also does not let its guard down when it comes to the deployment of THAAD.

There are two main reasons for China exerting pressure on South Korea's deployment of THAAD. First, considering South Korea's domestic politics and the current situation in Northeast Asia, it is highly possible that China considers South Korea as the weakest link among the Northeast Asian allies of the United States, and in this context, believes it could weaken the U.S.-ROK alliance and possibly the wider alliance system. Second, China seeks to prevent any changes to the current strategic situation on the Korean Peninsula, which could be brought about by changes in South Korea's missile defense system. North Korea's continuing development of ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons has put South Korea at a strategic disadvantage. South Korea is able to respond to this through the U.S.'s extended deterrence, but comparing the existing military strength on the Korean Peninsula, North Korea can be said to be in an asymmetrically beneficial position due to its missile and nuclear capabilities. Therefore, any changes to South Korea's defense capabilities to deter North Korea's missiles would change the strategic situation in the region, which is highly undesirable for China.¹⁴

Regarding the deployment of THAAD, there is severe competition for supremacy in the East Asian region. The U.S. is concerned that China's economic growth could infringe upon U.S. interests in the East Asian region and could threaten U.S. military power in the region.

In July 2016, Seoul and Washington announced plans to deploy the THAAD ballistic missile defense (BMD) system in South Korea. They just managed to reach an agreement regarding deployment in the latter days of Park's presidential term. South Korea and the United States Forces Korea have chosen Seongju County in North Gyeongsang Province as the site for the THAAD battery.¹⁵ Earlier in her presidency, Park had cultivated a stronger strategic relationship with China partly in order to influence Beijing's North Korea policy. But with Chinese pressure failing to curb Pyongyang's provocations, South Korea appeared to tilt toward U.S. wishes in joining its missile defense system.¹⁶

Moon and the Democratic Party of Korea (DPK) have so far criticized the

14. Woo Jungyeop and Eileen Block, "Misinformation Hinders Debate on THAAD Deployment in Korea," *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, August 11, 2015; <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/publications/misinformation-hinders-debate-thaad-deployment-in-korea>.

15. *The Korea Times*, July 12, 2016.

16. Coordinated by Mark E. Manyin, U.S.-South Korea Relations, *Congressional Research Service*, October 20, 2016.

former Park Geun-hye government's rush to deploy the advanced missile defense system. Since his inauguration as president, Moon has maintained an ambiguous stance on this issue, neither supporting the placement of the missiles nor sharing any plans to withdraw them.¹⁷ Moon suspended the deployment of THAAD, and the two launchers already installed can remain, but the other four launchers would not be set up until the administration has completed an environmental assessment. The delay of the deployment of THAAD is advantageous for China. Many people in South Korea regard the delay of THAAD deployment in South Korea as one method to avoid the danger of war between South and North Korea for a while.

However, in response to North Korea's test launch of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), President Moon decided to complete the deployment of four THAAD missile launchers. After North Korea's sixth nuclear test on September 3, 2017, South Korea decided to allow the United States Forces Korea (USFK) to carry out provisional construction work needed to operate the battery and bring the remaining four launchers to the site.¹⁸ It was an important decision for President Moon to make in managing negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea without any preemptive strikes from either side.

In 2015, President Obama insisted that a rebalance of Asia should not consist of a policy of blocking China, and mentioned that China could join the TPP. Through this, he tried to alleviate China's excessive concern. The U.S. policy toward China was also expressed in the summit talks with the South Korean president of the time, Park Geun-hye, on her trip to the U.S. in October 2015. President Obama mentioned that there was no contradiction in Korea having good relations with both China and the U.S., but he requested that Korea speak out if China should violate international rules.¹⁹ The request was that if there is conflict between the U.S. and China in the East Asian region, Korea should show its true colors.

So far, the U.S. goal is to develop a cooperative military system based on close ties with Japan and South Korea. This includes the integration of an anti-missile defense system between the U.S. and South Korea, and the sharing of military information among Japan, the U.S., and South Korea. The Japanese government takes an active role in these efforts by the U.S., but South Korea takes a passive attitude toward this issue, considering the feelings of China even if they are fully aware of the necessity for collective security.

