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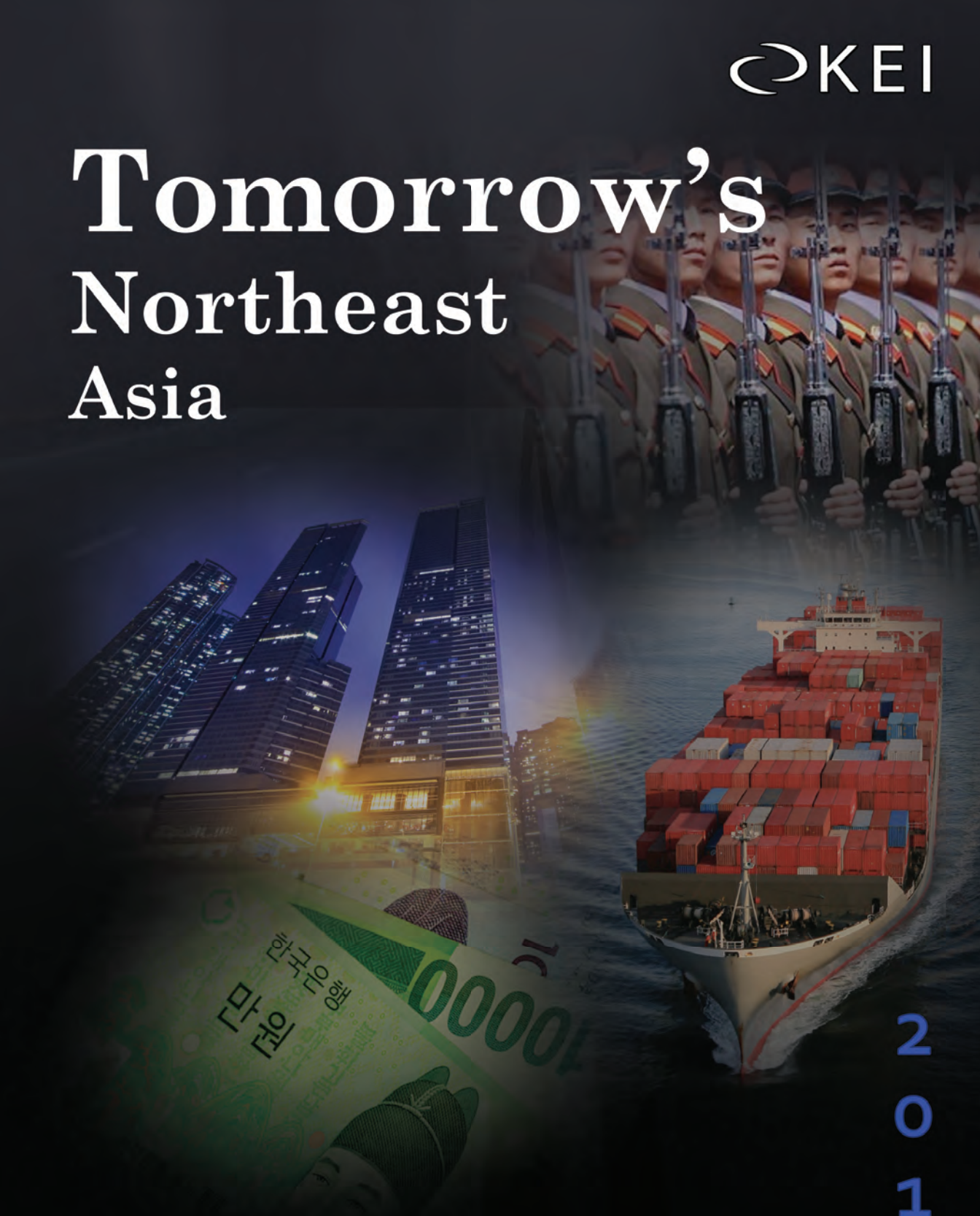
Tomorrow's Northeast Asia



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Prospects for Emerging East Asian Cooperation and Implications for the United States

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KEI ADVISORY COUNCIL

PREFACE

The Korea Economic Institute (KEI) in Washington, D.C., in cooperation with the School of International Service (SIS) at American University, also in Washington, D.C., cosponsored an academic symposium at SIS on 20–22 October 2010 on "Tomorrow's Northeast Asia." This volume contains the papers that were presented at the symposium and subsequently refined.

