

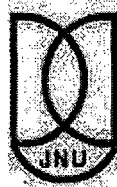
US-SOUTH KOREAN SECURITY RELATIONS,

2000-2008

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfilment of
the requirement for the award of

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KENEISENUO SOLO



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SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110067

Date: 28th July 2010

DECLARATION

I declare the dissertation entitled "US-South Korean Security Relations, 2000-2008", submitted by me in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any degree of this University or any other University.

Keneisenuo Solo

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra

(Chairperson)

Centre of Canadian, United States
and Latin American Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University

Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra

(Supervisor)



CHAIRPERSON
Centre for Canadian, US &
Latin American Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABM- Anti-Ballistic Missile

CIA-Central Intelligence Agency

CPVA-Chinese People's Volunteer Army

DoD-Department of Defense

DMZ-Demilitarized Zone

GNP-Gross National Product

IMF-International Monetary Fund

KEDO- Korean Peninsula Development Organization

LWR-Light Water Reactor

MAP-Military Assistance Program

NATO-North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NPT- Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty

PRC- People's Republic of China

ROC- Republic of China

ROK- Republic of Korea

US/USA- United States /United States of America

USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

PREFACE

The United-States and South Korea Relations

The United States of America, the most powerful nation of the world is also the most important player in international relations. Over the years, many scholars have contributed to the existing knowledge on the studies of the United States. For its role as the leader of the world, it is most looked up to by nations and also most criticized. The United States maintains many alliances and these alliances are one of the basic elements behind the American foreign policies. Change is inevitable in international relations and likewise the foreign policies of the United States also keep changing according to the need of the hour and according to the American interests.

Change is indeed the keyword to describe the current status of the United States and South Korea alliance. The United States wields enormous influence in South Korea and South Korea is also an important strategic partner of the United States. A major transformation has taken place in South Korea where the trend is shifting from the traditional anti-communist and pro-US approach to a more assertive Korean identity. These changes in the domestic politics of South Korea are having its effect on the US-South Korean alliance. Since the end of the Second World War, the security of South Korea, especially since North Korean invasion over the South has been dependent on the actions of the United States, whose chief interest was to block communist expansion in various parts of the world and also to maintain stability in Northeast Asia. The close military relationship between the two countries is a direct result of this strategic consideration.

The security of the US interests and the interest of its allies in the Northeast Asian region depends a lot on the peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula. South Korean security becomes imperative to the American interests in the region. The foundation of the alliance is based on the security of South Korea as a nation and security of the US

China's official name is People's Republic of China. Republic of China is the official name of Taiwan.

security interests in South Korea and in the region on the whole. This study will analyse the role of North Korea and China and their impact on the alliance.

Significance of the Study

This topic has been chosen keeping in mind the need for security and stability of the United States' security interests in South Korea keeping in mind the volatile situation of the region. The US security interests with regard to economic, political and military interests on foreign soil has been a major topic for debate and discussion and with regard to Northeast Asia, the United States have a major chunk of its foreign reserves and earnings in the region. It is also a region of great importance and interest to the US as it has two of its most important allies, Japan and South Korea, one rogue nation namely North Korea and its biggest rival and competitor in the world, the Republic of China. It is in this context that the issue of the US-South Korea security alliance gain prominence.

Unpardonable mistake

The study assumes significance as the security relations between the US and South Korea is directly related to the US security interests in the region not forgetting the security interests of the entire region. The military deployment of the American troops on foreign soil is a serious concern for the Americans and their commitment to security and stability as the world leader is always under the international scanner. The role that the US had played in South Korean security in the past is now facing new challenges. It is very important for scholars of American studies to understand the role that US plays in South Korea in order to understand the American commitment to its allies. With the emerging role of China in international relations, there is a threat that the Chinese may take over as the more dominant and influential partner, a position that the US have been enjoying for a long time. The study and analysis of this interesting change and its impact on the US – South Korea alliance will further help scholars of American studies to understand the US better in its commitment to its allies and also in way of dealing with its main rival and competitor namely China.

The Chapters in this Dissertation

For the purpose of studying the security alliance of the United States and South Korea, this study has been divided on the basis of change and continuity in the relations since the beginning of their security alliance. The main factors influencing the alliance like the communist threat, the nuclear threat of North Korea, the Mutual Defense Treaty, the deployment of US troops on South Korean soil, the China factor and the domestic challenges have been taken into account because of their impact on the security relations. The changes in the policies between the US and South Korea under the Bush administration and the time period from 2000 to 2008 has been chosen as the period to analyze the security relations as this was the time in which the security relations of Washington and Seoul went through a serious phase of challenges and opportunities with regard to threats from North Korea and China. For better understanding and clarity of the United States-South Korea security relations, the study is divided into four main chapters.

The first chapter i.e. "Origin and Evolution" deals with the historic meeting and the progress in the US-South Korea relations and the realization of strategic partnership between the two countries. The initial meeting between the Americans and Koreans were marked with hostility and suspicions due to problems in understanding and communicating with each other. The Korean Peninsula was not of much importance to the United States at the start of their relationship. I have made an attempt to understand how the relationship changed from a normal to a strategic relation. The developments prior to strategic relations are traced historically in this chapter. In this context, the Japanese annexation of Korea, the Cold War era and the Post-Cold War era, the division of the Korean Peninsula has been dealt with. With the division of the Korean Peninsula into North Korea under the communist Soviet influence and South Korea under the capitalist United States and the attack on South Korea by North Korea in 1950, the security relations between the United States and South Korea took a strategic turn. Security became very imperative to their relations. The United States' interests in South

Korea began to take a serious turn only after the North Korean attack in 1950. Prior to the Korean conflict, South Korea was not important in the United States foreign policy.

Chapter 1 also traces the commitment of the United States towards South Korea in terms of security. It emphasizes the importance and significance of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the two nations in 1953. It affirms the role of the United States as the superpower of the world after the post-Cold War era and the role that it was gearing up to play, that of a world leader. The role of the United States in the security of its ally South Korea was closely watched and observed by other nations of the world taking it as an example of the US' commitment to her allies. It also gives insight to the trajectory that the alliance had followed since its inception. The basic interest of both the countries in the alliance was security- security of its territory and people for South Korea and security of its interests in the region in the case of the US.

Chapter 2, "The North Korean and Chinese Factors in the US-South Korea Alliance" looks at the role and influence of the two nations, North Korea and China on the US-South Korean alliance. It examines the role of North Korea in the first part of the chapter by looking at the threat that it implies to the security factor in the alliance. North Korea's nuclear programmes have cast a shadow of uncertainty and insecurity in South Korea which also poses a threat to the American interests in South Korea. The United States is also aware that the security of South Korea is pertinent to the security of the American interests in the entire region. The US role in protecting South Korea is directly related to the maintenance of its status quo in Northeast Asian region. This chapter also deals with the North Korean aim of persuading the US to withdraw their troops from South Korea. It gives light to the attempts that the 'Sunshine Policy' of South Korea has made with regard to engaging the North Korea and the response of the US under Bush administration that undermine the peace and engagement process initiated by the South Korean government .

The Chinese factor was also taken into account in determining the alliance. The United States and China are global competitors and their efforts to ousting each other's influence in South Korea have also been stressed in this chapter. Although South Korea has followed the footsteps of the United States in establishing political and economic ties with China, both Washington and Seoul have anxiously watched the rise of Beijing as a global power. The uncertainty over the future role of China in the region in the backdrop of China's close ties with North Korea and assertive policies in South China Sea appeared to have provided additional reasons for close ties between South Korea and United States. But at the same time, the growing closeness between Seoul and Beijing is of grave concern to Washington as it could take away the comfortable and dominant position that Washington has enjoyed in the past.

The rise of China in the international scene has created a rift in the US-South Korea alliance and both the nations in the alliance are affected by it. China has become indispensable to them and is soon emerging as the main threat to the alliance. The role that China can play in subduing the North Korean nuclear threat is acknowledged by both South Korea and the United States. The Chinese has played a leading role in maintaining security in the region with regard to handling the North Korean threat. This chapter emphasizes the fact that China is the primary rationale for the US policies towards South Korea.

Chapter 3, "George W. Bush's Administration and South Korea", examines the security perspective on the US-South Korea alliance during the tenure of American President George W. Bush. On the South Korean side, this period falls under the administration of President Kim Dae Jung and President Roh Moo-hyun. It emphasizes the unilateral and hawkish policies of the Bush administration towards rogue nations after the terrorist attack on the US on September 11, 2001 and how it affected the security of South Korea and thereby undermined the position of the US as the leader in maintaining peace and

security in South Korea. This chapter looks at the challenges and opportunities that the Bush administration faced with both Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo-hyun's presidency.

George Bush's apparent dislike for the North Korean regime and his cold shoulder towards President Kim Dae Jung's "Sunshine Policy" created a situation in which North Korea had to turn to the only resort that gave them a place at the negotiating table, its nuclear programmes. Though the "Sunshine Policy" got South Korean President Kim Dae Jung the Nobel Peace Prize, in effect it was not as successful as perceived. The Bush administration's cold attitude towards the policy was one of the main reasons for the ineffectiveness of the policy to reach its desired goal. The administration of Roh Moo-hyun which carried on the "Sunshine Policy" is also discussed. The United States is the most dominant and influential country in South Korea and they became even more important to South Korea with the signing of the Free Trade Agreement during Roh's administration. However, the emergence of China as a strategic power has caused friction in the US-South Korea alliance.

The China factor in the US-South Korean alliance is dealt with extensively in this chapter. China's rise at the international level has further catapulted its rise in the Northeast Asian region. It now plays a decisive role in the politics of the region and its importance is further enhanced as it is the nation which can influence or persuade the North Korean regime. North Korea's nuclear threat is of grave concern to the US and South Korea. Due to the geographic proximity between China and North Korea, it is also a concern for China. The new role that China has started playing in pursuing peace and stability and its growing closeness with South Korea is becoming a threat to the comfortable position that the US enjoys in the US-South Korea alliance. In this context, the North Korean threat becomes a major gluing factor in the US-South Korea alliance despite of economic and diplomatic relations.

→ Repetitive

The military deployment of the American troops in South Korea is an issue that has garnered much debate and discussion. While one party encourages the withdrawal of the American troops from the South Korean soil, the other opines that the presence of the US troops is still essential for the security of South Korea. The debate continues both on the American side as well as the South Korean side regarding the presence of the US troops in South Korean soil. The main aim of the troops' presence is the security of South Korea and the security of the US interests especially from the North Korean nuclear threat. China, with its position as the ally and benefactor of North Korea becomes very important in the pursuit of peace in the region. Though the United States' position is threatened by this new role of China, they have to acknowledge the role that China can play in pursuing peace and security in the region and thereby sealing the security of both South Korea and the American interests.

Chapter 4, "South Korea's Domestic Challenges to the Presence of the US Troops", discusses the domestic challenges that the US-South Korea alliance faces in South Korea. With South Korea's rapid progress and development, the United States is facing a new kind of aggressive South Korean assertiveness in decision-making. The younger generations of South Koreans are mostly hostile to the US role in influencing their government and are of the opinion that South Korea should take decisions and make policies independent of American influence. In addition to this, instances and incidents involving the US personnel in committing mistakes or harm to the South Koreans are worsening the situation. Anti-Americanism is causing difficulties in the alliance. The American side feels that South Korea has become ungrateful to its long time ally and partner for all that they have done for them whereas the South Korean side feels that they should be more independent of the US pressure and influence in making decisions.

The United States have invested so much in South Korea and any instability and insecurity in the South Korean soil costs them serious loss. The chapter makes an attempt to show us that though the US is aware that China's role in South Korea is inevitable

owing to their close proximity with each other and their growing closeness economically, it is trying to find a way in which their interests will not suffer loss and also the status quo remains. The US realized that it had to either undermine the Chinese position in South Korea or cooperate with China in maintaining the security of South Korea by persuading North Korea to give up its nuclear programmes. It is also aware that it could mean putting China in the forefront in pursuing the desired goals. This showed a tilt toward multilateralism which was not the case in the early part of the Bush administration. The later part of the chapter emphasizes the need to cooperate and engage with China in maintaining and pursuing peace and security of South Korea. It also brings out the importance of China in the pursuit of peace and stability in the region. It could also imply the end of the American hegemonic policies in the Northeast Asian politics best exemplified in the case of the South Korean security.

This chapter also emphasizes the role of China in the domestic sphere of the South Korean society and its impact on the US-South Korea alliance. It also argued that the US had committed itself to the cause of South Korea's security genuinely. However, with the rising status of China in the global order, it seems inevitable for the US-South Korea alliance to be not affected by it. In the later part of the chapter, the position and importance of South Korea in Northeast Asia is highlighted. The profound impact of its security in relation to the security of the region is pointed out. It also brings to our notice the rather awkward and difficult situation that South Korea is placed in. Caught between the United States and China, the two most powerful and influential players in international relations, South Korea is caught in a quagmire where it has to tread carefully in order not to earn the ire of either of the two countries.

The US-South Korea alliance is facing new challenges. Along with the challenges, opportunities have also opened up for them to merge with the changes in international order. The United States have played a very dominant role in South Korea for so many decades and now, with the coming of the China factor in the alliance, they have to adjust

their policies to suit the situation. The concluding part of this study posits that China and not North Korea is the main threat to the US-South Korea alliance. It also offers a suggestion of cooperation among the three countries as an amicable solution so that their differences can be settled and the security relations of the alliance may not be undermined in any way.

Literature Review

Myers, Robert J. (2001) gave a historical explanation about the changes in the Korean Society, emphasizing on the Chinese and the Japanese factors that had played a pivotal role in the shaping of the Korean history. He explained vividly about the rise in the consciousness among the Koreans about their own independence when they were subjected to different and difficult treatment both by the Chinese and the Japanese. He also dealt with the impact of the Cold War in the Northeast Asian politics. His explanation of the methods and life of Kim Dae Jung and the "Sunshine Policy," was very detailed and showed glimpses of the United States' involvement in Korea though not much of it is highlighted. He tried to bring about a better understanding of the conditions and emotional changes that the Koreans went through. On the whole, he tried to lay a strong foundation for the discussion on the reunification process between North Korea and South Korea.

Name of the book ?

Feffer, John (2006) dealt with the issue of the United States and South Korea relations extensively. He also gave emphasis to the North Korea, Japan and the China factors in affecting the relations of the US and South Korea. His book also brought about a brief picture of the US policy towards the Northeast Asia. He emphasized on the issue of the imbalance of power in Korea. The regional asymmetries summed up to the turmoil among the countries and with US, having its interests in the region, played a very crucial role in maintaining the balance for its own interests. With the role of the United States changing in the international relations, the roles of the other countries were also re-examined. There seemed to be a tilt in favour of South Korea throughout the entire book which highlighted the author's stance on the issue. He dealt with the issue of the imbalance of power with regard to the region and gave a clear and lucid picture of the power asymmetry in the region. The United States was highlighted as the main factor in influencing the politics of the countries of the whole of the Northeast Asia owing to its hegemonic background.

Name of the book ?

Kichan, Bae (2007) wrote extensively about the Chinese civilization in the Korean cultural sphere. He brought in a very elaborate and detailed historical picture of Sino-centrism in Korea and also the tussle between China and Japan over Korea. His writing started with the challenges and opportunities in China-Korean relations and moved on to the Japanese annexation of Korea. Moving further he brought to light the issue of the Soviet-American rivalry in the Cold War period and the eventual division of Korea into North Korea and South Korea along the 38th parallel. He wrote about the American hegemony in Korean affairs and the challenges of China and how China was using the strategy of rising peacefully whereas Japan was allying with the United States. In his concluding remarks, he presented the dangerous position that Korea found itself in, involving four great nations namely the United States, China, Japan and Russia and called onto his compatriots to focus on peace and peace building measures and stressed on the importance of a unified Korea and also to make Korea into a wellspring of peace in East Asia.

Name of the book?

Koo, Youngnok and Suh, Dae-Sook (1984) offered an elaborate spread on US-Korean relations with noted academicians bringing out different viewpoints on the issue. They tried to bring out both the American as well as the Korean perspectives of each other. They also emphasized on the Chinese, the Soviet Union and the Japanese factors in their relations. A considerable portion of the book had dealt with the US-Korean economic relations. The impact of American-Korean relations was also featured. The last part of the book dealt with reflections on the changes that the relations between the two countries had brought about. Koo stated that the Korean-American relations needed to base itself on different interests other than Korea's immediate security requirements.

Name of the book?

Chung, Jae Ho (2001) brought out the rather difficult position of South Korea in terms of maintaining friendly relations with China and the United States. On the one hand, he brought out the importance of China in the strategic calculations of South Korea and on

the other hand, he also pointed out how South Korea had to maintain the friendly and mutually beneficial relationship with the US. He wrote about of four factors contributing to Seoul's dilemma, the first being Seoul's closeness to the US than it wished to be. Second was that Korea's perception of China were highly favourable even though the genuine intentions of the latter was unclear. The third factor was that the Washington-Beijing relationship evolved independently of Seoul. And finally, regardless of the three factors, Seoul has to find a middle ground between Washington and Beijing. He attested to the fact that the 'rise of China' had been both real and concrete in economic, military, diplomatic, cultural and perceptual terms. Adding to this, he brought forward the question of Japan. South Korea and China shared similar perception about Japan and to Seoul, the 'rise of China' could be more acceptable than a resurgent Japan. He stated that the history appears to repeat itself for Korea as an unfortunate geopolitical pawn of its stronger neighbours.

Name of the book?

Harrison, Selig S. (2001) examined not only the relations between Pyongyang and Seoul but between Pyongyang and Washington. He also dealt with the military tensions at the 38th Parallel. This issue involved the US directly because of its 37,000 military personnel and 100 late model combat aircrafts stationed in Korea, together with its 'nuclear umbrella' over the South, tilt the North-South military balance in favour of Seoul. He stated that the American policy was based on the assumption that North Korea's economic difficulties will eventually force it to make unilateral military concessions. He pointed out that the American Policy ignored the two factors; the depth of the Pyongyang-US focused security concerns and its limited but significant economic progress since the famine of 1995-1996. He also stressed on the view that the North-South cooperation will depend to a great extent on whether the United States and Japan normalize relations with the North and encourage financial institutions to support its reconstruction.

Name of the book?

Cha, Victor D. (2002) commented on President Bush's speech regarding the inclusion of North Korea in the 'Axis of evil.' He said that given a required time, the critics of the speech and the general public might realize how well-suited this strategy was to the complex realities of North Korea. The 'Hawk Engagement' stood apart from South Korea's 'Sunshine Policy.' He brought about a clear distinction between these two policies and also stressed on humanitarian aid that could help prepare Korean unification by winning over the hearts and minds of the Northerners. Engagement and aid conveyed a more compassionate image of the Americans and the South Koreans. He was of the view that the hawkish model offered more than just short-term policies and how it presumed a distinct view of how developments in Korea could best suit American interests, both unification and beyond. Hawk engagement sought to complement the current Korean policy. It also becomes crucial, for the hawks to establish a stronger relation between US' main Asian allies, South Korea and Japan, and to consolidate the trilateral Washington-Tokyo-Seoul relationship.

Name of the book?