In Japan, the pros and cons surrounding the issue of the U.S. military's

17. Charlie Campbell, "The Negotiator" *TIME*, May 15, 2017, 32–35.

18. "4 more THAAD launchers to be deployed Thursday," *The Korea Times*, September 6, 2017.

19. "2015 United States-Republic of Korea Joint Statement on North Korea," <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/10/16/united-states-republic-korea-joint-statement-north-korea>.

relocation within Okinawa are related to the U.S.-China security dilemma. In May 2015, Okinawa Governor Onaga Takeshi visited the U.S. and asked them to reconsider the planned relocation of the U.S. Marines' air base at Futenma to the less populous Henoko region when he spoke with members of the Defense and State departments as well as members of Congress. The U.S. made it clear that they would not go through with the renegotiations because they are based on an agreement made by both the U.S. and Japan.²⁰

Not all of the heads of local governments in Okinawa agree with Onaga Takeshi. Nakayama Yoshitaka, the mayor of Ishigaki, criticized him, saying that the head of a local government does not have diplomatic rights to criticize a national government. Nakayama also pointed out that Onaga raised the question on the relocation of the U.S. military base without considering the fact that Chinese military ships continue to enter the waters around the Senkaku Islands. Nakayama blamed the Okinawa governor for disrupting the balance between the U.S. and China at a conference with leading members of the Chinese government during his visit to China in April.²¹ On October 13, Onaga revoked a permission that his predecessor, Nakaima Hirokazu, gave to the central government to reclaim land for the relocation. Due to this, the central government suspended the withdrawal of the approval of landfill by executing administrative procedures.²² The conflict between the national government and Okinawa Prefecture over the plan to relocate the U.S. base has developed into a legal battle.

The conflict surrounding the relocation of the U.S. military base represents a dilemma between the central government and Okinawa and a lack of consensus among local government leaders. The relocation of the U.S. military base and the deployment of THAAD have something in common. If a war breaks out because of the aggravation of the situation, Japan and Korea are highly likely to be the first to be attacked. In July 2015, at a special committee of members of the House of Representatives regarding the Security Act, Ota Masahide, when questioned, testified that the Henoko base would be a target for attack.²³

The current U.S.-China relationship is not a confrontational relationship like

20. "Gov. Onaga to continue direct negotiation to stop new base," *Ryukyu Shimpō*, June 5, 2015.

21. *The Okinawa Times*, June 4, 2015.

22. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 14, 2015; *Asahi Shimbun*, October 28, 2015.

23. Former Okinawa governor Ota Masahide expressed his opposition to the construction of a new military base in Henoko, Nago. Ota emphasized his refusal to accept the construction of new bases, stating that the Okinawan people's opposition to the bases is grounded in their experiences of the battle of Okinawa. "At Okinawa witness hearing, two oppose security legislation; two support it but call for cautions deliberation," *Ryukyu Shimpō*, July 6, 2015; Ota, the witness, stated that when a base is made in Henoko, it'll be an aggressive mark. For details, see *Minutes of the Special Committee of the 189th House of Representatives on Bills related with Security*, July 8, 2015.

that of the U.S.-Soviet relationship during the Cold War. Although the U.S. and China have opposing views in politics and national security, they have kept their interdependent economic relationship and exchange of human resources.²⁴ They have taken both a competitive and a cooperative approach.

The U.S.-China dilemma can also be seen in the economy. Although the AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) and the ADB (Asian Development Bank) seem to be competitive, they are complementary and share work as international financial institutions.²⁵ The cooperation and competition in U.S.-China relations have an influence on the Korean Peninsula. This can be seen through the repetition of tension and reconciliation. In other words, sometimes there is tension among these countries, but other times reconciliation.

4. One of the Most Isolated Countries in the World

The close relationship between North Korea and China can be described as “lips and teeth.” The Chinese people consider the Korean War as a war where the U.S. was their common enemy. China’s involvement in the Korean War and the sacrifice of their soldiers is connected to the activity of Korean troops during the Chinese Civil War. So the relationship between North Korea and China can be traced to before the WW II.