The 2010 symposium focused on emerging and future challenges facing Northeast Asia. Papers and discussions fell under five broad topics:

- Prospects for emerging East Asian cooperation and implications for the United States
- The emerging role of South Korea on a global stage
- The future of energy security in Northeast Asia
- Engaging and transforming North Korea's economy
- Finding room for a six-party solution to North Korea's nuclear crisis.

The sponsors and authors welcome comments on the material in this volume. This is the 21st in a series of annual academic symposia on Asia-Pacific economic and security issues that bring together leading academics and policy professionals from throughout the region.

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December 2010

HISTORY OF KOREA ECONOMIC INSTITUTE ACADEMIC SYMPOSIA

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U.S.-RUSSIAN-CHINESE COOPERATION FOR THE SECURITY OF KOREA

Doug J. Kim

ABSTRACT

The United States, Russia, and China have cooperated to help deter North Korea from again invading the South and thus preventing Korean tensions to become a devastating hot war. While their interests have contributed to relative stability, they do not exactly complement those of South Korea, which, for example, envisions tomorrow's Northeast Asia to include truly peaceful coexistence followed by a unified Korea at some point in the future. Consequently, their policies have significant implications for Seoul's security planning. This paper recommends Seoul expand its public diplomacy to the surrounding powers and establish a Korean National Guard, among other measures.

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Introduction

South Korea established diplomatic relations with the former Soviet Union in September 1990 and with China in August 1992. Since then, South Koreans have been able to travel to Russia and China for tourism, business, and study. There is only one country in the world that they cannot visit freely. It is North Korea. This sad reality seems to be Northeast Asia's near-term future.

North Korea has been the main source of instability for South Korea as well as Northeast Asia. During the 1990s and 2000s when the region enjoyed relative peace and prosperity after the end of the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and a "rising" China, North Korea was in the center of international tension because of its nuclear ambitions. The first North Korean nuclear crisis ended in 1994 with the Geneva Agreement, but the subsequent second crisis started even before the final year of the Geneva Agreement in 2003. The six-party talks have been on hold for almost two years, and the future of the talks is unclear.

The United States, Russia, and China have been able to cooperate in dealing with problems caused by North Korea and containing military clashes between South and North Korea. South Korea has not taken military actions in response to provocations from the North. But when it comes to the state of a "nuclear North Korea," it will prove to be more complicated to handle future clashes between the Koreas. The North might use its nuclear weaponry to deter South Korean and U.S. responses and, thus, be tempted to use its nuclear umbrella to conduct more provocations to intimidate the South and its allies. Such practices would create difficult problems for Russia and China in dealing with the Pyongyang regime.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the bilateral and trilateral relationships among the United States, Russia, and China in the context of their roles in the peace and security of the Korean peninsula. It addresses these relationships and implications in four major sections, regarding the United States, Russia, and China in Northeast Asia; the Korean peninsula; trilateral cooperation for the security of Korea; and implications for South Korean security planning. Because of the cooperative mood among the three mentioned "surrounding powers" for the last two decades, they have been able to keep a fragile peace on the Korean peninsula. South Korean governments managed to live with a hostile and violent North Korea for the sake of regional peace. Is there any way to reduce North Korean threats? How can the three countries support South Korean efforts to promote the security of Korea and the Korean peninsula?

The author is not going to deal with the political developments in North Korea, for it is that country's internal affair. His concern is limited to the interactions between North and South Korea, especially when they collide with each other militarily. The main goal of the South Korean government should be providing a shield from North Korea's military provocations and violations of the 1953 armistice agreement until a unified Korea can be part of tomorrow's Northeast Asia.

United States, Russia, and China in Northeast Asia

Northeast Asia, unlike the rest of the world, is an area that contains many varied and challenging issues such as the North Korea nuclear issue, cross-strait relations, territorial disputes over islands, historical disputes, and exclusive economic zone issues (MND 2008, 16). And, unlike Europe where a framework for common security planning already exists, the interests of the four major regional powers differ (MND 1993, 49). However, the countries in the region have been in a cooperative mood for the last two decades.

The United States, through comprehensive engagement with China, hopes to induce it to be a responsible member of the world community and thus enable regional countries to pursue common interests and reduce tensions (MND 1997, 39).