Cha, Victor D. (2009) said that North Korea's latest provocation could no longer be rationalized as an attempt to engage the US. For him, the simplest explanation for North Korean actions was the desire to improve their nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. He went on further to question what more the North Korean leader Kim Jong-il might want. This logic lead many to argue that Pyongyang seek nuclear weapons only for lack of a better deal out there offering food, energy and a new relationship with the international community. The problem was that he had been offered the deal twice. It was no wonder that the members of the Obama administration had stated their disinterest in buying the same horse three times. Obama had positioned the US well, both for a negotiation and sanctions track. According to him, the talks will never achieve what Washington or Pyongyang wants but if ever resume it will serve as a way to manage the problem, contain the proliferation threat and run out the clock in the regime.

Name of the book?

Heo, Uk and Hyun, Chong-Min (2003), brought out an analysis of South Korea's 'Sunshine' policy towards North Korea. They wrote that the core of the Sunshine Policy was to bring out North Korea out of isolation and integrating it into world politics. The Sunshine policy had the support of the Clinton administration but with the Bush administration, the picture changed. The Bush administration had employed a hard-line policy toward North Korea, emphasizing reciprocity between aid and nuclear and long-range missile development. This change led the South Korean government to be concerned about political discord between the US and South Korea with respect to North Korea policy. The writers made an attempt the inter-Korean relationship through simple game theory. They said that though South Korea and North Korea had common as well as conflicting interests, the main problem of their relationship was that they do not trust each other and both wanted to maximize security. However, due to its better economy, Seoul felt comfortable enough to pursue a peaceful strategy such as the 'Sunshine' policy. They brought out the impact of Bush's North Korea policy on the "Sunshine" policy. They wrote that Seoul should play mediator role in the Washington-Pyongyang relations. Their analysis ended on the note that Seoul need to form a new cooperative framework with Washington in approaching North Korea.

Name of the book?

Carter, K. Holly Maze (1989), wrote on the US Foreign Policy in the East Asian region. She brought out the importance of the East Asian region to the US national interests in economic, military and political perspectives. Her book examined the components of foreign policy formation in the United States and made an attempt to explain the influences of global and national issues on foreign policy. She brought out the fact of how the Korean Conflict brought about a thorough reassessment of US Foreign Policy in East Asia. American policy makers, who had been drawn into war in the Pacific only by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, perceived the primary obligation of US Foreign Policy to be containment of communism through military intervention and confrontation after the Korean Conflict. She gave a detailed and vivid explanation of the role and influence of the East Asian countries in the US Foreign Policy making.

Name of the book?

Scalipino, Robert A. (1992) wrote about Korea and the changing international scene after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. He gave a brief analysis of the domestic situation in South and North Korea and their relationship at the international level. He wrote on changes in South Korea's economic and political policies and also South Korea's international reach, summing up the point that South Korea was a nation to reckon on the regional and global scene post Cold War. In contrast, North Korea remained a strongly traditional society. He dealt with the North-South relations extensively in the wake of the new developments in the international scene as well as the changes in their own domestic affairs and its impact on both the Koreas. He wrote about the importance of maintaining relations with the United States and Japan for both the Koreas, especially South Korea. Overall, his writing mainly dealt with changes between North-South relations and also the relations with other countries in the Post-Cold War era. Name of the book?

Lee, Jong-Sup and Heo, Uk (2001) wrote about the issue of defense burden-sharing between the United States and South Korea. They dealt with the two approaches of defense burden-sharing, free-riding model and the bargaining model. They wrote about how the US and South Korea had confronted the defense burden-sharing issue in a very detailed manner and gave a theoretical framework on the issue. They wrote about the bargaining process as the most common way to achieve cooperation among the states. They made a case study of the US- SK alliance using the Revised Bargaining Model. Through this, they claimed to have revisited the free-riding and bargaining models of defense burden-sharing. The economic, military and political factors were taken into account in determining the relationship on the basis of national interests. The relationship of the US and South Korea could be better understood in the context of defense burden-sharing through their writing. Name of the book?

CHAPTER 1

ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION

1.1 Background

The greatest democracy in the world, the United States of America, is undeniably the most important player in international politics. Nowhere in the world do we find a nation like the United States whose actions and policies are so keenly watched by other nations and which is the most influential and powerful international player in global politics. The fact of the matter is that nations may like or dislike the American policies but they cannot ignore them. There was a nation, who declared its independence from the English on the fourth of July, 1776 and after experiencing wars and challenges as well as opportunities both at home and at the international level emerged as the global leader. It covers an area of about 9,826,675 square kilometres with a population of 309 million people. It possesses the world's largest economy and is the world's third largest, both by land area and population. It is one of the most ethnically diverse and multicultural countries of the world comprising an ethnically diverse and multicultural population. It is the melting pot of the people of the world and the land of opportunity and freedom owing to its democratic background.

Although a reluctant participant at the beginning, the United States' entry sealed the fate of the Allied powers in the two World Wars into the winning side. It quickly emerged as the global leader. Its geographical location in which it is isolated from the rest of Europe added to its advantage and helped in making it the leader and also the most powerful nation of the world. At the end of the Second World War, the world went through the Cold War period in which the world was divided into a Communist bloc led by the erstwhile Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United States leading the Capitalist bloc. Both countries tried to limit the influences of each other and at the same

time expand their own ideology to other nations. Both the countries were highly suspicious of each other's motives and actions and the atmosphere was so tense that the world seemed to be on the verge of breaking into another war. The atmosphere was thick with suspicion and mutual distrust. But after the disintegration of the USSR in 1991, the United States became the sole superpower of the world. It commanded the best, most advanced and largest military forces in the world and it got into playing the role of the international policeman by spreading its military to strategically important areas of the world. Since then, the US had been caught up in a constant struggle to maintain its position and to protect its national interests and security in its homeland and all over the world through diplomatic, economic, political and military means.

The Republic of Korea (ROK) or South Korea lies in the southern region of the Korean Peninsula in Northeast Asia. The Peninsula had been invaded and plundered by its stronger neighbours throughout its history. The ROK was liberated from the Japanese rule on August 15, 1945. It has a population of more than 50 million people with an area of 98,480 square kilometres which is slightly larger than Indiana, a state in the United States. It is one of the most ethnically and linguistically homogeneous nation of the world and also known as the "Hermit kingdom," in contrast to the diversity of ethnicity and language in the United States. At the end of the Cold War, the Korean Peninsula found itself divided on political and ideological grounds with North Korea going the communist way under the influence and encouragement of the Soviet Union and the South embracing democracy with the help and support of the United States.

When the North Korean forces attacked the South Korean soil in 1950, the United States, under the aegis of the United Nations came to the support of South Korea and won the conflict. Since then, troops of the US have been stationed in the South Korean soil for its security and defense which continues till today. The US has been instrumental in the rapid development of South Korea through aid and assistance. South Korea started on a journey of economic and political development. The goodwill between the two countries

persists despite the apprehensions and challenges caused from time to time over disagreements and differences on certain issues especially with regard to the security.

The relation between the United States and Northeast Asia presents a very complex and interesting scope for research and study in international politics. Among the relations, the United States-South Korean relations stand out as it continues to be one of the most volatile and complicated one that can change the political, economic and security setting of the whole East Asian region as well as determine the role and future of the United States in the region. South Korea is a nation surrounded by powerful neighbours with a history of being attacked and invaded because of its geographical position, size and weaknesses. There is also a looming threat of nuclear warfare hovering over the whole of the East Asian region. Though stability of some sort has been maintained for a while, it is not a certainty in the Korean Peninsula as it continues to be one of the most disturbed and unpredictable region in the world. The geopolitics of the region involving the neighbouring countries is the key determinant in the policy-making between the two countries paving a line of continuity and change throughout their history. It is in this backdrop that the US-South Korea relation has to be looked at.

1.2 The Beginning of the US-South Korea Security Relations

The United States and Korea started off on a very wrong note based on hostility and misunderstanding. Suspicion and apprehension ruled the roost at the time of the initial contacts. The initial documented encounter between the Americans and the Korean people took place in January 1853, when a “strange-looking ship” came to Yongdangp’o, which is now part of Pusan (Hahm 1984). The early encounters were at the seaside, with the most notable being the incident of the armed American boat, the General Sherman, which ventured into the Taedong River in August 1866. Due to the problem in communicating with each other, the incident led to the killing and slaughtering of the

people on board by the Koreans. The meeting ended in total misunderstanding of each other. The Koreans were highly homogeneous in their social life who were not very welcoming to the Western world. Moreover, they were highly isolationist in their approach at the early part of their contact with the Western world.

In 1871, the US President Ulysses S. Grant and his Secretary of State Hamilton Fish decided to open Korea forcefully. They instructed Frederick F. Low, who served as the US Minister to China and Admiral John Rodgers to negotiate a treaty with Korea. This led to the Low-Rodgers expedition of six ships which attacked the Korean forts in Kanghwa, burned the buildings and houses, and killed the Korean soldiers who tried to resist the unprovoked American attack (Suh 1984). The main interest of the United States was to open ports in Korea for commercial purposes. It was a bloody battle in which many lives were lost on the Korean side and the Americans emerged as the winning party. Though the Americans were victorious, the Koreans were adamant and unwavering in their stand in refusing to conclude a treaty with the Americans.

But Korea was a weak nation and when the stronger neighbours opened up their countries to the United States, it was not long before Korea followed suit. This brings out a fact which is still very pertinent today that the geopolitical position in which Korea is located has always been a main determinant in influencing its decisions in international politics. The first important episode in the American-Korean relations is the signing of the Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation between the United States and Korea on May 22, 1882 at Inchon. It was signed by Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt of the United States and Sin Hon, president of the Royal Cabinet, Korea, and representing two independent and sovereign nations (Ibid). It is popularly known as the Shufeldt Treaty or the Treaty of 1882. The United States did not have any serious interests in Korea as such at the onset. Korea gave no threat to the national security of the United States nor was it a prized location for the US interests. The Americans had not given much importance to Korea and had a nonchalant view regarding the hermit kingdom of the world. Moreover,

the Koreans were entangled in their web of poverty and war with stronger neighbours keen to take control over it and they were of the idea that a treaty with the United States might ensure them security from other nations.

1.3 The US Expansion in Northeast Asia

The United States after gaining independence in 1776 from Britain, developed into one of the most industrialized and advanced nations. After overcoming a civil war, participating in the two World Wars and becoming the leader of the capitalist bloc culminating with the disintegration of the leading country of the communist bloc, the Soviet Union, the United States was on its way to becoming the sole superpower of the world. Owing to the fast and rapid development in its economy and growing population and territory, the United States started asserting an ideology, 'Manifest Destiny', through which they started to expand their influence from the Atlantic board to the Pacific board. From an isolationist mode, the US leaped into an era of expansion and started spreading out to different parts of the world.

The United States was becoming aware of its own position in the world and had started behaving accordingly and in 1901, when Theodore Roosevelt became the President, this idea became more pronounced. He was the first American President who believed that his country was the centre of civilization destined to expand into barbaric realms. The logic of civilization versus barbarism which had persisted for 3000 years in the hegemony system was revived splendidly with the emergence of a powerful new hegemon in the 20th century, and according to Theodore Roosevelt, civilization depended on race and national capability (Kichan 2007). Apart from its security interest, this approach and attitude of Roosevelt was one of the main factors leading to the US allowing the Japanese to rule over Korea. Roosevelt pursued a policy of expansionism from the Atlantic to the Pacific advocating the spread of civilization into the barbaric realms of the world.

(Repetitive)

Through these actions and policies, the United States' role as a global hegemon took flight. ✓

The United States was involved in intervening in the matters of some Latin American countries like Cuba, Haiti and Panama using the Roosevelt Corollary as their reason for doing so. The Roosevelt Corollary is an expansion of the Monroe Doctrine which was aimed at curbing and preventing the European role in the Latin American countries. The US also started pursuing a Northeast Asian policy. In this policy, they advocated the 'Open Door policy', for China to further the US interests. Japan became a very important partner in the East Asia policy of the United States. For a country which is so keen on expansion of their interests, it was not long before the "land of the morning calm" by which Korea is also known fell under its influence.

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The Shufeldt treaty which was signed on May 22, 1882, at Incheon between the United States and Korea (Suh 1984), was an entirely political move on the South Korean side as King Kojong of Korea wanted to use the American influence as a counterweight towards its powerful neighbouring countries namely China, Japan and Russia and bring about a sense of security to Korea. Korea was very weak and poor at that time when compared to its neighbours and always lived in danger of being attacked or annexed. Its geographical position also, in no way helps its cause as it is strategically located between powerful nations. So, they thought that the treaty would in some way protect them and it brought about a sense of security to their position in the region. But as in most cases where the bigger and stronger party's interests becomes more pronounced, the Treaty of 1882 between the United States and Korea was also inclined towards the benefit of the US, the bigger and stronger nation. The fourteen-article treaty granted commercial privileges to the United States, fixed tariffs, extraterritorial jurisdiction and also a clause for the most favoured nation. In return, Korea was assured the good offices and mutual assistance of the United States should any nation unjustly try to oppress it. For the



Americans, their primary interest in Korea at the beginning of the relation was to open it up solely for commercial purposes.

To trace the early trajectory of the US-South Korea security alliance, it becomes imperative to look at the historical aspects of the US expansion in Asia, the Japanese annexation of Korea, the Korean conflict, the impact of the post-Cold War and the division of the Korean Peninsula. This chapter deals with the historical situations that the two nations found themselves in and the evolution of the relations throughout their history.

The United States agreed to let its key partner in Northeast Asia, Japan, to rule over Korea though it had already signed a treaty of peace, amity, Commerce and Navigation in 1882. In this light the Taft-Katsura agreement took place between the United States and Japan in which the United States recognized Japan's sphere of influence in Korea and Japan recognized the United States' influence in the Philippines. Korea, who had depended on the United States for security was let down inconsiderately by this act and history is witness to this act of betrayal.

(Excellent!)

1.4 The Taft-Katsura Memorandum

The American envoys started coming to Korea since the signing of the 1882 Treaty but their attitude was not much to do with equal partnership or cooperation. The cultures, religion, people of the two nations were completely different and both were apprehensive in dealing with each other. It was the amalgamation of two completely different nations who were worlds apart in almost everything. The Americans were interested in promoting and maintaining their commercial interests but quite indifferent to many things that the Koreans face as a nation. They looked at Korea as a commercial base in

Northeast Asia, nothing more. Korea was not important to the US during this period. This is shown in the fact that the United States accepted the Japanese domination of Korea in the Taft-Katsura memorandum on July 29, 1905. The agreement was between the Secretary of War of the United States, William Howard Taft and the Japanese Prime Minister, Katsura Taro.

According to this agreement, the United States approved of Japanese suzerainty in Korea and the Japanese recognized the United States' sphere of influence in the Philippines. There was never a signed agreement or a secret treaty, only a memorandum of a conversation with regard to American-Japanese relations. King Kojong and his officials were under the impression that the American-Korean Treaty of May 1882 was an American guarantee for the security of Korea. Sadly, the Americans proved them wrong with the Taft-Katsura's memorandum of conversation. On November, 1905, the Japanese forced the Korean Emperor to sign the treaty of protection, putting the empire under Japanese protection (Nahm 1982). After this, the relationship between the US and Korea soured and it led to the termination of the Treaty of 1882 and Edwin Morgan, the last American Minister to Korea was ordered to close up the legation in Seoul in November 1905. The annexation of Korea against her will by the Japanese followed in August 1910.

According to Andrew C. Nahm, "Korea fell primarily because of her own weaknesses and inaptitude. But Roosevelt's power politics and his vain hope to establish the open door in Manchuria and maintain the balance of power in East Asia by helping the Japanese contributed directly and indirectly to the growth of aggressiveness in Korea" (Ibid). It was one of the biggest acts of betrayal of the Koreans in the hands of the Americans. The Koreans were left at the mercy of the Japanese by the Americans and this has led to decades of living under the Japanese rule in which the Koreans had really suffered and endured hardships and humiliation and though time has healed the wounds, the scar remains in the pages of the Korean-American history and time and again resurfaces to

haunt the relationship, especially more so when the relationship is going through a rough phase. This is also the biggest bone of contention between the Koreans and the Japanese relations which though now subdued to a certain extent raises concern time and again. And since the Japanese and the South Koreans are allies of the United States, it becomes imperative for the US to bring about better cooperation between the two which becomes very difficult due to the bitter history behind them.

1.5 Japanese Occupation of Korea

Korea was under Japanese rule from August 22, 1910 to August 15, 1945 due to the Taft-Katsura Agreement. During this time the Koreans suffered untold humiliations and hardships at the hands of the Japanese. The Taft-Katsura Agreement was a set of notes in which the US recognized Japan's sphere of influence over Korea and Japan recognized the US sphere of influence in the Philippines in the conversation between United States Secretary of War, William Howard Taft and the Prime Minister of Japan, Katsura Taro. There was never a signed or secret treaty, only a memorandum of conversation. It was this agreement that led to decade of Japanese rule in Korea and the Koreans betrayal at the hands of what they once considered to be a protector of their land. However, there is another explanation for the US total giveaway of Korea to the Japanese. Andrew C. Nahm pointed that it was actually the US using the Japanese to check Russian expansionism in the Far East (Ibid). The Japanese rule ended on September 2, 1945 with the Japanese defeat in World War II.

Japan was one of the first Eastern states to grasp wisely and practically the power and strength of the Western industrialization and the accompanying military technology. One of the many blessings of Japanese awareness of the West was a modern day army and navy and it soon turned these advantages over China and then Russia, both to the disadvantage of Korea (Myers 2001). As stated earlier, Japan was considered to be

“civilized” among the East Asian countries and therefore the United States helped in making it one of the most advanced countries in the world. The Japanese occupation of Korea left a mark in the history of Japanese-Korean relations which still disturb the peace in their relations and also has its impact on their relations with the United States as well. Both the Koreas are still suspicious of Japan’s intentions and vice versa. This is not good in the context of the United States interests and role in Northeast Asia. It becomes very necessary and crucial for the United States to have its allies of Northeast Asia to be in good terms with each other. But the history between Japan and Korea were not easily forgotten by the people of both the countries as it was deeply etched in their memory which caused frictions in the relations. Apprehension and suspicion rule the roost in this situation. However, there were attempts and efforts on both sides to improve and enhance their relations no matter the hurdles and challenges that come along with it. History revisited, the Taft-Katsura agreement is seen as a reminder of the uncertainty and ambiguity of the American promise to the Koreans and the Koreans are indeed careful of their steps in international relations as the saying goes, “Whoever ignores history does so at his own peril.”

1.6 The Cold War Years and the Alliance

After the end of the World War II in 1945, there was a state of political tension and military rivalry between the two most powerful nations in the world, the Soviet Union and the United States for dominance in world politics and fill in the power vacuum. They entered into a phase of Cold War in which both were trying to curtail the influence of each other and also trying to get more allies on their side and were just short of waging a war. The US became the leader of the Capitalist Bloc and the Soviet Union led the Communist Bloc. Nowhere in the history of the world (was) nations divided into two blocs to such an extent as they did in the Cold War. The Korean Peninsula also became a victim of the Cold War politics. In fact, Korea can be called, “The Victim”, as it continues to remind us of this divide till now.