According to a survey in *World Policy Journal*, the DPRK is one of the most isolated countries in the world. The survey was conducted according to the following: 1) the number of countries directly connected by plane; 2) the percentage of individuals on the internet; 3) the number of foreign visitors; 4) the percentage of immigrants; and 5) imports per capita in dollars.²⁶

China handles North Korea with kid gloves because it fears what would happen if the regime collapsed. China regards stability on the Korean Peninsula as its primary interest. Its support for North Korea ensures a friendly nation on its northeastern border and provides a buffer between China and the democratic South Korea.²⁷

North Korea’s eventual reunification with South Korea might lead to it becoming a democratic U.S. ally with the potential for tens of thousands of U.S. and Korean troops to be stationed along China’s border. Millions of Korean-

24. Kim Kwangwook, “Triangle confrontation between Japan, China and South Korea regarding to historical recognition,” in *Kioku no kyouyu o mezasite* [Aiming at the Sharing of a Memory], ed. Kawashima Masaki (Otsu: Kohro-sya, 2015), 248.

25. Nathan Sheets, “Building a global infrastructure for growth,” *CNBC*, January 7, 2015; <https://www.cnbc.com/2015/01/07/building-a-global-infrastructure-for-growth-commentary.html>.

26. *World Policy Journal*, Spring 2013, 22–23.

27. Beina Xu, “*The China-North Korea Relationship*,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 26, 2017; <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-north-korea-relationship>.

Chinese living in the border regions are one of China's most stable ethnic minorities and they have not called for independence, but if the Korean Peninsula were unified, this could change. This is part of the reason why China provides North Korea with presumably large amounts of aid as well as diplomatic cover at the United Nations.²⁸

On September 3, 2015, President Park Geun-hye attended China's war victory parade. Park then visited the building that housed Korea's provisional government in Shanghai during the colonial era. The purpose of this visit was to attend its reopening ceremony. At the request of the South Korean government, the Chinese government renovated the three-story building.

It is stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, which was amended in 1987, that the Republic of Korea originates from the provisional government in Shanghai. We can assume that the fact that China has renovated the building that housed Korea's provisional government in Shanghai means that China intends to improve its relationship with South Korea and has changed its relationship with North Korea, with whom they had kept friendly relations for a long time.

What does North Korea's position imply in the relationship between the U.S. and China? Delegations of the U.S. and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) held talks in Geneva in 1994 to negotiate an overall resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. The U.S. called upon North Korea to freeze its development of nuclear weapons and stop the construction of nuclear reactors until the completion of a light water reactor. In exchange for this, the agreement included supplying North Korea with 500,000 tons of heavy oil annually. This plan was meant to gradually repair the relationship between the U.S. and North Korea.

This agreement suffered a setback when North Korea admitted possessing a uranium-enrichment program in October 2002. The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) suspended oil shipments to North Korea, and the IAEA adopted a resolution criticizing North Korea's uranium-enrichment program.

In April 2003, the United States, North Korea, and China held trilateral talks in Beijing to find a solution to the nuclear issue in North Korea. The U.S., which did not have faith in North Korea, began to consider having neighboring countries participate in the negotiations. In July 2003, the United States contacted North Korea in New York, which led to the Six-Party Talks that involved six countries, including Japan. The Six-Party Talks have not been held since the third chief delegate talks at the sixth meeting in December 2008.

In January 2009, President Obama expressed his willingness to compromise with countries in conflict with each other. However, North Korea launched a long

28. Shen Dingli, "Lips and Teeth," *Foreign Policy*, February 2013; <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/02/13/lips-and-teeth/>.

range Taepodong-2 ballistic missile on April 5 and conducted its second underground nuclear test on May 2, which made the U.S. take a firmer stand. In March 2010, the South Korean patrol ship *Cheonan* was sunk near the South Korean-North Korean maritime border, and in November 2010, North Korea fired artillery rounds at the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong, which led to a worsening of the situation. Disputes between Japan and China surrounding the Senkaku islands brought about U.S.-China conflict and lowered the chances of holding the Six-Party Talks.

In December 2011, following the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, his son, Kim Jong-un, succeeded political power. In February 2012, a high-level meeting between the United States and North Korea was held in Beijing. They reached agreements that included suspending long-range missile tests, halting operations at the Yongbyon uranium enrichment plant, and inviting IAEA inspectors to monitor the suspension. It was also made clear that the U.S. would provide North Korea with 240,000 metric tons of food. All this opened up the possibility of resuming the Six-Party Talks.