China has been growing as a "rising China." As of September 2010, it surpassed Japan as the world's second-largest economy. On 23 September 2010, however, Premier Wen Jiabao, in a speech entitled, "Getting to Know the Real China," stressed at the UN General Assembly that:

> China remains a developing country and will stick to the path of peaceful development for the common good of mankind. While China's gross domestic product is the third largest in the world, the per capita figure is only one tenth of that of developed countries.

Rapid economic development has been translated into a military buildup for China. Beijing has felt that the disintegration of the Soviet Union has lessened the external threat. This awareness has enabled Beijing to shift priorities away from the former threat from the USSR and toward preserving its own political system, bringing unity within the nation, and seeking resolution of the Spratly Island question (MND 1993, 45). China also has been pursuing continuous military modernization in preparation to support its growing national interest commensurate with its increasing economic and diplomatic status in the

international community (MND 1997, 44). China has pushed ahead with military modernization through continuous increases in its national defense budget; these increases are made possible because of China's high economic growth (MND 2008, 21).

Relations among China, the United States, and Russia have been generally favorable. For instance, in 1998, the four surrounding powers, including Japan, around the Korean peninsula established strategic partnership relations with each other (Kim 2002, 63–64).

The United States and Russia signed the most comprehensive arms control treaty in decades, and they have reduced the role of nuclear weapons in security strategy. At the United Nations, they came together to strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (Obama 2010). They worked closely on initiatives to address the threat of nuclear terrorism and keep terrorists from acquiring nuclear materials. Regarding North Korea, Russia is a participant in the six-party talks aimed at the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Russia and China have been strengthening their strategic cooperative relationship through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The SCO held a combined training exercise among member nations under China's initiative for the first time in 2005; a second exercise took place in July 2008 under the leadership of Russia. The SCO held a meeting of defense ministers of member countries in May 2008 and agreed to hold a third combined training exercise in 2010 (MND 2008, 15–16). President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia made a state visit to China in late September 2010 to further promote the development of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership. On 25 September 2010 People's Daily Online reported the expected agreement:

> Russian President Dmitry Medvedev will hold a state visit to China from Sept. 26 to Sept. 28. . . . The Chinese Ambassador to Russia Li Hui said that measures should be taken in order to further promote the in-depth development of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership: First, the two countries should increase mutual political trust and continue to expand all levels of communications and exchanges to consolidate the political foundation of Sino-Russian relations. Second, the two countries should vigorously promote pragmatic cooperation. Third, the two countries should strengthen international and regional collaboration on major issues. And the last but not least is to deepen cultural exchanges.

Overall China-U.S. relations were favorable until this year, despite several accidents. According to the U.S. Department of State (DOS 2010):

> U.S. China policy has been consistent . . . to encourage China's opening and integration into the global system. As a result, China has moved from being a relatively isolated and poor country to one that is a key participant in international institutions and a major trading nation. The United States encourages China to play an active role as a responsible stakeholder in the international community.

In April 2009, President Obama and President Hu established the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue as a framework for the two countries to discuss bilateral, regional, and global issues of common concern, identify potential areas of cooperation, address differences frankly, and build mutual trust (DOS 2010). However, in 2010, especially after the *Cheonan* incident, U.S.-China relations began to show friction (Wong 2010):

> The United States is carrying out naval exercises with South Korea in order to help Seoul rebuff threats from North Korea even though China is denouncing those exercises, saying that they intrude on areas where the Chinese military operates. . . . American officials are increasingly concerned about the modernization of China's navy and its long-range abilities, as well as China's growing assertiveness in the surrounding waters.

This indicates that certain territorial disputes in Northeast Asia could involve the United States and China in confrontation with each other, and these disputes could become the major destabilizing factor in this region. It is expected that fast-growing China will become more aggressive in pushing its territorial claims because of the strong emotional support from the Chinese people (Fackler and Johnson 2010). The *New York Times* (Editorial 2010) opined:

> The ownership of the islands—in waters rich with fish and oil and natural gas deposits—has been disputed for decades. China's claims have become increasingly shrill in recent months; Beijing has even started calling the South China Sea, where Vietnam and the two Koreas also have claims, a "core national interest."

In this standoff, China cut diplomatic communications; detained four Japanese nationals; and suspended exports of rare earth minerals that Japan needs for

hybrid cars, guided missiles, and wind turbines. The United States took the position of emphasizing the freedom of navigation (Editorial 2010):

> The Obama administration has offered to "facilitate" talks that would ensure freedom of navigation and encourage all states to settle their claims peacefully. That won't solve the territorial disputes, but it should make confrontations less likely.