Initially, Korea was divided temporarily at the 38th parallel with Soviet control on the Northern side and the Southern part coming under the United States' control. This however, became permanent and till today, the reality of the two Koreas continues. Korea which was often plundered and destroyed by stronger and bigger nations wars have once again became the victim of powerful nations' enmity. This was the backdrop leading to the Korean conflict through which the relations of the United States and South Korea gained strong ground.

K. Holly Maze Carter pointed out that the Soviet representatives arrived at the 38th parallel in August 1945, by way of Manchuria while the United States came to the Southern side a little over a month after the Soviets because they were involved in planning the occupation of Japan and the implementation of the Marshall Plan for war-torn Europe. It became clear from the month long delay that the Truman administration was not concern about the Soviet interests in the Korean peninsula (Carter 1989). The established US military policy prior to the outbreak of the Korean War was that the US had little strategic interests in maintaining in maintaining troops and bases in the Korean Peninsula (Kwak 1982). The United States and the Soviet Union could not bring about unification of the Korean peninsula after dividing it temporarily as the reality of the Cold War seeped into a fight for strategic influence in the world.

The United States took the case of the problem of unification to the newly formed United Nations which passed a resolution for nationwide elections in the Korean Peninsula under the UN supervision in 1947. The North Korean leader, Kim II Sung refused to participate in it. On May 10, 1948, elections under the supervision of the UN were held on the Southern side of the Peninsula. Syngman Rhee was elected as the president of the newly formed Republic Of Korea. South Korea under the influence of the US, adopted a constitution modelled after the United States, with democracy as its base. The North side

was not left behind. With the support of the Soviet Union, on August 25, 1948 elections were held and Kim Il Sung was declared the Prime Minister of the new Democratic People's Republic of Korea. After this, the divide on the 38th parallel became even more pronounced.

The United Nations General Assembly, under pressure from the United States, passed another resolution on December 12, 1948 declaring that the government of the Republic Of Korea had been duly elected and was "the only lawful government in Korea" (Ibid). Owing to this declaration, many countries led by the United States formally recognized the Republic Of Korea. However, reality presents a different picture. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea still exists and also creates news over its development in nuclear technology as well as in the area of human rights. It became very militaristic in character and has dynastic rule of the Kim Il Sung family. Most of its focus is on developing its military strength and it plays the nuclear card well enough to make its opponents listen to it at the bargaining table.

Without thinking of the long-term strategic implications of their actions, the United States decided to withdraw their troops in 1949. The United States were neither eager nor willing to make any military commitment to the Republic of Korea and had not given enough forces to protect it. The withdrawal was considered necessary and appropriate with regard to shortage of manpower and also the strategic insignificance of the Korean Peninsula in the American eye at that time. South Korea was not a strategic partner then and the US thought of it as unimportant and therefore removed their troops from the Korean soil. The Americans were not aware of the implications the withdrawal of the troops will have on the opponents up North. The North Korean leadership assumed that the Americans have abandoned South Korea and that it was the proper time to launch an attack and bring the whole of the Korean peninsula under the communist wave and also in the process, bring about unification of the two Koreas.

The reality of the situation at that time was that the United States was building its image as a world leader and global power. They were keen to prove their point that they were the emerging world leader. Though they made a mistake of not thinking about the strategic implications of their action in leaving Korea, fortunately for them, the Korean conflict turned out to be an opportunity for them to prove themselves as the world leader and as a nation which will stand up and protect its allies. They knew that the whole of the Northeast Asian communities were closely watching the steps and actions that they would take in the rescue of South Korea and how they will protect their ally. The US leadership was wise enough to understand the significance of saving South Korea. Here, the domino theory also became applicable. The domino theory is the theory in which the US believed that if one of the Asian countries fall under the communist influence, then the whole region will fall like a row of dominoes. South Korea thus became strategically very important to the American foreign policy.

1.7 The US and South Korea in the Korean Conflict

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After the surrender of Japan in the World War II, the Soviet Union and the United States divided the Korean Peninsula temporarily at the thirty-eighth parallel with the former's presence above the parallel and the latter, below. With the beginning of the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union, this division became permanent (Spanier 1988). As stated earlier, the Korean Peninsula was not of much importance in the foreign policy of the United States until the Cold War. With the victory of the Allied powers led by the United States, the World War II ended and a new development started in world politics. There was a power vacuum which transformed into a phase of Cold War led by the superpowers of the world namely the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States led the Capitalist Bloc and the Communist Bloc was led by the Soviet Union. There were tensions with regard to fear of a war breaking out with both sides trying to

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bring in more countries for support as well as both being suspicious of each other's activities. Bipolarity on the globe persisted and the world was thrown into yet another kind of war. Since foreign policy and military policy are very closely linked, the United States created the Department of Defense (DoD) after the World War II. The National Security Council was also formed in 1947. As the role of the US in the world grew, these institutions became key factors in determining the American role on the world.

On January 12, 1950, the United States Secretary of State gave a speech before the National Press Club where he indicated that the Korea is outside the defence perimeter of the United States and therefore can only be guaranteed limited protection in case of a military attack. Some critics argue that this speech made the communist North Korea to think that even if they attack South Korea, the US would not intervene. They were in a bid to unify the entire Korean Peninsula under communist rule. On May 3, 1950, Senator Tom Connally, Chairman of the Senate Foreign relations Committee expressed his opinion that he did not think of Korea as “ very greatly important. It has been testified before us that Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines make the chain of defense which is absolutely necessary” (Ambrose and Brinkley 1997). These two statements gave a picture that South Korea indeed was not of strategic importance to the US at that time. It was also earlier epitomized by President Theodore Roosevelt's benign acceptance of the influence of Japan over Korea in 1950. Washington had largely ignored or even overlooked Japan's subsequent colonial subjugation of Korea (Lee and Sato 1982).

On Sunday, 25th June 1950, in the pre-dawn hours, North Korea attacked South Korea across the 38th parallel. Immediately and drastically, the history of the US-South Korea relations changed. Suddenly the Korean Peninsula became very important in the United States Foreign Policy. The world was watching. According to John Spanier, “If the US stood by while South Korea fell, it would demonstrate to the world that the US was either afraid of the Soviet Union or unconcerned with the safety of its friends or allies” (Spanier 1988). Too much was at stake for the US in the Korean Peninsula. Their image as a world

leader was at stake. Inaction on the part of the Americans would cost them the support of their allies and put the Soviet Union at an advantage which the Americans at no cost could allow as it would strengthen the position of the Soviet Union in the fight for world leadership.

Report

The United States feared the Domino effect on Asia where one by one the countries may fall into influence of the Communist Bloc like a row of dominoes. This domino theory was used by the successive administrations in the United States in its foreign policy during the Cold War Era and especially enunciated with regard to the politics of the Northeast Asian region. Taking the Domino theory into account, the US could not let the matter of the Korean Peninsula go into the hands of the Soviet Union. All of a sudden Korea became very vital in the East Asian Policy of the United States. President Truman put the Korean War in the perspective of “struggle between freedom and communist slavery” (Stanley 2009). Under the auspices and support of the newly formed United Nations, the US entered in the Korean conflict, saving South Korea. Through this conflict, the start of a very strategic partnership in which both the countries cooperate and work together to for protecting and developing their interests and security took place. This approach continued till the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the US emerging as the sole superpower of the world.

Under the aegis of the newly formed United Nations, the US, along with fifteen member-countries of the United Nations intervened in the Korean conflict on the side of South Korea. Japan was closely watching the United States’ commitment to the defence of South Korea. Even the two other neighbours, Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China were watching the South reaction very closely. They knew that this was one war which could develop into war involving the whole of the East Asian countries and more. In a way, since the United States had the most modern equipments, nuclear power and a large troop, the Soviet Union and China did not want to engage in a war with the US directly. Excluding the South Korean troops, the United States’ troops suffered the

highest number of casualties in the Korean War. The table below shows the estimated casualties of the United Nations Forces the Korean War, 1950-1953 (op. cit., Myers 2001)

Country	Dead	Wounded or missing	Total
United States ^a	29,550	106,978	136,528
Australia	265	1,387	1,652
Belguim	97	355	452
Canada	309	1,235	1,544
Colombia	140	517	657
Ethiopia	120	536	656
France	288	836	1,124
Greece	169	545	714
Netherlands	111	593	704
New Zealand	31	78	109
Philippines	92	356	448
South Africa (military and civilian)	20	16	36
Thailand	114	799	913
Turkey	717	2,413	3,130
United Kingdom	670	2,692	3,362
Subtotal	33,693	119,336	152,029
South Korea	414,004	428,568	843,572

Total	447,697	547,904	995,601
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^a Percent of total UN forces: dead 87.7%; wounded or missing 89.6%; total 89.8%.

When the North Korean soldiers attacked, the South Korean soldiers were caught unprepared. They were also far too weak as compared to the North in terms of troops, weapons and training. Although the ROK Army had reached the strength of nearly one hundred thousand men, the United States had supplied armaments sufficient for only sixty five thousand men. Furthermore, fifteen percent of the army's weapon and thirty five percent of its vehicles were not in service. The American Military Advisory Group estimated that the ill-equipped, ill-trained men of South Korea could not hold for more than fifteen days (Cho 1982). On the other hand, the North Korean Army was well trained with better equipments supplied by Soviet Union and when they attacked South Korea, it was certain that the whole of the Korean Peninsula will be united, even if by force by North Korean leadership and this in turn will lead to the total spread of communism throughout the Korean Peninsula and even the possibility of further expansion. There was a major difference at the top level leadership in terms of military and politics when it comes to revising their policy towards Korea. Whereas General MacArthur saw it as his duty to clear the Asia of communism, it was seen as a means of pursuing the containment policy further by President Truman (Ibid). This difference was the main reason for the discord between the two of them which finally led to the dismissal of the General by the President in April 1951. But ultimately, the fear was the same, the fear of communism. It was this fear that had been the most enduring cement in the US-led alliance (Kolko 2007).

What was the immediate reason behind MacArthur's dismissal?

When the North Korean Army attacked, the immediate reaction of the United Nations, under the leadership of the United States condemned the North Korean action and urged it to return north of the 38th parallel. The North was in no mood to listen to the United Nations and carried on with their attacks. The prestige of the newly formed United

Nations was at stake. They sent a multinational force comprising of soldiers from different member-states of the United Nations under the command of the US to Korea on June 27, 1950. On the same day, Truman authorized the use of the naval and air forces to the defence of South Korea. The Chinese also entered the war on the side of communist North on September 8, 1950. The Korean conflict came to an end with the signing of an armistice between the two sides. The Armistice Agreement between the military commanders of the North Korean Army, the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (CPVA), and the United Nations Command was signed at Panmunjon on July 27, 1953. The war which lasted for three years destroyed and devastated the Korean Peninsula. Neither the United States nor South Korea is a signatory of the armistice per se, though both hold on to it through the United Nations Command. No significant or comprehensive peace agreement has replaced the 1953 armistice pact (Korean War May 29 2010). Thus, there still exist a condition of mutual suspicion and possible aggression on the Korean Peninsula.

1.8 The Mutual Defense Treaty

After the signing of the armistice, the United States and South Korea signed the Mutual Defense Treaty on 8th August, 1953. It entered into force on 17th November, 1954. It was a treaty containing six articles signed by Y.T. Pyun for the Republic Of Korea and John Foster Dulles for the United States of America. Through this treaty, the United States and South Korea agreed to come to the aid of each other should one of them be attacked which may be regarded as dangerous to the safety and peace of the other. Both signatories would act in accordance with each state's constitutional process, to meet the common danger. The most important article of the treaty is Article 4 which allows the right to dispose US land, air and sea forces in and about the territory of the Republic of South Korea as determined by mutual agreement (Military Alliance May 29 2010). South Korea was also under the 'Nuclear umbrella' of the United States which acted as a deterrent for many warring states.

In the time between 1954 and 1955, the United States withdrew five Army divisions and one Marine division from South Korea leaving only two infantry divisions, despite strong protest from South Korea. They transferred their equipment to the ROK Army. South Korea created five more infantry divisions, making a total of 19 Army divisions by 1954. Due to lack of modern equipment and leadership, the quick expansion of the ROK military required constant assistance and support from the United States (Kim 1996). South Korea was poor and the war added to its woes further. It looked at the United States, not only for support militarily but for support in the different spheres of their existence as a nation. The Americans thought it imperative to deploy their own troops as well as to improve South Korea's military capability to avoid another communist expansion. Various military assistance programmes like Military Assistance Program (MAP), Military Assistance Services Funded, Excess Stock Transfer and others were conducted and most of the military expenditure, even clothing and consumables were covered by the US. The South Korean Army owed its birth to the US occupying forces in the post-war period, militarily trained and equipped by the US and by 1981 became one of the largest armed forces in the world (Mahapatra 1989). The two countries even conduct the annual, "Team spirit" exercises which involve troops and weapons from the military bases in Hawaii, California, Okinawa, the Philippines and South Korea which is often looked upon suspiciously by North Korea. Since then, there have been American troops on the South Korean soil to safeguard its security from any further attacks as well as to protect the American interests in the region. South Korea became a very important and strategic partner and ally of the US. The Korean War changed the whole relation of the US- South Korea relations.

For many decades since its independence, South Korea had depended heavily on the United States for aid and assistance both militarily and economically. They still continue to do so but now, the dependence on the US had reduced a lot with the change and development that South Korea has gone through over the years. The Cold War phase was

quite turbulent in the US-South Korea alliance. South Korea was progressing at a very fast rate through the assistance of the US and with it, change was bound to happen. South Korea started expanding out through business and bilateral trade and brought in both positive and negative aspects. South Korean students started going to the US for their studies. Many migrated and settled in the US. The United States was occupied with the Vietnam War during the 1960s and 1970s. South Korean troops were deployed in the Vietnam War and their involvement created more intensification and infiltrations at the border with North Korea. But the South Korean government got much compensation from the United States. From the period 1966 to 1973, South Korea maintained a force level of about 50,000 and received about one billion dollars as the compensation for its troop's commitment in the Vietnam War (Cho 1982). The United States was also responsible for improving the South Korean military and supplying advanced military technology and equipment to them.

1.9 The Alliance in the Post-Cold War

The world went through changes in its power equation owing to the two World Wars. The nations were picking up the pieces of the ravages of the wars and trying to gain ground again. Most of the nations were affected either directly or indirectly. While Europe was caught in the chaos and mayhem that the two World Wars created, the United States, due to their geographical position has been building herself up at her home ground. Despite the fact that the US was involved in both the wars and was a determinant in the outcome of the two World Wars, the geographical advantage it had proved to be indeed a boon because there were industrialization and rapid development in all spheres of the American society. This geographical advantage had been instrumental in making it one of the most advanced nations of the world. Even their position as a world leader was elevated because of their involvement in world affairs, both negative and positive effects of their foreign policies.

The position of the United States as a global power was confirmed at the end of the Cold War era with the disintegration of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) or Soviet Union in 1991 into 15 new republics and the United States emerging as the sole superpower of the world. The power pull between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War was best highlighted in the division of the Korean Peninsula. Korea was divided along the 38th parallel with North Korea supported by the Soviet Union and United States coming to the aid of South Korea. With the division of the Korean Peninsula into Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) or North Korea and the Republic of Korea (ROK) or South Korea, the United States started giving aid as well as building up the economy of South Korea. Both the Koreas became a significant symbol and also victim of this divide, evident in the fact that Korea was divided across the 38th parallel with Soviet troops in the North and American troops in the South. The American troops are still present in South Korean soil. The Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) is the most highly militarized zone in the world. The United States took the issue of Korea into the newly created United Nations. There were attempts to bring about a unified Korean nation but it never materialized due to the differences in their ways and approaches of dealing with it. Reunification of the Korean nation has become more of an ideal and less a certainty.

The North Korean side, which initially had the support of its communist neighbours, went into an isolationist mode and followed the policy of the official state ideology called "Juche", which stands for "independent stand" or "spirit of self-reliance". North Korea still pursues this policy. South Korea, on the other hand, became the protégé of the US. The US had a very significant and dominant role in building up the economy of South Korea. They extended their support and assistance to the newly formed Republic Of Korea. The United States had contributed to substantial growth in education, military and economy in South Korea. Since then, the United States and South Korea had travelled along a tumultuous and challenging journey of friendship which is often rocked with their own domestic politics as well as in their foreign relations. The United States, through this

strategic alliance benefitted a lot in maintaining their security interests in the region and in keeping a hold on to its affairs.

In keeping up with the beneficial aspect, the South Koreans also did not lack behind. In fact, the South Koreans seemed to have benefitted more than the US from this alliance. From then on, South Korea had experienced tremendous growth in its economic, political and military field. Even in the social sphere, the American way of life seeped deeply into the Korean society. One of the most homogeneous society of the world was suddenly exposed to the culture of the most free and multicultural country. However, like most strategic alliances, this alliance also came with certain baggage of its own. While on the American front, there were continuous debates on whether to keep the American troops or to take them out from the Korean Peninsula; the South Korean side was equally festered with the same issue and more.

The alliance still continues today but it was not unaffected by the geographical position that South Korea was in or the hegemonic position that the United States found itself in. Both the nations had prospects and challenges at the international level as well as in the domestic level. The alliance had weathered many challenges along the years since the beginning of its strategic relations. There were opportunities and challenges to both the nations from nations like North Korea, China, Japan and Russia politically, socially, economically or militarily. The domestic factors also played a critical and pertinent role in determining the state of the relations. With mounting challenges both at home and at the international level, the two nations had tried to bring about the best solution for the both of them. This became problematic because what is best for the US may not be the best for South Korea and vice versa.

It is in this backdrop that the security alliance of the US-South Korea had been examined. This research had made an attempt to understand the implications and influences of the

role of nations like China and North Korea as well as the role of domestic factors in South Korea during the Bush/ Presidency in the US and the Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo-hyun's Presidency in South Korea. This research had also made critical examination and analysis of the role of China in US-South Korean security alliance. However, the issue of the North Korean threat would also be discussed.

Comments

- ⊗ An excellent narrative.
- ⊗ Good analysis, though there is room for improvement.

CHAPTER 2

NORTH KOREAN AND CHINESE FACTORS IN US-SOUTH KOREAN ALLIANCE

2.1 The US-South Korea Alliance and Northeast Asia

Northeast Asia is undoubtedly one of the main regions where the US interests have been abounding. With around 20 percent of global Gross National Product (GNP), 30 percent of world's savings, and a third of the world's prospective manpower, there is no doubt about the economic potential of the region (Calder 2004). The US global strategy demands of them to have good and stable relations with the countries of the region namely China, Japan and South Korea. They are key partners of the US in international politics. The most direct and serious issue regarding the security of the region lies with the stability in the Korean Peninsula. This is one area which can change the whole power equation in the region. The alliance between the United States and South Korea has been a strategic one. Both the nations have benefitted from the alliance despite the problems and challenges along the way.

Owing to the geographical position of South Korea and the political and economic position of the United States, this alliance has been the centre of attention for many countries whose interests are at stake and intertwined with the changes in the policies of the alliance. China, Japan, Russia and North Korea play an important role in affecting the alliance and looks cautiously at every action and policy of the alliance. Owing to the position that South Korea finds itself in, all the neighbours' eyes are ever on Korea as throughout history. Korea has been either a buffer or a danger zone for them and they have all at some point wrestled for control over Korea and still continue to do so, though in a more diplomatic way in recent times.