On April 3, 2012, North Korea stated that it had nuclear weapons and amended its Constitution. In spite of U.S. opposition, North Korea attempted to launch a missile on April 13. It launched a long-range missile on December 12 and carried out its third nuclear test, opposing UN sanctions, in February 2013.

After this third nuclear test, the UN Security Council decided to impose trade regulations against the North. In March and April, North Korea warned that they would close the Kaesong Industrial Region because of joint military exercises conducted by the U.S. and South Korea. In April, North Korea actually prohibited the access of workers from the South. Even though it is beneficial for the North to activate the Kaesong Industrial Region, North Korea argued that they could utilize the Kaesong Industrial Region for political and military purposes.

North Korea then announced that they succeeded with a fourth nuclear test on January 6, 2016, and then on February 7 they launched a long range ballistic missile. The reason why they have continued with these is because they would rather strengthen their current system than stop the sanctions imposed on them. On February 10, 2016, the South Korean government indefinitely suspended reopening the Kaesong Industrial Region, and on February 11, North Korea banished South Korean workers. This shows that the operation of the Kaesong Industrial Region depends on the political and economic situation since it was closed once in 2013.

On September 9, 2016, North Korea conducted its fifth nuclear test and stated that this test had enabled them to confirm that its warheads could be mounted on missiles and verify the warhead's power. Each time North Korea conducted a nuclear weapons tests, the country was burdened with sanctions.

Following the fifth nuclear weapon test, the UN Security Council passed UNSCR (UN Security Council Resolution) 2321, added a resolution on human

rights, in November 2016. UNSCR 2321 condemns the DPRK for pursuing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles instead of the welfare of its people, and emphasizes the necessity of the DPRK respecting and ensuring the welfare and inherent dignity of people in the DPRK.

North Korea launched a missile and carried out a nuclear test in order to counteract the U.S.-South Korean joint military drills which had been held almost every year. China and Russia have taken positions as mediators, and they have strongly opposed both the U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises and North Korea's nuclear tests. In January 2015, North Korea suggested that they could suspend nuclear tests only if the United States and South Korea stopped their annual joint military drills. The United States rejected North Korea's suggestion. In response to this, China criticized the U.S.'s rejection and defended the position of North Korea. China seems to understand North Korea's position but it makes North Korea feel cut off within the framework of "A New Type of Great Power Relationship"²⁹ between the U.S. and China.

Cui Tiankai arrived in Washington, D.C., on April 2, 2013, to take up his new post as China's ambassador to the United States and had an interview with *Foreign Affairs* in which he insisted that they should find ways to work with each other rather than for China to confront with the preexisting great power, the U.S..³⁰ China's intention is to be on an equal standing with the U.S. in pursuit of their economic profits. China wants its opinion to be respected since they are competing with the U.S. in territorial problems in the East China Sea, and the South China Sea.

In its relationship with China, the U.S. expects both countries try to solve global problems responsibly and to behave appropriately, according to international laws. The U.S. has been demanding that North Korea's nuclear problem should be solved according to international laws or international standards, and has kept the line that Six-Party Talks or U.S.-North Korean talks must be preceded by South-North Korean talks on denuclearization and improvements in South-North Korean relations. The U.S. expects China to comply with U.S. requests in order to protect its own interests.³¹

After North Korea announced that they had conducted a fourth nuclear weapons test, claiming to have detonated a hydrogen bomb for the first time on

29. This quote, "A New Type of Great Power Relationship," is taken from President Obama's national security adviser, Tom Donilon, when he mentioned this to the vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, Gen. Fan Changlong when they met on May 28, 2013, in Beijing; "Chinese President to Seek New Relationship With U.S. in Talks," *The New York Times*, May 28, 2013.

30. Interview by Jonathan D. Tepperman, "Beijing's Brand Ambassador: A Conversation With Cui Tiankai," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2013, <http://jonathantepperman.com/beijings-brand-ambassador-a-conversation-with-cui-tiankai>.