Unlike the reality of Sino-American relations and the U.S. perception of the rapid growth of Chinese economic and military power, many South Koreans have different views. Such a trend was easily identifiable in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when South Korea's governments were pursing an engagement policy with North Korea.

Anti-U.S. sentiment among the Korean public was widely accepted. Their anti-American posture was easily equated with a pro-China stance. They saw rising China as the only country to stand against the only superpower, the United States. For those Koreans, China was to replace the position that the former Soviet Union used to hold. Washington and Beijing, however, contrary to those expectations, were in a cooperative mode through various channels of dialogue and negotiations.

Like these bilateral relations, the trilateral relations among the United States, Russia, and China have been generally favorable despite the United States continuing to reduce its strategic role in the region while China, Japan, and Russia continue efforts to qualitatively improve their military power (MND 1993, 49). For the past 20 years, there has not been a major military confrontation among the three in Northeast Asia. The triangular relationship has remained peaceful, even though there have been several accidents between Washington and Beijing that concluded with peaceful solutions.

The Korean Peninsula

Although Northeast Asia has been enjoying overall peace and stability, the Korean peninsula has been under constant threat of North Korea's nuclear ambitions and occasional military provocations against the South. In 2010 South Koreans are commemorating the 60th anniversary of the start of the Korean War, which sadly is still going on. North Korea has violated the 1953 armistice agreement on numerous occasions, but there has been no military response from the South. The truce has been fragile but maintained without escalation into an all-out war. In part, this reflects the success of the United States, Russia,

and China in containing the consequences of North Korean aggression to the Korean peninsula.

The end of the Cold War era in 1989 was followed by the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Before Mikhail Gorbachev lost his presidency in 1991, the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with South Korea on 30 September 1990. This year, we are also celebrating the 20th anniversary of that event. Korea also normalized its relations with China in August 1992. Since then, Russia and China have had diplomatic relations with both North and South Korea.

North Korea, however, has not been able to establish diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan. Consequently, Pyongyang claimed a sense of insecurity to justify its decision to become a nuclear weapons state. The first North Korean nuclear crisis was apparently resolved in late 1994 in the U.S.-DPRK Agreed Framework (also called the Geneva Agreement) after the death of Kim Il-sung in July and the cancellation of the first North-South summit meeting planned between Kim Il-sung and the South Korean president, Kim Young-sam.

The second North Korean nuclear crisis, which started in 2002, was followed by the series of six-party talks beginning in 2003. China has been a visible key player since its participation in the Korean War. Meanwhile the Soviets worked more quietly behind the scene as demonstrated by the USSR's 64th Independent Soviet Air Corps support of Chinese ground troops against UN forces. After the Russians failed to sell their nuclear power plant to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization after the Geneva agreement, Moscow had to wait another nine years to participate in Korean affairs in 2003. Then, Russia began to take its place at the international six-party negotiating table dealing with Korean problems. Cooperation among the United States, Russia, and China in the six-party talks was expected, but the talks have not brought any meaningful solutions after six years of negotiations.

The North Korean nuclear issue forms a serious threat to global security as well as to the security of Northeast Asia. Since a nuclear test was conducted by North Korea in October 2006, regional tension has increased. Although the United Nations Security Council applied some sanctions after the 2006 nuclear test, Pyongyang conducted a second nuclear weapons test in 2009, drawing more international condemnation and UN sanctions. North Korea walked out of the six-party talks in 2009 amid international criticism of its long-range rocket launch. The future of the six-party talks is not promising. Pyongyang has not responded favorably to either the "sticks" of UN resolutions sanctioning North Korea nor the "carrots" promised through the six-party talks. After more than

six years of long negotiations, the talks have not been held since 2008. Now it is time to reconsider the talks themselves and find a way to restart them. Faithful implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1718 and 1874 could give the North an incentive to go back to the six-party talks.

The United States is not only interested in resolving the North Korean nuclear threat. It is also interested in the human rights situation in North Korea, which President Obama (2010) regards as a country that enslaves its own people:

> Human rights have never gone unchallenged—not in any of our nations, and not in our world. Tyranny is still with us . . . a North Korean regime that enslaves its own people.