According to Kyoung-suh Park, the defense of Korea is not just for the security of Korea per se but for the whole of the region as well. He stated that if the security of Korea is endangered, the whole position of Northeast Asia will collapse (Park 1981). To keep its presence and influence in the region intact, the United States cannot afford to let go of South Korea in the sense of a total withdrawal of its troops from South Korean soil. This issue had been a major concern for both the US and South Korea and also the regional countries. It is one issue which affects the balance of security, involving the US in the region as most Northeast Asian countries have ties with the US in political, military and economic areas. North Korea, for one, remains immune to the capitalist tendencies which had already seeped in among the other countries of the region. They continue to maintain their ideological rationale of, 'juche' or self-reliance. In the path of globalization and interdependence that the world is heading, self-reliance is seen as a kind of "narrow-minded isolation" (Hyun 2004), to the international community. In this context, even the case of South Korea stood out as it was one nation which had no choice but to rely on its alliances because it was one of the weakest countries in its region and depended heavily on its superpower ally, the United States.

The relations between the United States and South Korea was an asymmetrical one, with the former emerging as the sole superpower after the World War II and the latter coming out from the perils of Japanese dominance as well as one among the poorest nations. But both the countries had overcome a series of differences to build an amicable atmosphere in which both of them gained a lot through the relationship. At the start of the relationship, both the United States and South Korea had different priorities as stated in the first chapter. The US wanted to stop the influence of the Soviet Union and Chinese power in Northeast Asia whereas South Korea's sole objective was stability through the prevention of another North Korean attack. In the relationship, the United States played the role of a provider and South Korea, of a recipient. The US was instrumental in building up the economy and defence mechanism of South Korea. But with the passage of time, the equation is shifting as the geopolitics of the region is changing and the

booming economy of South Korea is making them more assertive in their dealings with the United States. ✓

One of the key allies of the United States in the region apart from South Korea is Japan. It is imperative that the allies of the US remain on good terms so that the partnership of the nations involved would be enhanced. With the hope to lessen the American defence burden in Northeast Asia, the US welcomed and encouraged diplomatic normalization between South Korea and Japan in 1965. After the Korean War, it became very essential for the US not to lose South Korea to the communists or allow it to fall from within due to economic or political reasons. The US was now eager to make Korea a “showcase of democracy and prosperity” (Han 1977). By 1967, Japan surpassed the United States as the primary trading partner of South Korea. It is in a way an American diplomatic success, if seen in the backdrop of a common Japanese perception that “Korea lies like a dagger ever pointed towards the heart of Japan (Myers 2001). Korea and Japan, despite their age old animosity became friendlier over the time and the United States, being the common partner to both, played a very crucial role in encouraging the cooperation between them. There have been differences along the path but the cooperation became more stable due to the encouragement of the American government. While Japan was considered a historical enemy of South Korea, North Korea and China were actually regarded as adversarial in the post World War II era. The fact that both China and North Korea were communist countries and fought the Korean War against South Korea and the US, spoke loudly about the South Korean perception of these two countries. The case of North Korea and China related with the American and South Korean security interests is undermined by the differences in ideology as well as the unpredictability of the behaviour of the two nations.

This chapter describes the North Korean and Chinese factors in the US-South Korean relations as they are the two main sources of challenges to the alliance. It also makes an attempt to prove how China, and not North Korea’s nuclear programme is the main

rationale behind the US policy towards South Korea and how the US policies made South Korea a pawn in America's Asia-Pacific strategy. Indeed, the US-South Korea alliance had been under the scanner of the Chinese and the North Koreans. Both China and North Korea have been apprehensive about the motives and intentions of the alliance.

2.2 North Korea and the Alliance

North Korea and South Korea were once one nation, fighting foreign invasions and interferences on their soil. They were one of the most homogeneous groups in the world and were content to be left to themselves. But due to the small size of their nation and also the geographical position that they were placed in, they often became the victim of attacks and plunder by the more powerful, aggressive and ambitious nations. Since the division of the Korean Peninsula into North and South Korea along the 38th parallel during the Cold War, a division which is still a reality today, the Koreans have come a long way, with each side embarking on a journey so diverse from each other especially in ideology, politics and economy that the hope of unification seem very bleak, despite efforts made from time to time.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, North Korea was suddenly left without a strong ally. On the other hand, under the enormous assistance of the United States, South Korea progressed, developed well and became one of the most industrialized nations of the world. The North Korean leaders considered the South leadership to be the puppet of the United States. As stated earlier, North Korea attacked South Korea in 1950 in an attempt to unify the whole Peninsula under its control after the US troops withdrew from South Korea. However, their plans were thwarted by the timely rescue of South Korea by the United Nations Command led by the United States. This Korean Conflict ended in 1953 without a clear-cut victor. However, it changed the equation of the US-South

Korean relations instantaneously. South Korea became an important part of the US strategy in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the Cold War era, North Korea came under the influence of communist ideology with the support of the Soviet Union and China, whereas South Korea's support and care fell into the hands of the United States. Since then and till now, the United States and North Korea have not been able to see eye to eye. The US-North Korean relations runs on very difficult terrains and their policies towards each other are watched very closely by China, Japan, Russia and especially South Korea as it concerns the security of the region as a whole. The North Koreans had tried many ways to unify the Korean Peninsula by strengthening their own revolutionary base through education and training their own people, attempting to overthrow the South regime by calling for greater organization of the masses through a vanguard party and to improving relations with other third world states exploited by American imperialism (Roehrig 2003). One of the serious actions of North Korea against South Korea was the attempt to assassinate the South Korean President Park Chung Hee at his residence, the Blue House in Seoul on 21st January, 1968.

Adding to the list of offensives against the South Korean government were two terrorist actions of North Korea. It earned them the permanent condemnation of the US. The first was the attempt to kill the South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan in Rangoon, Myanmar in 1983 and the second incident was where they planted a bomb aboard Korean Airlines flight 858, which exploded over the Gulf of Thailand four years after the first incident. This earned them a place in the list of the US State Department of the states that support terrorism and prevented many international economic assistance and loans (Ibid). North Korea was branded initially as a state that adopted terrorist methods against South Korea. As time passed by, its nuclear programme drew more attention and caused concerns in South Korea, in the US and perhaps in other parts of the world. As nuclear

questions cropped up, the US-North Korean interactions became very problematic because of their diametrically opposite ideologies and political system.

The Clinton Administration, which championed the cause of nuclear non-proliferation, took some steps to resolve the nuclear question in the Korean Peninsula by taking diplomatic initiatives to prevent North Korea from having a nuclear weapon programme. Washington's relationship with North Korea was somehow making slow but significant progress. The most prominent progress with regard to Washington's relations with Pyongyang under the Clinton administration was the Agreed Framework signed between the United States and North Korea on October 21, 1994. The main objective of the Agreed Framework was to freeze the North Korea's indigenous nuclear power plant programme and replace it with light water reactor (LWR) power plants. It also agreed to work towards normalization of political and economic relations, peace and security on a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and also work together to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. With the coming of the new administration of George W. Bush in Washington which did not hold the same perspective as the former administration, the equation began to change. The Bush administration surely did not follow the policy of appeasement in this case. This issue has been addressed in the next chapter extensively.

North Korea had been in the news for all the wrong reasons. The Nuclear programme and violations of human rights were main issues for debate and discussion concerning North Korea. Throughout the entire period since the Korean War till the end of the 1960s, North Korea had not kept any considerable contact with American people or government officials except for the armistice between the two countries in the early 1950s. Jae Kyu Park wrote about the characteristics of the North Korean policies towards the United States by dividing it into three periods: the period of extreme hostility toward the United States. This was especially during the Cold War, the period of ideological differences between the United States and Soviet Union that North Korea had shown extreme

hostility and hatred towards the United States. The second period was the so-called, "People's Diplomacy" which happened in the early 1970s. The North Korean leaders began to soften their aggressive attitude towards the United States. They did not want to be isolated from the international community. From the early 1974 till 1982 was the third period, the time he was writing he called it the period of governmental approaches to the United States like the calling of direct negotiation with the United States to replace the armistice with a peace treaty (Park 1982).

The main ambition of the North Korean reconciliatory overtures towards the United States was to persuade the Americans to withdraw their troops from the Republic of Korea so that they can unify the whole Peninsula under communism. The North Korean middle-range goal was to improve its international image on the one hand and to isolate the Republic of Korea on the other. However, the United States' refusal to the reconciliatory overtures thwarted their plans and North Korea had fallen short of accomplishing any of its policy goals so far (Ibid).

2.3 North Korea's Nuclear Threat to the Alliance

The North Korean nuclear programme gave enough reasons and support to the Americans to pursue their defence system even more relentlessly. North Korean leaders were portrayed as "irrational xenophobes with a mindless anti-American hatred that explains why they want nuclear weapons and why they might well use them to attack the United States" (Harrison 2002), by the supporters and promoters of the US national missile defense system. The Truman and Eisenhower's administration's nuclear threats over Korea established a long standing pattern. Though the United States had not used nuclear weapons, the American national security elite believed that the nuclear threats pushed the Chinese and the North Koreans to settle at Panmunjon pointing out that nuclear threats

could be used to deter or compel behaviour of adversaries even if they were not used on the battlefield (Hayes 1988).

The North Korean nuclear programme has been a very serious matter of concern for the United States and South Korea. It was also one of the main reasons for the continued deployment of the American troops in South Korea and also the reason for getting into earning the hostility of the global community in general and the United States and South Korea in particular. For the North Koreans, though their nuclear programmes had claimed them the title of a rogue nation, isolation from the global community and brought about sanctions on their nation as well as inclusion of their name in the 'axis of evil' in President George Bush's speech, it was their bargaining chip at the negotiating table and it was unlikely that they would let go off it easily. They considered this to be the vital weapon to make their voice known and to intimidate their enemies. In fact, it was their only card, maybe not to win but to at least be heard.

According to Selig S. Harrison, North Korea's opinion of its security environment was not irrational in the context of its embattled history since 1945. He opined that the North Korean effort to develop nuclear weapons and missile delivery system was a direct response to the nuclear saber-rattling during the Korean War and the subsequent deployment of US tactical nuclear weapons in the South for more than three decades. Other factors accelerated this efforts but it was propelled by the US nuclear posture towards the peninsula. The US made direct or implied threats to use nuclear weapons throughout the Korean War. Even after the removal of the tactical weapons, the United States continued to point out to Pyongyang that the US nuclear umbrella over South Korea was still operative. After 1993, the scenarios involving the use of nuclear weapons were dropped from the US military exercises in Korea. But the damage was already done much earlier (Harrison 2002). The North Korean had already got the message of the nuclear threat and was on their way to counter the threat given by the United States.

The shifting North Korean response to the US nuclear challenge revealed a wide search for security that embraced economic as well as military priorities. He went on to say that Pyongyang had been flexible in adapting to changing circumstances, indicating clearly that it would be willing to give up the development of nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems if its security can be assured without them (Ibid). But this had not happened as none of the parties were able to ensure security in the standard that the other demands.

The country most affected by the North Korean policies was South Korea. According to Li Jip, the main aim of the US for invasion on the Northern side and the containment of the Asian Socialist countries was to turn South Korea into a forward base for making forestalling attacks on them (Jip 1986). From the North Korean view, all this militarization would make South Korea a ground base for the US space militarization system, not a mere nuclear base. The other neighbours also watched the developments in the Korean Peninsula closely as it was crucial to their own security. North Korea is considered a belligerent rogue state of the world mainly by both the United States and South Korea. It was one of the most closed societies in the world and its nuclear programmes were a much discussed and debated topic in the relations between the United States and South Korea. The North Korean problem was central to the American foreign policy as it will show America's commitment to its allies.

The main issues that the US had with North Korea were the nuclear programme of North Korea and human rights. These issues had an effect on the then US-South Korean alliance and thereby affected the other countries in Northeast Asia as well. There were many precarious situations in the past which had nearly led to confrontation and even at present, the matter refuses to settle. The Bush administration's hawkish approach towards North Korea in areas such as nuclear development and human rights did no good to the problems but rather it had aggravated the problems (Armstrong 2006).

The United States was very apprehensive and suspicious of the North Korean nation, not so much for their communist way of life but more so because of their nuclear programmes which seemed to have increased. North Korea seemed to have gotten bolder with every test. North Korea was under the constant watch of the international community because of its suspicious and secretive military activities. Sweden play the role of the protecting power of the United States interests in North Korea for consular matters, as North Korea and the United States have no formal diplomatic relations. North Korea, as stated earlier, was considered a belligerent rogue state which was charged up with developing nuclear weapons to intimidate its neighbours and the United States and the United States hold firm to their rigid and cold attitude towards North Korea.

The United States administration and the governments of South Korea, Japan and other countries established the Korean Peninsula Development Organization (KEDO) in March 1995. It was established to coordinate the provisions of the Light Water Nuclear Reactors . At the beginning, the North Korean government was not open to the idea and rejected negotiation with KEDO or South Korea, demanding only to deal with the US and to accept only US reactors. The US and North Korea reached an agreement in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in June 1995 under which North Korea agreed to negotiate with KEDO (Sutter 2003).

2.4 The Sunshine Policy

The most noteworthy South Korean administrative attempt to engage and maintain good relations with North Korea is the administration led by President Kim Dae Jung. His famous 'Sunshine Policy' was instrumental in bringing about some changes in the otherwise deteriorating relationship between the two sides. Both North and South Korea wanted to maximize their security and this was the main bone of contention between the two. Since the South Korean economy prospered and the North Korean did not, shown by

the fact that South Korea's GNP per capita is eleven times higher than North Korea its GNP is also twenty times higher. It puts Seoul in a position comfortable enough to pursue the "Sunshine Policy" (Heo and Hyun 2003). Since then, the South Korean government gave a lot of economic aid to Pyongyang. Business also started to increase rapidly though on the North Korean side, military programmes have hardly reduced. North has not reciprocated well and has not done much to ease the tension on the Korean peninsula according to many people of South Korea and especially the opposition party of Kim Dae Jung, the Grand National Party to criticize the "Sunshine Policy." North Korea's aggressive pursuit of military superiority even after the "Sunshine Policy", the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officials of the United States suspect the North Korean government of diverting South Korea's aid to military preparations.

The famous, "Sunshine Policy" was the brainchild of the South Korean President Kim Dae Jung. He pursued two goals through this policy. The first is to establish a peaceful coexistence, the second being the easing of tensions between the two nations (Chae 2002). He was also a firm policy maker in the sense that instead of voicing national distress towards the United States, he championed structural reform in agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demands and presented his country as the most enthusiastic regional supporter of globalization (Rozman 2006). He opened ~~the~~ his country to its age old rival Japan and followed a policy of opening up talks for reconciliation with North Korea through his famous, 'Sunshine Policy.' President Kim Dae Jung was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000 for his work for democracy and human rights in South Korea and in East Asia in general, and for peace and reconciliation with North Korea in particular.

Repetitive
The 'Sunshine Policy' under the supervision of the South Korean President Kim Dae Jung, was articulated in 1998. The main aim of this policy was to soften the North Korean's attitude towards the South by encouraging interaction and economic assistance.

There were four main principles of the Sunshine Policy, the first being the principle of no absorption of North Korea in the process of unification. The second was the principle of intolerance of any armed provocation destructive to peace followed by the principle of reciprocity and lastly, the principle of separation of the economy from politics.

Among the principles of the Sunshine Policy, the principle of separation of economy from politics and the principle of reciprocity without a doubt, signified South Korea's friendly position towards North Korea. The principle of reciprocity which showed a great deal of commitment on the side of the South as it was ready to continue the relations even if the exchanges were not equal, as long as the North side gave something in return (Chae 2002). However, the North Korean government was reluctant and unwelcoming to the idea, seeking bilateral relations with the United States in its own course. The next South Korean government, under the leadership of Roh Moo-hyun also pursued the relationship on the same lines.

During the Clinton administration, there was a considerable development and progress in the United States' relation with North Korea. Things were beginning to look up until the change in the administration in the United States when George W. Bush won the presidential elections in 2000. The new administration was not on the same footing with the Clinton administration and followed a hardened policy towards North Korea which aggravated problems between North Korea and South Korea.

The Bush administration was unfriendly to the North Korean government from the beginning of their governance. In March 2001, he made it clear that he would not continue the Clinton administration's style of dealing with the North Korean government. Bush refused to endorse the "Sunshine policy" of Kim Dae Jung stating his suspicions and scepticism of the North Korean government. Three months later, he said he would resume the talks. There was an atmosphere of deep distrust and hostility between the

and whom?

United States and this had added to the woes of the South Korean government which was grappling with the issue of its national security which was directly affected by the policies of the North Korea and the United States. The North Korean Nuclear Programme has a direct effect on the security relations of the United States and South Korea. Despite the hard stand policy of the Bush Administration, the North Korean government had shown signs of wanting to deal with the United States directly. The Bush Administration, however keeping the history of the North Korean act of backing out from the Agreed Framework and the withdrawal from the NPT did not warmed up to the idea .

2.5 The Security Paradox of the Korean Peninsula

The nuclear shadow of the North Korea hovered over South Korea and the US-South Korean alliance constantly. North Korea was as unpredictable as ever and presented huge dilemma to the entire region making the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) the most volatile place in the world. The former US President Bill Clinton called the border between the two Koreas as the world's scariest place referring to the massive forward deployment of North Korean forces around the DMZ and the shaky foundations of the 50 year old armistice, not a peace treaty that still maintains the peace between the two former combatants (Cha and Kang 2003). The United States was caught in the unique Korean paradox of defending its protégé against the communist North involving nuclear weapons which aggravates the situation to escalating heights. [devoid of meaning]

It is a constant irritation, tugging at the line of the US-South Korean relations but ironically one of the strongest gluing factors of the relations as well. The relation keeps evolving and is bound to change even in the future and both the nations are trying hard to find the best possible solution for bettering the relationship. The present President of South Korea, Lee Myung Bak is very friendly to the American government and even the President of the United States Barack Obama is keen to improve the relations. This

present developments in the context of the changed administrations bring about a new leash of life and hope to the relationship.

2.6 China's Role in Northeast Asia

Northeast Asia indeed became very important to the United States foreign policy and its significance continued to grow. It was also the region where the United States was confronted with one of the most complex challenges to its government. The United States was trying to find a balance for their role as peacekeeper, economic partner and political advisor amidst a host of other roles that they had to play in the region. Apart from the Korean dilemma, the other great threat to the American interests in the region was the region's giant, China. In fact, it was becoming a bigger problem than North Korea though more subtle in nature at first but with time it became stronger and there were already signs of its increasing powerful influence in the region. The People's Republic of China (PRC) challenged the American policies and posed a threat to its interests in the region in every possible way. China was fast becoming the most powerful regional player as well as the direct challenge to the United States on the global scene both politically and economically. The US did not want to lose their grip in the Northeast Asian region. In this context, the case of the Korean Peninsula became very dear to both the US and China.