31. Mark E. Many-in, *Congressional Research Service*, 16.

January 6, 2016, China denounced North Korea immediately. However, considering the position that China has taken every time North Korea has conducted nuclear tests, it is unlikely that China will take firm action on this matter.

China will suspend all imports of coal from North Korea until the end of the year 2017. Coal is North Korea's largest export item, and also China's greatest point of leverage over the country.³²

5. How Can We Overcome the Nuclear Crisis on the Korean Peninsula?

North Korea has been put under stress to survive, regardless of international rule, including the presidential statements of UNSCR. China will be in a better position to pressure North Korea into denuclearizing. But there are limits to counting on China's role, as China regards North Korea as a "buffer" between China and the democratic security alliance of the U.S., South Korea, and Japan. North Korea has repeatedly called for a peace treaty to formally end the Korean War but the U.S. has been reluctant to respond to this proposal.

President Moon Jae-in was chief of staff to the former president Roh Moo-hyun and a strong proponent of the Sunshine Policy. Why could the Sunshine Policy not be sustained during the administrations of Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye? North Korea did not freeze nuclear development during the decade from 1998 to 2008 of the Sunshine Policy. How can Moon negotiate an agenda in which North Korea has insisted that nuclear weapons are unnegotiable?

And what can we expect of South Korea's bargaining power between the U.S. and North Korea? North Korea eagerly wants to be seen as a nuclear state, and wanted to sign a peace treaty instead of the armistice agreement in 1953. The U.S. plans to talk with North Korea on prior agreement to dismantle North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. The U.S. has warned North Korea that all options are on the table, ranging from a military strike on North Korea to direct diplomatic talks.

If South Korea's foreign policies were in conflict with a unification strategy, one of them would be ignored by the person in power. President Moon wants to be in the driver's seat when negotiating the problems on the Korean Peninsula with China and the U.S. Why does President Moon need to be in the driver's seat? The primary concern of nations surrounding the Korean Peninsula, including the U.S., is victory in a war against North Korea, but the primary concern for South Korea is to avoid the tragedy of fratricidal war.³³

Generally speaking, opposition parties in South Korea tend to follow a

32. "China halts import of coal from North Korea," *The New York Times* (International Edition), February 20, 2017, 5.

33. Philip Gordon, "A Vision of Trump at War," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2017, 19.

traditional foreign policy. On the other hand, the ruling party and the progressive party tend to place a lot of value on the unification strategy. Disagreements on foreign policy and the unification strategy of South Korea could result in poor relations within international society. If South Korea were to adopt a policy of appeasement with North Korea, it would be suspected of betrayal with allies. One feasible policy for South Korea would be to guarantee the survival of North Korea; that of the U.S. is to freeze North Korea's nuclear program.

The security dilemma among Japan, China, and Korea receives attention because policies that strengthen national security may function in reverse. In particular, the changes to international relations surrounding the Korean Peninsula are noticeable. Recently, with regard to the deployment of THAAD, the South Korean government took its relations with the U.S. and China into consideration. Due to this, the relationship between Japan and Korea was undermined a little.

The reason why the Korean government has strengthened its relationship with China is because they are aware of the influence of China on North Korea, and they intend to create the unification of the Korean Peninsula initiated by the South Korean government. Besides this, they consider that their relationship with China on a trade basis, as well as on an economic and security level, has increased. Collaboration with neighboring countries is necessary in order to prevent local wars on the Korean Peninsula and to bring about denuclearization in North Korea.

As shown during the Cold War, Japan and Korea had strengthened their solidarity in politics, military, and national security through aid from the United States. However, the recent solidarity between China and South Korea has weakened the triangle security alliance among Japan, the U.S., and Korea. By strengthening its political and economic association with South Korea, China has tried to block political and military pressure from the solidarity of Japan, the U.S., and South Korea.