Meanwhile, North Korea describes the United States as the main source of threats against the North, according to Russian Korea specialist Aleksandr Zhebin (2010) who opines:

> Until now, the U.S. and allied military presence in the region was justified by the Soviet threat . . . the U.S. is not going to give up their military alliances established during the "cold war". Now it is very convenient to have a "bad guy" in Pyongyang that can be used as a scapegoat for everything.

This argument of blaming the United States, however, does not justify North Korea's aggressive actions against the South. Pyongyang's provocations have seriously fractured North-South relations, including economic and humanitarian exchanges. North Korea's behavior has also degraded U.S. interest in providing international aid.

North Korea's continuing nuclear, conventional, and unconventional threats have all been interrelated. With respect to terrorism, the United States (Manyin 2010, 1–2) made it clear that the sinking of the *Cheonan* was a military action, not an act of terrorism:

> On June 28, 2010, State Department spokesman Philip Crowley said that the Department had determined that while the *Cheonan*'s sinking was a violation of the 1953 armistice agreement . . . it was not an act of international terrorism because it was "taken by the military or the state against the military of another state." Therefore, Crowley said, the sinking "by itself would not trigger placing North Korea on the state sponsor of terrorism list."

Unlike North Korea, South Korea maintains favorable relations with all three countries: China, Russia, and the United States. China and Russia, regardless of their long-standing support for the security of North Korea, are not going to jeopardize their cooperative and strategic partnership relations with South Korea. The three countries were able to contain the problems caused by North Korea's aggression within the peninsula, albeit occasionally at South Korean expense.

South Korea's response included emphasizing the ROK-U.S. alliance. South Koreans did not respond with military force, a rapid increase in the country's defense budget, or other necessary measures within the South Korean military structure. Nor did Seoul try to build support for its approach among the Chinese and Russian publics, even though South Korea had diplomatic relations with both countries for nearly 20 years.

The *Cheonan* incident of 26 March 2010 was a failure to deter North Korean aggression. However, China and Russia did succeed in containing the consequences to the Korean peninsula. Russia's position can be seen in the following two reports, the first in *JoongAng Daily* (Bae 2010):

> Russia was the only country to send its own team of specialists to Korea to investigate the Cheonan incident. . . . Three months have passed since then, but the Russian government has yet to make the results of its investigation public. . . . The *New York Times* featured an article by Donald Gregg, former U.S. ambassador to Korea, who wrote, "One problem . . . is that not everybody agrees that the Cheonan was sunk by North Korea," and cited words from a "well-placed Russian friend."

And in a second report (Ahn 2010) Russia took the following measure in an effort to maintain a neutral position:

> the country's investigation into the March sinking of the South Korean warship *Cheonan* is intended as internal information for the Kremlin and has never been shared with other nations. . . . Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that the report was created to inform Russian leaders and not to be publicized. . . . He also said it is important to focus on the future to prevent military and political tensions on the Korean Peninsula from heightening further.

The *Cheonan* incident reminds us that the Korean War remains an ongoing ("limited") war to the surrounding powers. In 1950, the former Soviet Union,

China, and the United States were able to keep the Korean conflicts inside the Korean peninsula, preventing them from exploding outward. This year's *Cheonan* incident was kept within the peninsula, with the exception of a United Nations Security Council statement criticizing the attack.

Trilateral Cooperation for the Security of Korea

The security environment of Korea does not seem to be stable nor its future bright when we think about the *Cheonan* incident and other challenges. The failure of the Geneva Agreement, six-party talks, and UN sanctions suggest that North Korea will not give up its nuclear ambitions. Complicating the situation is the North Korean leadership transition. Paul Chamberlin (2010, 1–3) wrote:

> The *Cheonan* sinking is one more "hot" incident in the ongoing Korean War. It was not the first instance of North Korean aggression and it won't be the last. . . . Pyongyang's aggression . . . may become more intense if the ruling Kim regime regards its nuclear arsenal as sufficient insurance to permit other provocations.

Fortunately, however, all-out (hot) war in Korea is not likely. Despite the high tension, the chances of renewed large-scale military combat are limited. Both North and South Korea see the prospect of all-out war as mutually assured destruction. Given the risk of miscalculation, however, a resumption of all-out war would devastate the Korean peninsula.

None of the three powers—Russia, China, or the United States—is uninterested in the rapid changes in the Korean peninsula. Preserving the status quo may be the best option for them as well as the two Koreas in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, containing North Korea's military provocations vis-à-vis the South should be seriously taken into consideration by the surrounding powers.