Most of the regional governments in Northeast Asia supported the continued presence of the US military as they considered it as a guarantor of regional stability so important to sustaining peace and development with the exception of China (Sutter 2003). China was the nation to watch out for in the coming years. It was growing rapidly and powerfully in every sphere and was reaching out to the international community like never before. The changes in the countries of Northeast Asia, both internally and externally had led the US to rethink their policies towards this region. China posed the greatest threat to the United

States security interests in the region. It was fast becoming the most powerful country in the region and also a threat to the sole superpower's position in the world. At the same time, China and the US, though they were competitors in almost every field cooperated and worked together on many issues involving global stability and security. The rise of China had brought about mixed reactions.

China was already seen as America's "Regional peer competitor" in Northeast Asia and the process of China becoming a 'great power' in Asia was bound to clash with the United States' desire to maintain their hegemonic influence in the region (Chung 2007). While a very strong China might have boosted the regional power equation, the US and the other nations of the Northeast Asian region were also apprehensive of many issues like security that came with the rise of China. China, on the other hand was keen to make its significance known in the region as this was the first step on their path to become a truly global power, even challenging the position of the United States in the power status quo in the international scene

2.7 China and the Alliance

China and the United States, two large nations of the world had battled out in every sphere in world. The United States is the world's largest economy and China is also catching up. Their relations make for an interesting study capturing the interests of scholars from all over the world. It is multifaceted too. They are partners and at the same time, they are competitors, fighting out for their interests in the international scene. The ideologies that these two countries professed were completely opposite of each other, with one being the torchbearer of capitalist ideology and the other leading the few communist countries. There were several strains in the relationship especially right after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Apart from other issues, the issue of Human Rights and the Taiwan issue came to the forefront in affecting the relations especially in

the political realm and this in turn permeated to other areas as well. Though they differed in their opinion in many ways and did not agree with each other in their ideologies, both were concerned about the rise of terrorism and the issue of nuclear proliferation. In the fields of economics, politics or social life, they were fighting for supremacy and their history makes for an interesting study of two very different culture and civilization trying to cope and outdo each other with competition and cooperation working simultaneously in the international system.

The issue of South Korea became a cause very dear to both the nations. Whereas China, with its geographical proximity and shared history tried to built a stronger and closer relationship with South Korea, the United States, which was responsible for most of South Korea's development and progress focussed on a greater cooperation and better relations based on the friendship that has developed over the years despite strains once in a while'.

Korea and China had a shared history as stated above and shared very close relations. Often China acted like the big brother of Korea in the context of the politics of the region. And the social and religious life of the Korean society still carries the essence of the Chinese Confucianism. China's rise was acknowledged by the nations across the globe. It was in a position where it can directly or indirectly challenge the might of the onetime lone superpower i.e. the United States. With the world coming to a new phase of multi-polarity or maybe even non-polarity, the countries of the world were vying to peacefully co-exist while at the same time trying to arm themselves for security. In history, countries had waged wars with each other due to a number of reasons like expansion, protection and security of its people and its interests. But the manner in which the countries were arming themselves seemed to be so fast that one can take the risk to say that if this trend continues, then the world is heading for a World War III and this time, with the advancement in technology and the spread of nuclear weapons, the whole of mankind could be destroyed in no time.

China was increasingly becoming important in the South Korean strategic calculations. It had rapidly risen and had become a very important power in the region and also a key determinant in the context of global security. South Korea had been recently a “center” status in terms of attracting economic, diplomatic and strategic attention from both the United States and China. The South Korean government’s wish to continue amicable and favourable relationships with both the United States and China but from the American perspective, Seoul unprecedented efforts to maintain a strategic balance between Washington and Beijing have been viewed with grave concern (Ibid).

South Korean perception of China over the years had become more favourable as China continued to rise and on the American side, the relationship seemed to be going downhill as the domestic factors and differences in policy making had started surfacing. Even in the regional context, China had become indispensable in influencing the decisions of the policies of the other nations and in this context, South Korea. Earlier, the United States used to guide and influence the South Korean government on many important decisions but off late, the South Korean government became more assertive in voicing out their opinions independent of the US influence.

Beijing had changed its stand of pro-Pyongyang to opening up to Seoul in 1992 which added another boost to the already improving relations between Seoul and Beijing. Though China was instrumental in the politics and regime survival of North Korea, it was mostly done to suit their own interests which was mainly out of the fear of the outflow of refugees into China should North Korea collapse . Because of concerns and the political and geographical position that North Korea was in, China became a gateway and an indisputable location for North Korea’s negotiations with South Korea, Japan and the United States, making China to analyze its two-Korea policy as projecting its renewed national identity as a responsible great power (Kim Samuel S. 2006).

2.8 China's take on the US' Military Presence in South Korea

That North Korea and China occupy a very important place in the US-South Korea alliance is understood. But in the comparison, China became a greater threat, especially for the United States because though the North Korean posed threat to the alliance, they only provided a stronger reason for the US presence in South Korea and moreover, they were too tied down with their own problems and this proved to be a hindrance in their aim of uniting the Korean Peninsula under communism. Their intentions were not very clear but they could possibly not afford a war with the US and South Korea because they might have considerable damage to Seoul but that way even their nation was at the risk of being wiped out completely by their adversaries. They played the nuclear card to make their voice known at the bargaining table but the situation was so precariously balanced that any mistake on their part to push the limit might have resulted in the end of the whole North Korean regime. They showed their aggressiveness from time to time but it seemed to be a call for attention and nothing much though it cannot be dismissed because they were one of the most unpredictable nations of the world and could shock the global community with their actions. But in the case of China, the very status quo of the US' presence in the region was under attack owing to the rise of China in almost every field on the global scale.

Korea had been the pawn in the geopolitics of Northeast Asian region, plundered and attacked by its stronger neighbours throughout its history. It was only after the United States protection over South Korea that they had some sense of security for some decades. History seems to repeat itself with South Korea caught between the US and China. This was mainly because of the rise of China as US' presence was already there in South Korea. Neither the US nor China were dependent on South Korea per se though they both considered South Korea important in their foreign policy. They were both very independent in their decision making and taking actions regarding policies. This had put

intense pressure on South Korea as they were both very strategically important and to tilt towards a particular side might have proven dangerous. South Korea was grappling with the position of being stuck between the already established superpower of the world and the new and strongly emerging China.

The most dangerous issue centered on the issue of the US troops' deployment in South Korean soil. The Chinese wanted the United States to withdraw their troops from South Korea as this was the source of the continuous tension in the Korean Peninsula and also not interfere in the internal matters of the Korean people, thereby paving the way of peaceful and possible reunification of North and South Korea. This was unacceptable to the US as it was apprehensive of the intentions of both North Korea and China and the fact that these two nations follow the communist policies did not help in any way. South Korea found itself increasingly pulled to either sides in the tug-of-war between the US and China.

name of book/article/essay?
Jae Ho Chung wrote that for South Korea, self armament would be too expensive and China would not have any incentive or intention to support it at the expense of Pyongyang and therefore, the US support for reunification, as well as for post reunification would be indispensable. On top of that, the South Korean economic relationship and dependency on the US was too closely intertwined with bilateral strategic considerations to justify a switch (Chung 2001). He also opined that even if this was the case, the case of China cannot be dismissed as China's growing influence over the Korean Peninsula was real and only assessing China in economic terms would miss the point and also Seoul should not antagonize China or get sucked into the US-China conflict over Taiwan or elsewhere (Ibid). The Taiwan issue was another tough issue for the United States and also the main area of disagreement between the US and China. China was not happy with the role of the US in Taiwan which was against China's interests. This hostility towards each other might have a spill over effect on the Korean issue as well even though the Korean issue had been and still is a bone of contention

between the two. Though China and other nations may blame the US self-interests and domineering role in South Korea because of the presence of its troops till today, it could also be argued that the presence of the US troops in the South Korean soil actually confirm the US commitment to its allies in the region.

Though China and the US had a lot of differences and challenges in their relationship, both were practical enough to understand the importance of cooperation in the fast evolving world system of interdependency in the age of globalization. Chinese leadership's pragmatism stopped China from directly opposing the US hub-and-spokes system for various reasons. The first reason was that they did serve as the guarantor of security and stability on the Korean Peninsula and for Japan when no feasible alternative has yet emerged. The second reason was that the US allies except for Taiwan had no possibility of making alliances directing actions against China but rather look at their own alliances with the US as part of the hedging strategy within the overall game-plan of engagement with China. The Chinese also preferred the path to actively pursue multilateralism by advancing its new security concept to spread its influence in the creation of a new regional security arrangement (Pablo-Baviera 2003).

In the case of China's relations with South Korea, things were looking up. Though formal diplomatic relations with the South Korean government started as late as 1992, there had always been a sort of informal interaction with each other due to their economic need and geographical proximity. In the Cold War era, there was hostility rather than friendly relations between the two nations because China supported North Korea and the South Korean government maintained diplomatic ties with Taiwan or the Republic of China (ROC). The Chinese government had encouraged, initiated and promoted the tripartite talks among Pyongyang, Seoul and Washington. Trade between Beijing and Seoul was on the increase and this was posing as a threat to the economic interests of the United States. South Korea was again caught between great and strong powers and once again, history seemed to have repeated itself. Though the South Korean nation had become very advanced and rich over the years, rising like the phoenix from the ashes and ravages of

the Korean War, it was still trapped by its strategic geographical position which posed rather difficult and challenging situations in which its very existence was put at risk and it had to make decisions very carefully so as not to offend the greater powers that continued to affect and influence its nation.

China indeed, then became the primary rationale of the US policies towards South Korea because it was the one regional power that can challenge the US presence in the region substantially compared to the other regional countries of the Northeast Asia as North Korea was weak and despite its nuclear threats, might not really pose as the real threat because it cannot afford to wage a war with the US for long. Japan was the staunch supporter and ally of the US and despite the challenges in the Japanese' stance, it did not pose any real threat to the US policies in the region. As for the case of South Korea, the nation was still so in tow with the US policies in so many aspects that it would either look to continuing its partnership with the US in the future or get away from the US fold and join the path of increased cooperation and development with China. The third option for South Korea was to balance its relations with both the US and China which was very dangerous but at the same time could prove beneficial.

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South Korea, then, indeed was in a fix. Either ways, they faced the threat and animosity of the one of the two nations should they choose to align themselves to one side and they cannot afford to ire both the two. Band-wagoning with either one of them might prove very dangerous to its security as well as the security of the region. South Korea had to find a middle ground where they could balance their relationship with both the nations and get maximum benefit from both the nations. This however was a very dicey and risky approach and the South Korean government tried to find a solution for these problems. The road was indeed long and perilous for South Korea as it embarked on a journey of uncertainty and insecurity.

P.T.O.

CHAPTER 3

BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S APPROACH TOWARDS SOUTH KOREA

3.1 George W. Bush and Northeast Asia

George Walker Bush of the Republican Party became the President of the United States of America on the January 20, 2001. The new administration carried with it the baggages of the previous administration. During the presidential campaign, Bush showed interest in focusing on the domestic affairs more than foreign affairs. In his campaign, foreign affairs were given just a small focus (Sutter 2003). It looked as though the Bush administration was going to follow the steps of the Clinton administration's policies in the context of the Northeast Asian region. But with the terrorist attacks on the American soil on September 11, 2001, the Bush administration's policy changed overnight and their focus was diverted towards the Middle East. However, the other regions were not totally neglected including the Northeast Asian region. The United States was the most important regional trading partner and source of foreign investment in the Northeast Asian region and thus their policies affected the region like no other country. All regional governments recognized the US economic engagement as critically important for regional development and economic well-being (Ibid).

The United States had so many of its interests at stake in the Northeast Asia. It was the most important strategic partner for most of the countries of the region. Its influence stretched far and wide. In this context, the case of South Korea stood out in the United States foreign policies as it lies in one of the most important strategic location of Northeast Asia. The Korean Peninsula lies in the heart of East Asia with Japan, China and Russia surrounding it. Korea had a history of being a pawn in the hands of its stronger neighbours. It was either a buffer zone or an area of conflict throughout its history. Through the deployment of troops in the South Korean soil the US maintained

the role as balancer in the regional security of the Northeast Asian countries. However, this role was constantly under the scrutiny of the regional countries and created problems in the relations from time to time. The US played the role of protector and provider to South Korea when it was badly in need of aid and assistance. The relation was also more like a patron-client arrangement. South Korea flourished and rose in every field owing a lot to the support and assistance of the United States and became one of the developed countries of the world in a short span of time. Even in trade, South Korea became the United States' seventh largest trading partner ranking ahead of larger economies like France, Italy and India.

The security relationship between the United States and South Korea was central to the security of Northeast Asia. According to the Office of International Security Affairs, US Department of Defense, the US –South Korea combined defense structure rested on three strong pillars namely the 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty, Combined Forces and the annual Security Consultative Meetings (US Department of Defense 1995). They also went on to point out their continuing commitment to the terms of the Armistice Agreement of 1953. The deployment of American troops was a source of debate and discussion among the leaders of the regional countries. The American troops were deployed after the North Korean forces attacked South Korea in 1950. Protection of South Korea and American interests against North Korea was the main reason for the continued deployment as their nuclear threat was perceived as very dangerous by both the countries and even the other regional countries.

3.2 The Bush Doctrine and South Korea

The September 11, 2001 attack on the United States changed the course of American history. The United States came under terrorist attacks on their own soil. 19 terrorists from the terrorist group al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial passenger jet airliners

crashing two into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. The third crashed into the Pentagon and the fourth crashed into a field into Shanksville in Pennsylvania. Then Americans were left in shock, disbelief and total insecurity. Being the sole superpower of the world, they could not believe that such a tragedy has befallen on their nation and was so shaken by the incident and their whole notion of security also changed. For the first time, the Americans were insecure even on their own soil. George Soros wrote, "Until then, the idea that the United States could be challenged on its own soli and that U.S. citizens may be personally vulnerable did not enter into Americans' consciousness. The attack shattered people's sense of security." (Soros 2004). After this tragedy, the United States started the 'War on Terrorism'. It diverted its attention to security. The security of its people and its interests both at home and in the foreign countries were put on top priority. It was under these circumstances that the Bush Administration which earlier wanted to focus more on the domestic affairs embarked on a journey of active foreign policy to protect the American interests and the American people both at home and abroad. The main focus of the Bush administration's foreign policy went into the Middle East. America was fighting an unseen enemy and was scarred and scared for its own security. Major changes were adapted to make the US safer like the enactment of the USA Patriot Act on 26th October, 2001, withdrawal of the United States from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty on 14th December 2001, creation of the Department of Homeland Security on 25th November 2002, etc.

Bush followed a policy which emphasized on pre-emptive attack and unilateralism. In the search for its own security, the United States followed a policy of unilateralism in which the other countries felt threatened and this in turn added to more chaos in the global order with almost every country trying to secure its own security leading to a feeling of insecurity all over the world. At first, the Bush Administration had the support of the American people and the support and sympathy of many nations but with time and revelations of war crimes, the sympathy waned and his popularity rating also plummeted. Playing the role of the leader of the world, the Bush Administration went on to wage war with the Middle East countries of Afghanistan and Iraq. The war continues till today.

In its war against terrorism, the Bush administration's focus was diverted towards the country's relations with the Middle East and all other relations took a back seat including America's Asian affairs. Nevertheless, the Asian policy of the US was also affected considerably. China, Russia and Central Asian States' role as security partners went up, the value of Japan as an ally also went up and the pressure on North Korea to give up its nuclear programme increased (Gurtov 2006). Three main concerns of the Bush administration were terrorism, non-proliferation and its weakening influence (Feffer 2006). The American government wanted and also needed the support of their allies and partners and at the crucial time. The United States, together with the United Kingdom, NATO members states and even some non- NATO countries deployed their troops for the war on terror in Afghanistan and Iraq. The first appearance of the US and their allies in the war on terror showed a strong and unified stand. Off late, the support and unity seems to have fallen, crumbling down under pressure from their country as well as from the international community.

George Bush, after becoming the President followed a policy that could be characterized as ABC- Anything But Clinton and went to the extent of suspending talks with North Korea in his administration's foreign policy (Shin 2009). He had officials who wanted to emphasize on the strategy of dialogue and engagement on the one hand and on the other hand, others who supported the use of sanctions and other coercive measures to bring about the end of the regime as they believed that engagement would only add to the sustenance of the dangerous regime. Bush's personal distrust of Kim Jong-Il put him in the latter group. Thus, from the start of the Bush administration, the relationship between the North Korean regime and the US were headed towards a very rocky and hostile terrain. This in turn affected the carefully and precariously built foundation that the South Korean President Kim Dae Jung built through his Sunshine Policy and thereby affecting the US-South Korean relations.

The US-South Korean relations also went through changes mainly in their different take on security in the Korean Peninsula as the Bush administration adopted a hard stand against North Korea which according to many South Koreans was compromising their national security. It is in this light that some differences between the Clinton and the Bush administration needs to be pointed out and these differences were best summarized in four points by Mel Gurtov. Firstly, Clinton accepted that North Korea had legitimate security concerns, whereas Bush considered North Korea , as he said in his January 2002 State of the Union Address, part of an “axis of evil.” Secondly, Clinton believed in bargaining with North Korea and creating a reliable agreement, whereas Bush seemed to consider bargaining on a package deal the equivalent of appeasement. Thirdly, Clinton believed in the value of direct US-DPRK talks, for example, the US-DPRK joint Comminique in which the parties “stated that neither government would have hostile intent toward the other” and would work “to build a new relationship free from past enmity”- whereas Bush gave low priority to such talks, believing that North Korea could be pressured to dismantle its nuclear weapons facilities. And finally, Clinton believed that the use of force should be the last resort, whereas Bush believed in the utility of military threat- hence, his “axis of evil” speech, the 2001 Nuclear Posture Review mentioning North Korea as a potential target of US nuclear weapons and North Korea’s appearance in national strategy in connection with the doctrine of pre-emptive attack (Gurtov 2006). After the end of the Cold War, one of the most important objectives of the American Foreign Policy was the containment of “rogue” or “outlaw” states (Litwak 2002).

The North Korean policy review of the George W. Bush administration took several months to complete. The policy review announced in June 2001 was a general policy direction for talks with North Korea, but included few hints of precise US positions for those talks. North Korea avoided a formal response but sharply attacked the US motives in official North Korean media. North Korea also rejected forward movement in contacts with South Korea until the US showed more flexibility. South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung’s engagement policy with North Korea stalled and some in South Korea joined

with the North Korean media in blaming the Bush administration for the lack of progress (Sutter 2003).

3.3 Bush and Kim Dae Jung

Kim Dae Jung happened to be one of the most memorable Presidents of South Korea. He was the pioneer in pursuing engagement policy with North Korea and for making progress in engaging with the North however short the time. The Sunshine Policy was articulated by him, the 'Nelson Mandela of Asia,' in 1998. This policy was derived from one of the stories of Aesop's fables in which the wind and the sun compete to remove a man's coat. The wind blew so strongly only to make the man pulled his coat together even more. The sun shone so brightly that the man had to take his coat off. The moral of the story was that kindness, gentleness and persuasion win when force fails. This was the basic idea of the Sunshine Policy. The South Korean government, under the presidency of Kim Dae Jung wanted to engage North Korea through encouragement of talks and economic assistance. North Korea was otherwise always a threat to the security of South Korea and through engagement, the South Korean government wanted to better the relationship and lessen the pressure on its own security. In this regard, the United States which had a crucial role in influencing the outcome of the policy acted cold towards it and thereby stalling the development as well and making it less effective.