In the process of passing Japan's security laws, the concept of proactive pacifism, which was emphasized by the second Abe cabinet, means that it is necessary to react based on the principle of international cooperation, considering that Japan has faced important national issues to cope with various threats from North Korea. Based on this concept, Japan emphasized the importance of making laws related to their national security. The background of this situation is as follows. After the Gulf War, the Japanese government sent the Self-Defense Forces to remove mines in the Persian Gulf. The government provided over \$13 billion instead of taking military action, and Japan was harshly criticized internationally for its unfriendly manner. Japanese troops halted their refueling mission in the Indian Ocean in November 2007 before the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law took effect. But the U.S. and the UK criticized Japan for this. With the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law ratified in January 2008, Japan resumed its refueling mission, but felt the necessity of legislating a new law since the old law had been annulled in January 2010.

Collective self-defense, which is included in Japan's security laws, receives attention with regard to the overseas dispatch of Japan's Self-Defense Forces. Prime Minister Abe has given examples of occasions where overseas dispatch would be considered necessary based on collective self-defense. They include a crisis on the Korean Peninsula, the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, and the South China Sea, which is Japan's oil supply route. This was also the area where the United States was involved in territorial disputes between China and other neighboring countries concerning the ownership of the Spratly Islands.

Among the disputes over ownership and free passage in the South China Sea, we can clearly see a security dilemma between the U.S. and China, and Japan may also be influenced by this dilemma.

In order to resolve these conflicts and to ease tension in the East Asian region, including on the Korean Peninsula, Japan, China, and Korea must develop close relations. It is true that historical disputes and territorial problems have become heavy burdens on Japan's foreign policy with China and Korea. However, China and Korea are pushing forward to make the Korea-China-Japan FTA along with the China-Korea FTA. Besides, China and Korea are also interested in joining the TPP, which is led by Japan.

In the keynote speech by Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May 2015 he insisted that the U.S. play an important military role for economic development, growth, and stabilization in Asia after World War II. He made a serious request for informative models in Asia through U.S.-China cooperation by pointing out the transition of power and the competition between China and the U.S. Concerns about China's military action in the South China Sea are common interests of surrounding nations.

For Japan and Korea, security and freedom in the South China Sea are considered important since both countries have a high degree of trade dependence. How will the Japanese government and the Korean government collaborate and compete with China's foreign policy? South Korea wishes to collaborate with Japan, the U.S., and China in order to bring peace in East Asia.

Conclusion

There has been tension and confrontation among Japan, China, and Korea due to historical issues and territorial problems. Therefore the security issue, including nuclear weapon tests and missile tests in North Korea, needs to be solved in order to bring about cooperation among countries. In particular, cooperation between the United States and China is essential to solve the North Korea nuclear problem.

Recently, since North Korea conducted nuclear tests and launched missiles, the world has seen the reappearance of the confrontation between Japan-U.S.-South Korea and China-Russia-North Korea from the Cold War era. China accepted sanctions against North Korea according to the rules of the United Nations

Security Council and international society, but is also worried that sanctions on North Korea might result in a blockade of China which is centered on the U.S.'s rebalance policy in Asia. This kind of concern can be seen in China's policy of opposing a complete economic blockade of North Korea. However, the U.S. considers that the nuclear weapons possessed by North Korea could harm the security of international society and has pushed for economic sanctions against North Korea, even considering regime change in North Korea. In contrast, China considers peace important on the Korean Peninsula through the stabilization of systems in North Korea.

Each country's opposition to North Korea's nuclear weapon and missile tests is built on a gap in recognition between international rules accepted as universal values and domestic-oriented defense for the survival of North Korea. The bottom line of the UN Security Council sanctions against North Korea appears to be different depending on the various interpretations and applications of each country.

When South Korea pushes forward its unification policy along with its security policy, the discordance between these can influence international relationships. What makes the situation even more complicated is the priority between war and peace. From the perspective of the Japan-U.S.-South Korea triangular alliance during the Cold War, the closeness of South Korea and China gives us an impression of it moving away from the structure of the Japan-U.S.-South Korea triangle alliance. But a serious deterioration in relations between China and South Korea on the deployment of THAAD in South Korea has put paid to these misunderstandings. The gap in recognition between China and South Korea concerning the deployment of THAAD started with security issues but has now morphed into various types of disputes on economic problems.

Continuous nuclear tests and missile launches by North Korea could make South Korea take a harder line such as long-term evacuation from the Kaesong Industrial Region and to reconsider their security policy. However, President Moon makes a good excuse for the resumption of dialogue with North Korea.