But the possibility of North Korea's aggression persists, and South Korea should be prepared. The United States, Russia, and China could reach an agreement in terms of desirable North Korean–South Korean relations. They have different interests, but they all prefer the status quo and economic interests rather than military gains. They prefer the status quo and do not want to see the collapse of the North Korean regime. For instance (Wanandi 2010),

> It is in their national interest not to let North Korea collapse. Not only because they are going to face thousands of refugees, if that happens, but also of preventing a united Korea allied with the

> U.S. along their border. On the other hand, China, as a big country and economy in East Asia, has an obligation to the region and the world to keep North Korea under control and to stop behaving like a "rogue" country.

Russia as well as China prefers a divided Korea to a unified one, for it could become a more assertive nation after achieving unification.

Emphasis on observing the armistice agreement through the joint efforts of the United States and China will also help to reduce the North Korean threat. On 23 July 2010, the permanent representative of the United States to the United Nations submitted a special report (prepared by the United Nations Command [UN 2010]) to the president of the Security Council on the special investigation of the sinking of the *Cheonan:*

> In its recommendations, the U.S. requested the Chinese People's Volunteers to return to the MAC [Military Armistice Commission] in order to facilitate the MAC's settlement through negotiation of these violations of the KPA.

Six-party talks need to be resumed soon. For its success and the eventual termination of North Korea's nuclear ambition, China and Russia should accept a bigger role (DOS 2010):

> The United States looks to Beijing to use its unique position with Pyongyang to convince North Korea to cease its provocative behavior and to ensure that it implements fully its commitments under the September 2005 Statement of Principles.

The success of the talks depends on coordination among the parties involved, especially between China and the United States. In 2010, U.S.-China friction could have hurt the future of the talks. On 7 September 2009, Yen Xietung, director of the Institute of International Studies, Tsinghua University, gave a keynote speech at the JoongAng Global Forum held in Seoul, which focused on China's role in the prosperity of Northeast Asia. Director Yen (2010) said:

> China-U.S. security conflicts will become intensive in the next two years. . . . As the Pentagon becomes more suspicious of Chinese military modernization, Obama's policy toward China will become tougher for the sake of winning support from the Pentagon. In the

> next two years, China and the U.S. will witness more conflicting interests rather than common interests in security fields.

Further, he warned that,

> most East Asian countries worry about China-U.S. joint domination in region security and want to keep the advantage of China-U.S. security conflicts for the sake of advancing their political or security interests. In the foreseeable future, most East Asia countries will prefer to see a conflicting, rather than a cooperative, relationship between China and the U.S.

The "Joint Investigation Report: On the Attack against ROK Ship *Cheonan,*" was published in both Korean and English, and it has been distributed to the press, domestic and foreign academic groups, and research institutions. It is also accessible on the Internet and sold to the general public (MND 2010b). The report confirms that the sinking of the *Cheonan* was the result of North Korea's military forces' deliberate and premeditated action. The Russian media report that China has taken a more cautious position (Madsen 2010):

> Beijing suspects there was greater deception at work . . . the Chinese are very suspicious of the US' intentions in richening things up in the Korean peninsula.

China still takes the side of North Korea; therefore, the Korean government should be able to reach and explain the situation to the Chinese people.

Implications for South Korean Security Planning

The interests and policies of the United States, Russia, and China as well as the ROK-U.S. alliance have helped prevent the resumption of hot war on the Korean peninsula. However, the preference of these surrounding powers for maintaining the status quo of two Koreas is a matter of concern for Koreans who believe that "tomorrow's Northeast Asia" should include a peacefully unified Korea. In the near term, the inability of these surrounding powers to prevent North Korea from its ongoing acts of aggression against South Korea has important implications for South Korean security planning.

Containment and deterrence of North Korea's intimidation and military threat should be South Korea's top defense priority. The peaceful unification of a democratic, non-nuclear Korea will follow as a long-term objective, as Paul

Chamberlin explained. It will take time for North Korea to give up its intimidation-and-threat strategy to pressure the South into providing food aid and other concessions. The strong U.S.-Korea alliance could shorten the waiting time for a fundamental shift in North Korea's survival strategy.