President Kim Dae Jung rested on the idea that North Korea's threatening position cropped up from insecurity and offered various carrots like economic aid, normalized relations, reduced security tensions. It was suppose to give Kim Jong-il a stake on the status quo and persuade him to give up the pursuit of dangerous new weapons (Cha 2002). The hawkish policy that the Bush administration pursued in the context of North Korea defied the logic of Kim Dae Jung's policy. Many scholars attributed the difficulties that the sunshine policy faced to the cold response of the Bush administration. However,

there was a positive sign in 2002 when the reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong-il met South Korean President Kim Dae Jung in the inter-Korean Summit held from June 13-15, 2000. It was found out later that the North Korean government was paid 500 million USD to attend the Summit causing a political scandal. Nevertheless, the South-North relations seemed to have headed towards a slow but eventual promise of better relations. However, with the terrorist attack on America on September 11, 2001, and the subsequent event of the State of the Union Address of President Bush addressing North Korea as part of the, 'Axis of evil', the relationship soured. Many Koreans blamed the Bush government for the failure of the Sunshine Policy. Kim Dae Jung made a mark in history by visiting Pyongyang in 2000, marking the first meeting of North Korean and South Korean leaders since the end of the war. He followed a dovish policy engagement with North Korea, a policy which the hawkish government of the Bush administration did not give much priority.

Kim and Bush did not share similar views on many issues regarding security in terms of the North Korean threat in the Korean Peninsula. Till the moment of his death, Kim Dae Jung expressed hope that the Obama administration would continue to carry on the development with North Korea from where the Clinton administration had left. He blamed Bush for undermining his Sunshine Policy though Bush reversed the hardened policy that he followed in his first term. It was noteworthy to notice how the cold treatment of the Bush towards the North Korean government and also towards Kim's Sunshine Policy did a lot of damage to the security of South Korea and the whole region as a whole. The ties between North Korea and South Korea, the United States and North Korea and even the alliance of South Korea and the United States were negatively affected. The very fact that the US government was not prepared to treat Pyongyang as a sovereign country at par with other members of the international community provided an alibi to the North Korean regime to aggressively pursue its nuclear programme and bargain hard at the negotiating table.

3.4 Bush and Roh Moo-hyun

Roh Moo-hyun was not among the favourite candidates of the United States to win the 2003 South Korean Presidential election. His ascent to the highest political office of South Korea heralded the power of a new generation in South Korea, the so-called 386 generation, people who attended university in the 1980s and were born in the 1960s. They were mainly against the authoritarian rule and advocated an assertively nationalist stand towards the United States and Japan and a softer stand, like that of the previous administration of Kim Dae Jung towards North Korea. He continued the Sunshine Policy of engagement towards North Korea like his predecessor. The theme for his government was, "Participatory Government," and he also wanted to make South Korea the centre of business in the region. The issues of North Korea and the US-South Korea alliance were also taken into account for re-evaluation as Roh won the presidential elections through the voters who were voting with strong anti-American sentiments. President Roh's foreign policy team was also divided like the Bush administration. He had a nationalist or independence group on the one hand and a pro-alliance, pro-American group on the other hand. The alliance group of the foreign ministry called the other group, "Talibans of the BlueHouse" (Kim Tong 2010).

There was also an attempt on the part of the Roh administration to re-evaluate the country's relations with the United States. He was perceived as an anti-American leader before his presidential campaign. There was a wave of anti-Americanism in the South Korean society largely owing to the incident where two South Korean girls were killed by an armoured vehicle of the US Army. Both the soldiers involved met with the US Army court martial but the Kim Dae Jung's government insisted on a South Korean court trial for them which did not happen as the US military personnel fell under the jurisdiction of the US military courts according to the US-ROK Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). President Bush also expressed his regret to President Kim Dae Jung about the incident. The eventual end was the South Korean Justice Ministry stating their dissatisfaction over the verdict but agreeing

to comply with the process. This incident was one of the main reasons behind anti-Americanism in South Korea at that time and partly responsible for Roh's victory in the presidential elections of 2003, as he was perceived by the public to be an anti-American leader.

The most notable contribution of the Roh administration was its relentless pursuit for concluding a FTA with the US. The United States and South Korea signed the United States-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) on the 30th of June 2007. It is yet to be approved by the Congress. Under the FTA, nearly 95% of bilateral trade in consumer goods and industrial would become duty free within three years of the date the FTA enters into force. As the first US FTA in a major Asian economy, it could become a model for trade agreements for the rest of the region and highlight the US commitment and engagement to the Asia-Pacific region

3.5 Rising China Influence in the US-South Korean Alliance

The rise of China in the international scene was observed closely by the global community, most notably the United States. The Chinese and America were big powers vying for more security interests in the world. In economic, social and political sphere, they cooperated and competed and the United States under the Bush administration considered China as a strategic competitor rather than partner. Even in the East Asian region, their competition with each other was not lessened. In fact, it was one area in which the US and China's competitive streaks might have been best portrayed. The United States had been the most powerful and longest ally of the South Korean nation. China had been on the side of the North Korean government since they shared similar

ideals based on communism. The US and China were in direct confrontation with each other in the Korean War and since the signing of the armistice, both were influential in the Korean Peninsula in their own sphere of influence. One of the main fears of China was the influx of North Korean refugees in its land should a war break out in the Korean Peninsula amidst other fears. The US' main fear was the use of nuclear weapons by North Korea.

However, over the years, China began to understand the importance of globalization and globalized its economy in a massive way, opening up to the world. Since then, China has been on the rise and the global community's eye is glued to the progress and rise of China. China is developing very fast and threatening even the position of the world superpower, the United States. The rise of China in the world platform has been extraordinary. The rise of China would eventually threaten the position of the United States in their quest to have supremacy over international relations. While the Americans were fighting a long and exhausting battle in the Middle East, draining and stretching its limits to the hilt, battling a recession in its domestic politics which is reverberating throughout its foreign policies, China woke up like a sleeping giant and was making its presence known in international politics. China is continuing to rise whereas the Americans are struggling to get a grip on the position of being the sole superpower of the world. There were also many realities that the United States were coming to terms with, in the context of the rise of China.

China is undoubtedly the largest country in East Asia and wields enormous influence and power in the region. The Chinese had very diplomatically handled the Korean nuclear crisis so far, maintaining a very safe stand and trying not to annoy any of the nations in the region. China had a long history with the Korean nation owing to their geographic closeness. Their shared history was of a very complex and complicated kind. China was close to North Korea and the United States, to South Korea. There was a sort of balance in this sense because both the Koreas were backed up by a really strong and influential

power whose security interests were at stake in the Korean Peninsula. This balance was threatened with the growing closeness between China and South Korea and the increasing disparity in the US-South Korea alliance. China then became the real threat to the American interests in South Korea. The issue of North Korea became the gluing factor in the US-South Korean alliance although even in this field, there have been differences lately.

In the case of North Korea, Chinese support was very crucial as it was the protector of North Korea for long and had a very strong voice in influencing the decisions of North Korea. China, a member of the United Nations Security Council plays a very vital role in global politics. Bush wanted to come back to talks with North Korea only after it stops its nuclear programme. North Korea was not willing to do it as its nuclear program was its only guarantee of a say at the bargaining table. The North Korean regime considered the South Korean government as the puppet of the US and therefore did not give it much hearing. The role of China, under these circumstances became imperative in maintaining the security and stability in the region. In the case of North Korea and China, they shared common grounds in the sense that they both threatened the US security interests in the region as well as the security of South Korea and had communism as their main ideology. However, the commonality stopped there and the disparity began with China on the verge of becoming the challenge to US hegemony in international politics and the North Korean nation still remaining as one of the last existing communist countries as well as one of the poorest nations of the world.

It is in this context that the role of China as a threat to the US-South Korean alliance is studied in this paper. China wields enormous influence on the North Korean government. Its role in the region as well as in the world is increasing. The rise of China was the talk in the international scene as often stated in this paper. Apart from its nuclear threat, North Korea did not possess much whereas China, with its rising status by global standards and growing relationship with South Korea had become the main threat in the US-South Korea

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alliance. Without the help of China, it was possible that South Korean forces might be enough for the North Koreans because though the North Koreans had boasted of having a huge army, the South Koreans with their technological superiority might have the upper hand in the conflict. But the nuclear weapons threat loom large in this context and the US and China came in for their own interests as well as the interest and safety of the world. This was one of the most precariously arranged situations of the world which may herald the coming of even the World War III.

The Chinese role in dealing with its neighbours in the Korean Peninsula had shifted from passive to active since the end of the Cold War. Earlier, the Chinese did not want to get too entangled in the Korean crisis even though they knew that the stability of the Korean Peninsula was vital for their own security. In the past, China maintained a safe distance even from North Korea though it helped by supplying aid and is considered to be the main ally of the North Korean regime. It was one nation in the world that the North Korean have listened to considerably owing to the support and aid that the North Korea government got from them. The 2006 nuclear test of Pyongyang had upset and caused severe strains in its relations with Beijing. The Six Party talks, first of which was held after North Korea withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2003.

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The Six-Party Talks consisted of six countries namely the United States of America (USA) or the United States (US), the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Republic of Korea (ROK), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Japan and the Russian Federation. The main aim of these talks was to find a peaceful solution to the threat of the North Korean nuclear programmes. The United States requested the involvement of South Korea, China, Japan and Russia to avoid any bilateral negotiations with North Korea because of the breach of the 1994 Agreed Framework. The Agreed Framework of 1994 was signed between the United States and North Korea on October 21, 1994 in which the North Korean regime was to freeze its nuclear programmes and replace it with more nuclear proliferation resistant light water reactors and also to encourage better relations between

the United States and North Korea through a step by step process. The Agreed Framework was broke down in 2003. North Korea withdrew from the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty on January 10, 2003 and finally announced that they have developed nuclear weapons on February 10, 2005. This was followed with the conduct of nuclear tests in October 9, 2006 and again on May 25, 2009 with also a series of missile tests.

In all these developments in the region, the role of China stood out. It was common knowledge that China was the closest and perhaps the only ally of North Korea. However, like all other relations, the relations between China and North Korea were also not without its share of differences and difficulties. China had played a crucial role in persuading North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons programmes best evident in the role that it played in the Six- Party Talks i.e. the host. Jim Walsh, a security expert in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) opined that the role of China was crucial as the North Korean would not just open up its country for inspection and it would need China to watch its back (Nesnera 2007). The importance of China had grown significantly in the Korean issue as the North Korea could listen and respond to its views on comparison with the other countries in the region which North Korea perceived as hostile to it and was usually on the defensive while dealing with the other countries. There was also the factor of the 1961 Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between them which is still valid.

Even so, the extent of China's role was also not very secure as North Korea tried to make decisions independent of China's influence from time to time. But in comparison with the other countries of the region and also the United States, China was the best bet in persuading the North Koreans to deter from using nuclear weapons or any threat of this kind in the Korean Peninsula. This elevated the role of China in dealing with the crisis in the Korean peninsula and also with the security of the Northeast Asian region. In a way it greatly diminished the role of the United States in the region which was of strategic importance to them. The US therefore feared that the role of China might undermine their influence and interests in the region. In a government which was grappling with two wars

in the Middle East, the United States' hands were full and the prospect of dealing with the ever increasing influence of China in the East Asian country was seemingly becoming overwhelming. However, there was too much at stake in the Northeast Asian region and America tried to fight for its once influential and powerful role on the region. They faced the Chinese influence head on and tried to maintain and improve their relations with their allies though their influence seemed to be waning.

The issue of the North Korean nuclear threat was of grave concern for all the Northeast Asian countries as all of them tried their different ways of handling with the problem and all were not satisfied with each other's progress. The United States hard stand against the North Korean did not help in any way. They further aggravated the problem and this was causing a rift between the US and their allies in the region especially South Korea. South Korea was in a very vulnerable state where its security was directly at stake and therefore treaded very cautiously in the matter. Even China did not want a war in the Korean Peninsula as it would be dangerous for its own security. South Korea and China therefore found a common ground in which both were aware of the implications of having a war in the Korean Peninsula. The United States, on the other hand continues with their hard stand as they considered themselves the leader of the world and they did not want to resort to appeasement in the case of North Korea and continued to have a tough stand on it shown especially under the Bush administration. But this did not mean that the US had entirely left the matter of dealing with the Korean crisis peacefully in the hands of the Chinese because the US was also still very active in this issue.

A lasting and peaceful resolution of the Korean crisis would ensure and provide the US with an opportunity "to develop an innovative and cost-effective national security policy , relieved of burdens that Americans need no longer impose" on themselves 'in the name of leadership and credibility" (Olsen 2002) .Olsen, a professor of National Security Affairs, US Naval Post graduate school conceded to the role of China if the requirement was to work with China or leaving it to China as it would still encourage the American side for

their grand exit strategy in Asia. He was also of the opinion that the Seoul and Pyongyang would be slow in resolving the core problems in the peninsula to engage the United States as a buffer and stabilizer (Ibid). But with the increased role of China and its rise in the world, the exhaustive wars in the Middle East and attempts to improve as well as maintain its economic position, the United States was keen on making a mark and competing with China even through cooperation to maintain their eminence in the region as this region was crucial to them both economically and politically and keeping the American influence and making their presence felt in this region was imperative to their position as the global leader.

Taiwan or the Republic of China continued to be an issue of tension between the United States and China. The US did not have formal relations with Taiwan but had a de facto relation with it. On April 1979, the US signed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) which created domestic legal authority for conduct of unofficial relations with Taiwan. It also ensured the US commitment to assisting Taiwan in maintaining its defensive capability. The relations between the United States and China during the Bush presidency were marred with reports of human rights violations and tensions in China and also with regard to the US supply of military equipments to the Taiwanese government. Throughout the American history and their role, the American government had been able to maintain a somewhat peaceful and amicable atmosphere despite the always existing underlying tensions that could brew up into a war anytime. Knowingly, China and the US had kept their distance from each other's businesses until a direct attack on its interests was observed. However, as the world progresses and since international relations is dynamic and ever-changing, the relations have also faced changes.

The two issues between the US and China therefore, were the issue of the Korean Peninsula and the issue of Taiwan. These issues were intertwined with security issues. But the Bush administration had maintained peace with the Chinese by maintaining their "One China Policy." Bush said, "Any unilateral actions to change the status quo by Taiwan's

government” will find opposition from the United States. But for the Chinese, they felt that as so long as the American government continue to openly sell arms to Taiwan, the statements of the US President and other officials does not have much implications of peace and cooperation from the US.

Security was the main issue in the Northeast Asian region and the region presented a very complex and complicated picture where the relations were precariously balanced and were very volatile as any disturbance on the balance could result in a full scale war, putting the whole region in jeopardy. South Korean security lies at the heart of this security dilemma. It had the backing of the US, but its increasing closeness to China had caused ripples of uncertainty and doubt to the ally who had been on its side for many decades about its intentions and motives. Even the South Korean society was much divided as the older generation remembered the benevolence shown to them and also the rescue of their nation from the hands of the Communist North in the past while the younger generation wanted their nation to be more assertive in their decision-making without too much American influence. There were many domestic challenges in the South Korean society for the US troops’ presence in South Korea which would be dealt extensively in the next chapter.

South Korea was caught between the United States and China. Two main possible outcome of the dilemma of South Korea could be clearly seen. The first was that if South Korea could not play their cards well, they could lose the security of their nation if one of the two nations decides to strike against it or abandon it at the hands of the other. It already had a hostile neighbour in North Korea which was ready to attack any moment they see an opening and it would not help in any way. The second was that South Korea could play a precariously balanced game in which in which it could make an attempt to maintain the goodwill and friendship of both the nations and manage to get the most from the relations. However, the first one was too dangerous for its security and South Korea cannot afford to anger any one of the great powers, the second seemed close to impossible as both the two nations were too competitive and would try to outdo each other at every step and in the

process, South Korea could become a victim of their competitiveness and their show of power.

The US-South Korea alliance were at a juncture where they needed to review certain policy changes and still hold on to some form of continuity of their past relations. The role of China had become so important in maintaining the peace in the region and both the US and South Korea were aware of the fact. The Bush administration urged the Chinese government to drop its “traditional neutrality” and take a more aggressive stance against the governments that could be potential threats to the US interests and to the world. The Chinese were aware of their growth and increasing influence at the international level but they were more absorbed in their domestic affairs for quite sometime.

The United States decided to rope in China in its efforts to bring peace and stability in the region. They wanted China to play a more active role than it used to play and indeed, China with the increasing awareness of its rise in the status quo in the international system was becoming far more active than it used to be in the past. Inactivity on their part would have been perceived negatively by the US and the US-China relations were such that China cannot afford to lose the goodwill of the American government. Even in the presidential debate with Senator John Kerry in 2004, it was clearly shown that the Bush administration thought that the previous administration of Bill Clinton gave too much to Pyongyang in exchange for too little. Chinese foreign minister Li Zhaoxing said that the “entire international community” agreed that the six-nation approach was the best way to deal with the problem. He also expressed that nothing was more precious than peace. (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3705948.stm>)

3.6 The US Troops Presence in South Korea

The United States had troops deployed in the South Korean soil since their entry into the Korean War. At present, the United States has nearly 40,000 troops on South Korean soil. The issue of the deployment of American troops in the Korean Peninsula has been a matter of much debate and discussion among the Northeast Asian countries. President Kim Dae Jung had emphasized on the continued American presence even after unification of the two Koreas to help in stabilizing the balance of power in the region. There were mixed reactions to the realignment of US troops in the Peninsula. Many lives were affected. Though some people have accepted the cash-for-land deal offered by the South Korean government, some had refused to budge from their place. The farmers called it 'American Bullying' while Hillary Clinton fired South Korea for 'historical amnesia' implying that the South Koreans were losing their 'understanding of the importance of our position there and what we have done over so many decades to provide them the freedom that they have enjoyed' (Faiolo 2006).

Even on the American side, there were mixed feelings about the case of the deployment of troops in the Korean Peninsula. Col. John P. Cummings of the United States Army on March 19, 2004 in his Strategy Research Project defends the withdrawal plan of the US by stating that the "Withdrawal of US ground forces from South Korea will not degrade the military readiness of the alliance defence. On the contrary, it will eliminate one of the major sources of growing anti-Americanism among the South Korean population. Moreover, United States can utilize ground forces that are re-deployed from the peninsula in the Global War on Terrorism, and save the associated costs of forward based troops" (Cummings 2004).

Some still argued that the United States Forces in South Korea was an essential element in regional security and American global military position. They claimed that the forward deployed forces in the Pacific ensured a fast and global crisis response capability, discouraged the emergence of a regional hegemon, improved American ability to

influence a wide spectrum of important issues in the region, facilitated economy and force by reducing the number of United States Forces required to meet national security objectives, overcame the handicaps of time and distance presented by the vast Pacific Ocean and demonstrated to their friends and allies and potential allies a tangible indication of the US' interest in the security of the entire region (US Department of Defense 1995). Earlier, after the signing of the 1953 armistice, the situation in the Korean Peninsula though volatile in nature seemed to have been frozen in time as neither party wanted to disturb the status quo until the nuclear tests of the North Korean government started since 1993.

North Korean nuclear programmes were threatening the peace and security of the region and the biggest and strongest country in the region, China had been their long time ally and benefactor. China's role in the security concerns of the region was therefore on the rise, along with the rise of China in the international system. The US troops in the Korean Peninsula was geared up for a very unpredictable but dangerous situation if the uncertainties over their security issues between the nations continue and in this light, the role of China was very crucial as it wielded enormous influence over the region. It is also noteworthy that the US troops in the Middle East owing to the two ongoing wars had increased in these areas and there was a slight decline of the US troops in Northeast Asia.

South Korean President Kim Dae Jung had pressed on the issue of the importance of continued American presence even after unification to help in stabilizing a balance of power in the region (Harrison 2001). The wartime operational control over the South Korean Forces was still under the control of the United States. This was one of the main reasons why North Korea insisted on a US-North Korean dialogue to build up any new peacekeeping arrangements. According to Harrison, the only way to avoid this demand for the US would be to give the operational control to the South (Ibid). The American government under Bush wanted to pursue and engage North Korea on talks about giving up their nuclear programmes through the Six Party Talks and not through bilateral

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negotiations. Since the breach of the 1994 Agreed Framework, the US has become very cautious in dealing with the North Korean regime as they do not want to be let down again. The United States were assisting as well as building up the South Korean military troops into very technologically advanced and well disciplined troops.

The wartime operational control was in the hands of the United States in the Bush administration but both the South Korean government and the American government had agreed to transfer wartime operational control to the South Korean military on 17th April, 2012. Admiral Robert Willard, head of the US Pacific Command testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that operational control transition could clearly occur in 2012 (AFP news Agency 2010). This was also an indicator that the US was reducing its leading role into a supporting role. The two wars in the Middle East had been the hub of debate and discussion throughout the Bush era and it also stretched the US military as well as the civilians to the hilt.

The United States could have been interested in the reduction or dismissal of the North Korean government had the two wars in the Middle East not happened. But the fact of the matter was that due to the wars in the Middle East, the US policies and attention were mainly diverted towards the Middle East. However, the other regions were also not totally neglected in the true sense. In a way, we can contribute the hard line policies towards the North Korean regime by the US under the Bush administration on their 'War on Terrorism'. Kim Dae Jung, with his Sunshine policy received a somewhat lukewarm response from the American President Bush.

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Even President Roh Moo-Hyun followed the steps of his predecessor Kim Dae Jung in following the Sunshine policy after he took over. He thought that a policy of engagement could work and feared the consequences of a failed policy of coercion which might result in a war in the Peninsula of devastating and destructive proportion (Hanlon 2003). This in

turn would affect the security of the United States' security interests in the region and the security of the regional countries as a whole. All these insecurities can be curbed by the effective and efficient role of China in the pursuit of peace in the region.

The first test of the rise of China as a truly global leader could be best determined by its handling of and contribution towards the security of its region. Even the United States admitted to the importance of the role of China in keeping the security of the region intact. China and the US had many differences and disagreements at all levels and issues and they were also tough competitors to each other. However, there were certain issues where they shared common interests and goals and where they found a common ground to work towards achieving those goals. One of the main goals of the US-China alliance was the stability and security in the region especially with regard to the security of South Korea in the face of the ever present North Korean nuclear threat. The Bush administration had played a pivotal though controversial role in maintaining the security of South Korea for which the US-South Korean alliance suffered major setbacks also. However, their dealings and talks with China over the North Korean nuclear threat had gained considerable result with China becoming more active and vocal, though very diplomatically handled by the Chinese officials.

Amidst all the brouhaha over the security of the region as well as the US security interests, there were some development albeit slow and passive leadership. The US-South Korean alliance had a rough patch under the Bush administration because of their hawkish foreign policies and unilateralism. Of course, the Bush administration did open their eyes to strategic considerations but the damage was done. It would be difficult to repair the damages done to the US-South Korea security relations but it was not entirely impossible either. Under these circumstances, China whose relations with both the United States and South Korea bilaterally were reaching new heights became very pertinent to the issue of security. China was one nation that the other nations of the region

and the US were pinning their hopes on to bring about better security and stability in the region.

For the United States, it was threading cautiously on very thin ice as it was risking its position as the most influential player in the region. However, it was also practical enough to see the light and therefore had urged China to play along with them as well as the other nations in securing peace in the region and specifically to the security of South Korea. China had attempted to present a very neutral picture so far. But the Chinese were also aware of their rise in the world and that the whole world, especially the US was watching their every moves and actions. Like the saying that with great position comes great responsibility, China, whose position was changing and on the brink of challenging or rather, challenging the US, the superpower of the world for world leadership would need to play a greater role in maintain security in the world. Their role in maintaining the security of the East Asian region would be viewed and reviewed closely by the world community.

Thus, with regard to US-South Korea relations, China played a decisive role. North Korea continued with their nuclear programmes and it was up to the American government to pursue the Chinese government to play a more active role in securing the security of South Korea at the risk of giving up its status quo. The North Korean nuclear threat was a clear and present danger to the security of the region as well as to American security interests. This danger was out there for all to see and the nations in the region as well as the Americans were working together to bring about a possible solution which would be feasible and acceptable to all parties. The Chinese threat to the American interests and status quo in the region was subtle at the onset but it became more explicit and it was best seen in the affect it had on the US-South Korean alliance.

CHAPTER 4

SOUTH KOREA'S DOMESTIC CHALLENGES TO THE PRESENCE OF THE US TROOPS

4.1 American Presence in South Korea

Change is inevitable in international relations. Countries keep evolving according to the need of the hour and build their relations with other countries according to what they think is best for their country. The United States had also evolved a lot, especially after the tragic September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on their country. Its foreign policies were revamped to suit the circumstances. It started on a journey of unilateralism and pre-emptive attacks in its foreign policies. There were profound changes in the South Korean society too. The country that rose from being one of the poorest nations in the world into one of the developed nations of the world underwent a lot of changes in its politics, economy and social life. With the changes in the society, there were changes in the thinking and attitude of the people. There were many changes even in the domestic domains. Along with the changes came a change in their attitude towards the US. Whereas the older generation of the Korean society, especially those people belonging to the time when the US helped the poor and weak South Korea was still grateful towards the US, the newer and younger lot had a more critical and apprehensive of the US governments' relations with their government. There was a demand for lessening American influence in the policy and decision-making of the government of South Korea.

The American lifestyle and influence had indeed seeped into the South Korean society. When the Americans rescued South Koreans from the North Korean attack in 1950, their troops were deployed in the South Korean soil and since then, their deployment continued. The presence of the American troops in the South Korean soil was a sign of security and friendship during the early post Cold War era. It showed the seriousness and commitment of the US in defending and supporting South Korea. The presence of the

American troops in South Korea deterred many nations from bullying or attacking South Korea, especially North Korea. Something came along with the American presence in South Korea and that is the American influence on the Korean society. The Koreans were exposed to the American way of life, their style of education and the American influenced seeped into the lives of the South Koreans.

At present, we can say that the United States and the South Korean relations are very strong. Despite the changes and the challenges in the relation, under the leadership of the Obama and the Lee Myung-Bak, the relation is heading into a positive direction. However the tasks ahead is not going to be an easy one and requires the careful balancing act on both sides not to upset each other and also the better understanding of other factors which may affect the relations. During the Bush administration, the relation was faced and also proved dangerous and deteriorated as the Bush administration's initial unfriendly attitude towards North Korea created a situation in which the nuclear danger to the Korean Peninsula was heightened. North Korea had to play with the only card they have i.e. the nuclear card that gave them a say at the negotiating table. But the Bush administration was not willing to have a bilateral talk with them and it aggravated the problem further.

The South Korean government under Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo-hyun followed a policy of engagement with the North Korean government but without much support from South Korea's strongest and most important ally and not forgetting the superpower tag, the US, the efforts did not bear much result. Their policies came under question from their own people also as the South Korean people thought that their government was giving too much to the North Korean government for too less. But even here, the United States could have played a more effective role had they allow it but it chose to give North Korea not much importance and this action or rather inaction of the United States proved disadvantages to its security interests. It reverberated in the policy making and discussion even today because now it looks like the task has fallen into the hands of the

Chinese and the United States have lost a good chance to be a responsible and credible leader in the region. Though the new governments i.e. the Lee Myung Bak's government in South Korea and the Obama's administration in the US are mending the damages, the task is an uphill task. The reality of North Korea's nuclear program and the emerging or rather already emerged role of China in South Korea remains.

South Korea could have play wise and benefit from all these factors or be drawn into a quagmire where it might become a helpless pawn in the hands of stronger nations. There was a thin line between these two positions and South Korea had to tread cautiously. South Korea was caught between its long time ally and partner, the United States and its geographical neighbour and rising power, China who yielded enormous influence over the region. The fate of South Korea was directly related to the location in the region. The United States, on the other hand had to be more sensitive to the needs and sentiments of the South Korean populace to maintain its position as South Korea's top partner as well as open up to the reality of China in the politics of the region. Though the South Koreans were so influenced by the American culture, one can still notice the Chinese influence in their lives owing to the history between them, best depicted through their language 'Hangul' which has Chinese influence all over it and also the practice of Confucianism in the society till today amidst Christianity which was introduced to them by the western world. There were still many rituals and practices which were influenced by the Chinese.

As stated earlier, the US under Bush and the South under Kim Dae Jung did not start off in a very amicable way though their differences were also not in stark contrast except in the case of North Korea. At the beginning of the Bush administration, the American government was not very keen to establish relations with the North Korean regime and due to their lukewarm or rather cold response to the policies towards North Korea, there were not many achievements towards engagement with the North side. Due to this, the efforts of the South Korean President to engage North Korea did bear much fruit albeit some noteworthy developments like the meetings of the leaders in the 2000 meeting at

Pyongyang, permission to some large South Korean businesses to venture unto the North side and also the brief meetings of family members belonging to either side of the Peninsula who were separated. Many South Koreans and a few North Koreans blame the Bush administration for the failure of the engagement policy.

Though the attention of the Bush administration was focused mainly on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, North Korea was also recognized as a threat to the American interests and security which was clearly stated by Bush through the inclusion of North Korea in his 'Axis of Evil' in his 'State-of-the-Union Address' in 2002. This further undermined the role of the United States as a stabilizer in the region as it aggravated the already existing problems that the South Korean government has with the North Korean government. The role of China in determining the security of the region was given attention and even though it could come at the expense of a decreased influence and power in the region, the US had to acknowledge that they need the Chinese assistance in dealing with North Korea. The American government put more pressure on the Chinese government, the government that could have some voice in affecting the decisions of the North regime to persuade North Korea to give up their nuclear programme which was threatening the security dimensions of the entire region.

The United States invested heavily in this region and the instability of the region cost it profoundly. It was aware of the role that China could play in stabilizing the security issues of the region but at the same time, it was also very mindful of its implications. If China became too powerful in the region, it could spell doom for the US in the future with regard to its role and influence in the region. It had to find a way out in which they could get the best deal for itself. To do this, the US was in a position where it could not overlook or undermine the role of China. It had two options, the first option was that it can seek to cooperate with and include and also acknowledge the role of China in maintaining peace and security in South Korea. The second option was the opposite i.e. try to downplay the role of China in the region especially with regard to the South Korean

security. The latter choice could prove disastrous and end up with chaos and destruction and even the possibility of a nuclear war. The first choice could prove to be a stabilizer in the region. The American government had to take note that the unilateralism which it so profess in its policies would eventually had to give way to multilateralism. During the Bush administration, the attention to the Middle East Wars and Bush' unilateralism may weakened and worsened the position of the Americans in South Korean society and even the whole Northeast Asian society.

The United States had enjoyed their moments as the undisputed superpower for a long time but as international relations keep changing, so also the dynamics that drive world politics. This is not to say that the United States have fallen from their position as world leader but this is to emphasize on the coming of age of other nations of the world best articulated by Fareed Zakaria in putting it as, "the rise of the rest" (Zakaria 2008). He went on to say that the emerging international system was likely to be quite different than the past because though at the politico-military level, the US still have dominance, in every other dimension, the distribution of power was shifting away from American dominance which does not mean an anti-American world but moving into a post-American world, a world defined and directed by many places and by many people (Ibid). This was a reality that America needed to accept.

The United States, being considered the land of the free and the most liberal country of the world was often under the curious watch of the global community. Sometimes their benevolence and mistakes were magnified due to the status quo that they have in the world. Every action or policy that the American government came up with was always under the scanner of the world community. During the Bush administration, the US government received a lot of criticism because of their unilateralism and hawkish policies that earned them the global community's ire and resentment. The US role as a responsible world leader was questioned and with the rise of other players in the international politics, especially China, the United States had to get a firm hold on their

ground and at the same time face the possible reality of a multilateral world that was heading its way. In the words of Robert A. Scalapino, "But in the future, the United States will be a leader, not *the* leader. Not infrequently, America will serve as the head of a movement by like-minded states, but there will be a number of instances where others are required to step forth as initiators and primary actors. The age of *pax Americana* is coming to an end. The new premium will be upon collective decision-making and more intensive burden-sharing" (Scalapino 1992). The Americans had to face the possibility of multilateralism in the future as the international politics, dynamic as it is moves from an era of American dominance to an era of the rise of many nations with China leading the pack.

4.2 Anti-Americanism in South Korea

Anti-Americanism became a worldwide trend. The rise of anti-Americanism was an inevitable outcome in the changing relationship between the two nations. The new change was also a result of a steady change in the Korean perception of the United States. America had become a nearly universal scapegoat symbol because of its supremacy and accomplishment. South Korean anti-Americanism also fell on the global pattern and should be understood in that particular context (Kim Jinwung 1994). International relations were very dynamic and constantly changing. In this context, the changes in the domestic sphere had a very profound role in determining the role that the countries took on the global stage. South Korea was no exception. The changes in the relations with their partners especially the case of the United States was directly linked to the changes in its domestic sphere.

With the change in its position and status in the world from being one of the poorest countries in the world to one of the developed countries, South Korea had travelled a long way and was on the road to more self discovery as a nation and also more progress and development. For a long time, the South Koreans had perceived the US troops in their land as imperative to their security and also a sign of America's commitment to them.

With the threat of the North Korean nuclear programme hovering over it, the South Koreans lived in a somewhat insecure atmosphere and began to prepare itself for protection against any threat to their sovereignty.

The assistance of the US to the South Korean security was best seen in the deployment of the US troops in South Korean soil and also the training and assistance that the US provided. The US way of life had also seeped into the Korean society like no other foreign country with the exception of China and Japan who shared a long history with South Korea owing to the geographical location that they were in. The Koreans were quick in realizing the importance of globalization and through the encouragement of the United States embraced globalization and developed their economy to where it is today. The South Koreans benefitted a lot from the benevolence of the United States. However, the South Korean society's perspectives on the role and deployment of the US troops in its soil are changing. It is now plagued by anti-American sentiments at the domestic level along with the changes in world politics at the international level. The rise of China in the world was also in no way helping the American cause.

The Americans and South Koreans debated and discussed the issue of burden-sharing. Even many in the US opposed the increase in defense spending which happened post the September 11 terrorist attack. Uk Heo and Robert J. Eger III in their extensive and elaborate analysis on defence spending came to the conclusion that defense spending had a negative indirect effect on economic growth via investment and export. Defense spending has an indirect, delayed, negative effect on the US economy. But the direct impact of defense spending seemed to be rather small (Heo and Eger III 2005). Both the United States and the South Korean government faced harsh criticism on the way their budget tilted towards defense spending. In accordance with the Special Measures Agreement (SMA), the South Korean government would cover 50 percent of the non-personnel stationing costs of the US forces by 2004. The Republic of Korea's Ministry of National Defense (MND) and the United States Forces in Korea (USFK) signed the Land

Partnership Plan (LPP) in March 2002 under which the USFK would reduce the number of its bases from 41 to 23 and return to South Korea roughly 50 percent of the land that they were using, equivalent to some 135 million meters by 2011. The US is a partner in the ROK and the US Combined Forces (CFC). The Commander of the USFK also serves as the Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command (CINCUNC) and the CFC. The basic purpose of the defense cost sharing was to create a “stable stationing environment for the USFK and to contribute to the ROK-US combined defense capabilities” (Paek 2009).

There was discord between the US and the South Korean people over a lot of issues. Many South Koreans, especially the younger generation resented the American role in their nation’s decisions and policies as they are of the idea that the United States had too much dominance in the decisions and policies of the South Korean government. In the words of Choong nam Kim, “Post-Korean war generations, which make up 80% of the current population, have grown resentful of Washington’s influence over their country. They are ashamed of Korea’s military dependence in the United States and have come to understand that the United States acts solely on its own interests when dealing with Korea” (Choong nam Kim 2003). The fear of foreign influence, especially the United States, increased after the Asian financial crisis in 1997. While the people of South Korea desire their government to play an independent role in its foreign policy decision-making, some administrations in Seoul also began to perceive unnecessary American influence on issues particularly related to questions of peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula. Kim Dae Jung’s Sunshine Policy was in sharp contrast to President Bush’s muscular approach to resolve the North Korean nuclear issues, According to Choong Nam Kim, the North Korean threat is nothing new whereas the American perception differs and North Korea is included in its ‘axis of evil.’ This has been the cause of the ever-widening chasm to develop between South Korea and the United States (Ibid).

As in fellow Asian countries, such as the Philippines and Japan, so in South Korea, behavior and activities of American troops often fuelled anti-Americanism. In 2002, for example, the Americans were confronted with a new form of South Korean assertiveness directly aimed at the issue of the presence of the US troops in the South Korean soil. The rise of anti-American sentiments reached its zenith in the Yangju highway incident in which two 14 year old Korean girls, Shin Hyo Sun and Shim Mi-seon were killed by an American Army armoured vehicle returning to base in Uijeongbu on a public road after training. This Highway 56 incident on June 13, 2002 increased the already existing anti-American sentiments that were slowly seeping into the Korean society. In accordance with the US-ROK Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) in which it was stated that the US personnel fell under the jurisdiction of the US military courts if they commit crimes while performing official duties, the two US personnel's case was decided and they were acquitted. This sparked a wave of anti-Americanism like never before and even though apologies were made both at the civilian and military levels, it did not reduce the Korean anger for quite some time to come. US President George Bush even called up South Korean President Kim Dae Jung and expressed his regret over the death of the two Korean girls.