The clear objectives of Korea's military posture should be demonstrated to Russian and Chinese military personnel as well as security experts of those countries. Their understanding of Korea's benign security interests will help form public opinion in their countries that neither South Korea nor a future unified Korea has or will have any intention of using military means against them. Military provocations by the North should be condemned not only in the United States but also among the Russian and Chinese publics. More active and aggressive public diplomacy aimed toward the Russian and Chinese younger generations is especially needed, with the Internet and news media providing good ways to reach them. Increasing numbers of tourists from Russia and China to Korea will also provide the South with opportunities to show them the sharp contrast between the North and South. Most of them are peace-loving people who should support the efforts of the Korean government to achieve peace, stability, and prosperity on the Korean peninsula.

As a result of the attack on the *Cheonan,* the South Korean navy has to postpone its ambition of expanding its area of operations to the blue ocean. Now the navy will focus on nearby waters, mainly defending the South from North Korea's naval provocations. The South Korean navy will be stuck in Korean waters for some time until the North releases its hold on Korean security. This will reduce the navy's ability to help protect important sea-lanes of communication and help achieve other national interests abroad.

When South Korea becomes one of the economic superpowers, around 2050, as one report predicts, North Korea could still remain a liability because of expected high unification costs. Unless South Korea sets itself free from the hostage relationship with the North per the "special relationship" described in the 1991 North-South Basic Agreement, for example, North Korea will not give up its intimidating threat capabilities. With support from pro–North Korean groups in South Korea, the North will be able to maintain the security of its regime. Such a fragile security and quasi peace is likely to dominate the Korean peninsula for some time.

South Korea has been completely defensive in the face of North Korea's offense. For example, when the possibility of using a strong and immediate response to the *Cheonan* sinking was discussed at the very beginning of the incident, many

South Koreans reacted by saying, "Do you want a war?" That was a typical example of the rich man's dilemma. If there is a dispute between a rich man and a beggar, the rich man fears losing everything he has, while the beggar will lose nothing because he has nothing to lose in the first place. That is why the rich person needs to decide how to negotiate with this beggar. He will wonder which option will cost him less money and energy in dealing with the poor man. He will end up giving the beggar some money in exchange for not causing trouble in front of other people. That is the beggar's tactic of intimidating the rich man. Likewise, many South Koreans fear losing their fortunes and lives if a war breaks out. The fear of war makes South Korea vulnerable to the North Korean threat.

To respond to North Korea's future provocations, South Korea should do the following: First, South Korea together with the United States should be ready to respond immediately based on the stronger ROK-U.S. alliance. Second, support the resumption of six-party talks. Third, seek support from Russia and China, not only from their respective governments but also from their general publics. And, fourth, to augment active duty military forces, South Korea should establish a new defense structure—the Korean National Guard—with U.S. support.

It could be interpreted that the prospect of the six-party talks is not bright, because of the possible disagreement between China and the United States. Moreover, the succession process in North Korea will have significant impact on the conclusion of the talks. Many of South Korea's observers expect that the North will be maintaining a firm stance regarding nuclear weapons. The North will insist on being treated as a nuclear state (JAD 2010a):

> North Korea vowed Wednesday to strengthen its nuclear weapons stockpile in order to deter a U.S. and South Korean military buildup in the region. . . . Speaking before the United Nations Wednesday, North Korea's Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Pak Kil Yon said Pyongyang is, however, ready to join nuclear nonproliferation efforts in its capacity as a nuclear weapon state. . . . "As a responsible nuclear weapons state, we are willing to join in the international efforts for nuclear nonproliferation and safe management of nuclear material on an equal footing with other nuclear weapon states," he said. . . . He did say a nuclear-weapon-free Korean peninsula would be achieved only if external nuclear threats are eliminated, a reference to the U.S. presence in South Korea.

Public diplomacy toward Russia and China can help to share common values with the ordinary people in both countries opposing North Korea's possession of nuclear arms and opposing military or civilian casualties caused by armed conflicts or other noncombatant actions. Chinese and Russian people favor peace and prosperity. South Korea needs to talk directly to the Chinese and Russian people.

China still takes the side of North Korea; therefore, the Korean government should be able to reach and explain the situation to the Chinese people. The *Cheonan* report needs to be published in Chinese (and in Russian as well). Most of the ordinary Chinese people have no access to the Korean or English version of the report. This report, written in Chinese, should be accessible to the Chinese audience through the Internet. Making a documentary film based on the report should be considered before the public forgets the *Cheonan.*

Public diplomacy should also be aimed at Chinese and Russian tourists to South Korea. This would be but one reason for building a *Cheonan* memorial in the near future. Korea's minister of defense, Kim Tae-young, said that the military is planning to work on establishing such a preservation project along with the Second Fleet's security exhibit hall by June 2011 (MND 2010a):

> . . . the exhibit hall is planning to have a hall introducing the Northern Limit Line, a de facto maritime border between South and North Korea, established on the first floor and displaying investigative materials of the sinking of *Cheonan* by the joint civil-military probe team on the second floor.

The author proposes a memorial near the site of the sinking of the *Cheonan* similar to the USS *Arizona* Memorial in Hawaii. We could show it to Chinese and Russian tourists as well. A *Cheonan* Memorial in the Yellow Sea would serve as the permanent resting place for the 46 sailors.

Economic interests over gains from intimidation should be emphasized to the people of Russia and China, too. For instance, the trade volume between Russia and South Korea will show the Russian people why stability and economic prosperity are desirable on the Korean peninsula (JAD 2010b):

> Trade volume, which stood at just $190 million in 1992, grew to almost $10 billion last year, an impressive 52-fold increase. Both tourism and travel have also increased sharply between the countries.

A Korean National Guard should be established. This new defense structure would help mobilize the South Korean people as they face North Korean provocations. The primary purpose of the Korean National Guard would be to bring together volunteers after they successfully complete their military duties through the draft system. The U.S. National Guard could be the model, and the United States could provide technical assistance to the South Koreans. Russia and China would not need to be alarmed about this reserve organization for its nature would be genuinely for defense, and it would be mobilized only in the face of a national security crisis or natural disaster.

Establishment of peacekeeping forces in Northeast Asia under the United Nations Security Council could also be an option. An international peacekeeping academy could also be established on the Korean peninsula, possibly near the Demilitarized Zone and the Yellow Sea. Students and soldiers from the six-party-talks states as well as other countries that are interested in the peace and security of the Korean peninsula could come to Korea for study and military training. North Korea would benefit from the peacekeeping academy and peacekeeping forces as well.

Conclusions

For the past two decades, there have been no significant military clashes among the United States, Russia, and China in Northeast Asia. When it comes to the issue of the Korean peninsula, these three surrounding powers contained inter-Korean military conflicts to the Korean peninsula. No localized conflict has escalated further into a regional conflict.

In the near future, North Korea does not seem to have any intention or interest in giving up its nuclear ambitions, and the threat from the North will continue. Further, a North Korea armed with nuclear weapons could become more aggressive and it could become harder to contain clashes between the two Koreas inside the peninsula. That's one more reason why the United States, Russia, and China should work toward a non-nuclear Korean peninsula.

Future North Korean provocations are likely to feature conventional weapons backed up by Pyongyang's nuclear arsenal to deter a U.S. response against the North. Overall, there is a possibility of more military challenges from the North and a more unstable situation on the Korean peninsula, especially during the succession period in North Korea.

For the security of Korea and to reduce the chances of North Korean military provocations and possible clashes between the two Koreas:

- First, the six-party talks should be resumed soon. A stronger security commitment from the United States, including nuclear and conventional protection, should give the Korean public confidence in the country's security. However, the future of the six-party talks is a challenge because North Korea might take advantage of a U.S.-China confrontation not directly related to the issues of the peninsula. Territorial disputes in Northeast Asia could develop into another destabilizing factor among other Korean problems. The six-party talks is a good forum for the participants to gain understanding of ongoing developments and coordinate responses.

- Second, public diplomacy toward China and Russia is necessary in order to share common values with their people. Reminding China and Russia of their economic interests regarding South Korea (vis-à-vis the North) should enhance their support for strategies to achieve peace and prosperity on the Korean peninsula.

- Third, the introduction of a Korean National Guard modeled on the U.S. setup needs to be considered. And a peacekeeping (forces) academy in Korea could bring cadets from all countries participating in the six-party talks.

Peacemaking efforts by both Koreas could be developed into the peaceful unification of the divided Korean peninsula. It will take time, perhaps more than 60 years. Reunification of Korea could also come unexpectedly, as was seen in Germany, and this envisioned end-state must be considered the ultimate future of Northeast Asia. History also shows that the Koreans are exceptionally strong when they face hard times. Living on a violence-free peninsula is the start of peaceful coexistence and eventual reunification.

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