The USFK, formed in 1957 was always a topic of discussion and debate for the entire Northeast Asian region. Some peoples saw it as maintaining the peace in the Peninsula whereas others saw it as a direct threat to their nations. Victor D. Cha argued, "USFK changes should be neither the sacrificial lamb nor the bargaining chip for peace on the Peninsula but should be driven by a larger U.S.-ROK joint vision" (Cha 2004). He had blamed the biased media of the South Korea for the opposition of the USFK which seemed bent on reporting the complaints against the USFK and underplay any positive actions of the USFK. He further explained, "The Korean media underreports any positive or conciliatory actions taken by the United States to appease complaints about the military footprint. It often omits or ignores information that might contribute to a more balanced public debate on civil-military relations between the USFK and the host nation. An agreement, for example, to move USFK bases in Pyongtaek in recent years failed

largely because the South Korean government's commitment to underwrite costs did not materialize. Korean press reporting, however, focused largely on U.S. unwillingness to pay for the move, underemphasizing the South Korean pledge (Ibid). Incidents like this had been responsible for the perceived negative image of the US in South Korea. Even the issue of imports of beef from the US which was blocked in 2003 over the fear of mad cow disease, the Geneva Conference of 1954 which put the blame on the US for obstructing unification efforts, the No Gun Ri incident in which South Koreans civilians were killed by the US 7th Cavalry Regiment in 1950 near No Gun Ri village, the Gwangju massacre in which the US army was involved in bringing down the protests against military dictator Chun Doo-hwan and many more incidents where the South Koreans felt discriminated against and where injustice of the US prevailed sparked anti-Americanism.

South Korean governments were also partly responsible for misleading the general public in bringing about anti-American sentiments and even today, though the outright attacks have ceased up to a certain level, bad press still haunts the US as there is still biases in the reports regarding the US presence which rakes in a lot of anti-American sentiments from the people causing a lot of tension in the US-South Korean alliance especially with regard to security. Cha went on further and stressed on the importance of China by saying that the first key to make the USFK more acceptable in Korea and in the region depended on China. "In order to enhance regional stability and mollify geostrategic tensions between China and the United States over Korea, efforts at remaking the U.S.-ROK alliance, the USFK, and the trilateral cooperation should be as low profile and transparent to Beijing as possible." (Ibid)

According to Hayes, "The United States could not allow a client state such as South Korea to leapfrog past Japan to nuclear great-power status and undermine the global non-proliferation regime, a buttress of American nuclear hegemony" (Hayes 1988). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the war in Vietnam was becoming more and more difficult for

the United States and the US credibility was beginning to be doubted in the region, South Korea appeared to have embarked on a plan to develop an independent military capability to reduce its dependence on the United States. The US intelligence discovered in early 1970s that the South Korean government was toying with the idea of acquiring a nuclear weapon capability. This quest of the South Korean government was abruptly cut short by the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who ended the South Korean bomb program by threatening to close down the security alliance which kept American troops and nuclear weapons in South Korea. In the years that followed, the United States restored South Korean faith in the credibility of the American nuclear umbrella (Ibid). This particular development certainly promoted the US cause of non-proliferation, but the South Koreans were perhaps disappointed that the US government scuttled their indigenous nuclear weapons programme and made it certain that South Korean dependence on the US would continue. In the process, this particular development contributed to unspoken and unarticulated anti-Americanism.

Robert Einhorn, a senior advisor and analyst with the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) a political and defense issue think tank in Washington said that the rise in anti-Americanism sentiments over the past few years grew largely from South Korea's successes, particularly economic success since 1997. In addition to that the reason for anti-Americanism, Park Hyong-jung, senior research fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification said, "While dealing with the North Korea nuclear program, the United States had taken a hard-line policy, and President Bush has been a hard-liner. Many South Korean people didn't like the idea and they tend to blend anti-Bush with anti-Americanism." Many blame the Bush administration's unilateralism and also oppose the undermining of South Korean role in decision-making especially in matters related to the security concerns of South Korea (Joseph Giordano and Choe Singwon 2003). Thus, in a way, the Bush administration's policies were one of the main reasons for the rise of anti-Americanism in South Korea, although there were also cases of anti-Americanism before.

According to George Ehrhardt, "The change in the American governmental attitudes from January to June 2001 was dramatic, from opposing engagement and suggesting that the Agreed Framework needed to be revised to announcing that they were willing to talk to North Korea unconditionally and would continue to fund energy aid for North Korea." He also pointed that Secretary of State Colin Powell explicitly attributed this change to allied consultation (Ehrhardt 2004/2005). The US, however, resentful of the development of independent thinking of the South Korean government acknowledged the impact it had on the American policies towards the security relations. It started to take South Korea more seriously than it did five decades ago.

Even South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun had won the Presidential election based on his critical take on the United States and his opposition to their policies. He criticized the Bush administration for not negotiating with North Korea. He called for "modernizing" the U.S.-ROK alliance to make South Korea a more equal partner in the relationship. He demanded a renegotiation of the U.S.-South Korea Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) (Congressional Research Service 2003) Although he expressed reservations about the Iraq war, he justified his move of sending the South Korean troops to Iraq as a necessary move to maintain South Korea's ability to influence US policy towards North Korea and this in turn, prompted large anti-war demonstrations but the deployment of the South Korean troops was finally approved on April 2, 2003 mainly due to the support of the opposition, the Grand National Party (GNP) which supports close alliance relations with the United States (Ibid).

One of the many factors that could be attributed to the misunderstanding of South Korean society by the Americans in their attitude, behaviour and policy is that they had not kept pace with the growth of South Korean power and still reflected an origin where South Korea was weak and undeveloped and had not taken in the changes in South Korea's strength and its new sense of self importance, changes that would affect the US role and position in Korea (Gleysteen and Romberg 1987) Due to the differences culturally,

socially and economically, the United States and South Korea often went through perilous phases which hampered their relationship from time to time. However, both the nations were aware of the strategic importance that they have on each other and somehow found ways to reconciliation. Both the countries knew the implications of not having the support of each other as both their interests were so deeply intertwined and both needed the support of each other for their security interests.

4.3 Increased Chinese Influence over Seoul

China had often expressed its disapproval of the American troops in South Korean soil. Owing to the geostrategic position that South Korea was in, the issue of security was always a concern for the People's Republic of China. The two strongest American allies in the region, Japan and South Korea, having US troops in their home soil were closely scrutinized by China especially in the case of their military movements and actions. The very overriding and dominant role of the United States in the region had antagonized China over a long period of time. If the main rationale of the US military presence in both Japan and South Korea is for regional security, then one can argue, taking the Chinese case in context, that it had created more insecurity and tension than security in the region. But the big question was whether the withdrawal of the US troops from South Korea would make the region more secure. The Chinese perhaps would have liked the US forces to remain in South Korea, despite its obligatory statements calling for the withdrawal of US forces in Korea (Choi 1980). The Chinese were aware of the stability and security that the presence of the US troops brought to the region, though they did not endorse the idea of the US troops in South Korea openly and officially.

At a time when the world in was in a race for security and the US was struggling to maintain its status quo, there was also a need to look at the reality that was happening in the international scene. In the context of Northeast Asia, there was a need to examine the

role that the US had played in the region and the impact of its military deployment in the region vis-a-vis South Korea. Since the 1990s, China's trade and investment relations with the Asia-Pacific countries considerably improved. Slowly, over the years China became a significant trade partner of Japan and South Korea to eventually replace the US as their number one trade partner. One of the most significant rationales of US military presence in South Korea was to deter North Korea and even China from harming the interests of South Korea. When China became an economic partner, it obviously affected the original rationale. Significantly North Korea continued to pose a security threat to South Korea and China persistently maintained close relations with North Korea. The question that arose was whether a friendly China would protect South Korea from North Korean adventures or the US military presence would have the real deterrence effect. When the South Korean President Park Chung Hee was assassinated on October 26, 1979 at the Blue House, the official residence of the president of South Korea, the US issued prompt public and private warnings to North Korea backed by reinforcement of US forces to deter North Korea from any adventurism designed to exploit the situation. This showed that the US held firm to its security commitments to South Korea (Ibid). However, the US was really concerned that despite its continued support to South Korea as an alliance partner, China was perceived as the real protector by South Koreans and the result was yet another wave of anti-Americanism in the country.

(Excellent)

However, international politics keeps changing and every country is trying to get the best deal for itself. There was a race in Northeast Asia to outdo each other in securing and protecting its respective interests that included the United States, South Korea and China. The US-South Korean alliance was affected by the growing competition between the United States and China and China to co-opt South Korea. Adding to the problem was the increasing differences between the United States and South Korea over issues which were cropping up at South Korea's domestic level. The democratic set up of the governments in both the countries enabled the domestic factors to play a great role in determining the policies towards each other.

China to some extent influenced both the politics of the United States and South Korea. In its rise, the Chinese government had threatened the position of the United States at the international level and also appeared to have tried to reduce the American influence at the regional level, starting with the case of South Korea. Though China did not follow any openly hawkish or hard line approach to challenge the US interests, Washington was cautiously monitoring China's growing involvement in South Korea. China instead deeply involved itself in various economic activities and expanded its sub power in the region in general and South Korea in particular. As most of the things were linked to the economy, the other factors like political and social were bound to be affected.

The United States felt that its alliance with South Korea could increasingly go through the China test. The situation was such that both China and the United States were competing in a not so subtle way in the politics of the Korean Peninsula and at the same time, both the countries were also aware of the cooperation that they needed from each other in solving the nuclear crisis. The United States' close proximity to South Korea and the Chinese influence over the North Korean regime had important implications for security of the Korean Peninsula. Whereas the relationship of Washington and Pyongyang was going from bad to worse, the relationship between Seoul and Beijing was getting better with closer economic ties. It was in this context that the Chinese factor in the US-South Korean alliance was significant. The United States' role and position in the region was, if not diminishing, deteriorating, whereas the opposite appeared to be true for China. All the developments and changes in the geopolitics of the region were heralding a power shift in the region at the cost of the United States. The Bush Administration is also largely at fault for the changes. This development against the interest of the United States in the Northeast Asian region had been hastened by the Bush Administration's hawkish policy towards the North Korean regime and its cold response to attempts by the South Korean government to engage North Korea.

The issue of the security of the Korean Peninsula only elevated the Chinese position as the upcoming world leader further. The United States seemed to miss a mark in the context of provider and security guarantor when it overlooked and underestimated the importance of the North Korean regime. China seemed to be the only country which could persuade the North Korean regime to join the Six-Party talks and also the only country whose advice the North regime might take into consideration even though there was no guarantee that Pyongyang might follow the advice rendered to them. But China was as close as any nation could get to in the context of North Korea owing to its reclusive nature.

4.4 South Korea's Place in Northeast Asia

South Korea's security was imperative for the security of the whole region. It was surrounded with countries who were their attackers and plunderers throughout their history. The geographic position that it was in was such that, being a small country, South Korea had to rely on the US, the strongest ally that any country could possibly get. The other countries in the region namely North Korea which was open in its hostility towards South Korea and the US security arrangements, China and Japan, who shared a somewhat ambiguous and a rather suspicious relations with South Korea had all felt and acknowledged the US presence in the region. South Korea had depended heavily on the US for its development and even in the economic field, the US was the most important trading partner of South Korea.

With the coming of globalization, the economic relations in the Northeast Asian region also underwent a change. The countries of this region started opening their markets in a big way to each other as well as to the world. In this, the US faced the first jolt of things to come. China started expanding their business ventures and in the process became a country that threatened the US' interests in the region and also became the US toughest

competitor at the international level. With all these developments, one could take the risk to say that the United States would have to face the reality that lies ahead, the change in the power equation in international politics either to a bi-polar world involving China or a multi-polar world involving other nations as well.

South Korea's position was so strategically placed that the security of the whole region was connected to its security. There were still around 40,000 American troops deployed in the South Korean soil for its security as well as for the United States' security interests in the region. The issue of the deployment of the American troops in the South Korea had very often been under review and a topic for debate and discussion even in the domestic sphere of both the American and the South Korean public. The operational control during war time continued to be with the Americans whereas the peacetime operational control was in the hands of the South Koreans. The deployment had long been accepted as the main deterrent of any kind of North Korean attack. But the changes in the international politics was such that instead of North Korea being the real threat to their alliance, China has emerged as the main element in moving and shaking the very foundation of the US-South Korea alliance. As time and again stated, the rise of the People's Republic of China in the international relations heralded the coming of a new era in which the was marching forward towards multilateralism and the age of the American unilateralism was drawing to a close. The United States especially during the time of the Bush administration displayed American unilateralism to the hilt. Bush's actions and policies were resented and criticized by the global community and the issue of American unilateralism came under the critical review of the international community.

4.5 South Korea in the US-China Tangle

The size of the bilateral trade between South Korean-Chinese which increased by 1,647 times in just 20 years, from \$19 million in 1979 to \$31.3billion in 2000 seemed

extraordinary as it took around 30 years for the South Korean-US trade to reach an expansion comparable to that level (Chung 2001). The trade relations between South Korea and China were on the increase, especially because of the advantage of geographical proximity as well as the economic changes that the world was going through. Economically, China remained very important to South Korea. China, South Korea and the United States were so economically intertwined that they simply could not do away with each other as economics rule the roost in international politics and they were so economically involved with each other. It would be very detrimental for their country's economy if they do not reach out for a kind of diplomacy and understanding with each other under the multilateral banner which the whole international system seem to heading towards.

Jae Ho Chung argued that the South Korean specialists shared similar views with their American counterparts on the subject of Chinese military. Both the countries acknowledged that Chinese army was big but outdated. China might not need Dongfeng-41 long-range missiles, Su-27 fighter aircraft, SSBN, or aircraft carriers for military action against Korea. With its J-8s, brown-water navy and rapid reaction forces stationed in the Beijing, Shenyang and Jinan military regions, China could pose a formidable threat to South Korea. So, even though Seoul underplayed the military threat of China officially, it was aware that the Chinese military matters to their security concerns (Ibid) even diplomatically, the rising China had become an indispensable partner of both South Korea and their real and potential influence over Pyongyang only increases their importance. Even culturally, South Korean society was still under a lot of Chinese influence owing to the influence China had in the past and this was also highlighted by the bilateral student exchanges which were permitted officially only in 1993. Even, the South Korean public eye, China had become increasingly favourable in stark contrast with the United States (Ibid).

The change and continuity between the Chinese and the South Koreans gave a clear and lucid warning to the American government. The increasing closeness and cooperation between the Chinese and the South Koreans came at the expense of the US interests. But this development is not sans problems. The Chinese and the South Koreans differed on the question of dealing with North Korea and though they had become important trading partners, there were still tensions in their dealings with each other and the relation between them were still shrouded in ambiguity and suspicions. The South Korean-Chinese alliance also had to cross certain hurdles in this context.

Is it an alliance?

4.6 The Road to Security

Security was the underlying factor that governed the policies and decisions of the Northeast Asian nations. This region lived under the fear of a war which might happen anytime. It was one of the most volatile regions involving two of America's strongest allies, a rogue nation and America's biggest competitor. All the different elements of the different nations added to the complexity and complication of the situation. All the countries were mindful of each other's actions and policies. The United States was the most influential, dominant and important player among foreign countries in the region and also had a very high stake in the region. South Korea security had always been a priority for the Americans not only for the security of South Korea per se but for the security interest as well. The change in the world system and the rise of China in the international scene created a situation in which the interests of the United States faced direct threats from the rise of China in international politics.

The United States, China and South Korea worked together with nations like Japan and Russia to persuade the North Korean regime in giving up their nuclear programmes. The main threat to the position of the US was the role that China might get to play despite the US' presence in the region. South Korea became trapped between China and the United

States. It became a pawn in the hands of stronger and bigger nations again. South Korea had to find a middle ground in which they could get the maximum benefit from either the countries or side with one which it considered best for its future. However, the second option was not an easy one as the US had been their long time ally and partner and the Chinese was rising in global status and shared close proximity with them. The common thing was that both the nations were very strategically and economically important partners of South Korea. All the three nations were trying to find a middle ground in which all of them work amicably towards the protection and security of their nation as well as the world as a whole. They should find a way to increase and improve their cooperation with each other instead of wasting time in trying to bring the other down.

Excellent

- * In-depth analysis
- * All dimensions of the problem/issue have been looked at and explored
- * Consistent, and coherent.

CONCLUSION

The study has made an attempt to understand the security relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea. It started off with a historical account on the origin and evolution of the alliance and moved on to the factors influencing and affecting the alliance. The role of North Korea which was considered the main rationale behind the United States' military presence was discussed extensively. The changing trend in the US policies towards South Korea starting from indifference to active partnership was also highlighted. But the main focus of the study was concentrated on the role of China which is rising in status globally and becoming very powerful in the Northeast Asian region and whose rise is perceived as the main threat to the US-South Korean security alliance.

The alliance between the United States and South Korea had come a long way. Throughout their history, since the entry of the US into the Korean conflict, the US and South Korea stood by each other despite the hurdles and challenges that came along. The alliance is also one of the best examples of the US' commitment to its allies and in the context of the success of the South Korean economy, one of the best success stories of countries that rose from one of the poorest category into one of the developed nations notwithstanding the hurdles it had to pass through as a nation. It is also one of the best shows of the success of the US involvement and participation in a foreign nation. The US-South Korean alliance shared a strong relationship in which both sides benefitted from each other. The United States' interests in the Northeast Asian region gained a lot through the alliance and the security of South Korea was also taken care of up to a certain extent and the economy of the country also flourished. South Korea seemed to have benefitted more from the alliance but the dominance and influence that the United States got in every field in this region is higher than any other nation.

The study had given a detailed explanation about the initial meeting of the two nations i.e. the US and the then undivided Korea. It described the initial apprehension between the two countries and also attempted to bring out the events that shaped the history of the alliance. When the Korean Peninsula was divided into North Korea and South Korea with the former under Soviet control and the latter under American control, no one expected it to be permanent. But the fact was that the divide along the 38th parallel became almost a permanent boundary of divide between the two countries even after the Soviet Union disintegrated. North Korea was left without a proper ally except for China whose aid and assistance in a way had sustained it up to a considerable extent. South Korea flourished with the aid and assistance of the United States. The US assistance to South Korea in the military field was more pronounced though its other types of assistance were also equally significant.

The North Korean and Chinese factors considerably influenced and affected the USFK. The advancement in the South Korean military and technology under US guidance and assistance and its military exercises with the US military generated irritation and suspicion in North Korea. On the other hand, North Korea's controversial nuclear programmes caused more tension in the Korean Peninsula. The US cold stance towards North Korea, especially under the George W. Bush's Administration aggravated the problem and heightened the fear of a possible nuclear war in Northeast Asia. Bush showed his scepticism for South Korean President Kim Dae Jung's Sunshine Policy to engage North Korea. The US wanted to talk to the North Korean side through the Six-Party Talks and not through bilateral talks which the North wanted. It is at this juncture that the role of China became vital for the maintenance of peace and security, as China would be perhaps the only viable nation that could influence the North up to some extent.

The South Korean domestic factors also affected the alliance from time to time. It brought up the issue of anti-Americanism in South Korea. The change in the South Korean society marked by its rise in global standards as a developed nation triggered a

new sense of assertive Korean identity. Though most of the older generation people in South Korea were grateful to the US role in helping their nation, the newer and younger generation, with their assertiveness, began to demand the American influence and role to be decreased in their nation's policy and decision making and according more autonomy to Seoul on military issues. Some in the US viewed this as an ungrateful gesture on the part of the South Koreans. These differences between the two nations caused much tension and strain in their alliance, more heightened at the time of the Bush administration.

With the rise of China at the regional and international level, there seemed to be a new contender to challenge the dominant role of the US in the Northeast Asian region. China that had already made a mark at the international level as the next big power was expected to make an impact on the Northeast Asian region as well. Beijing soon ventured into the area by building relations with other nations through soft diplomacy. This change in the role of China made waves in the South Korean politics and economy and created a situation which could be a threat to the central and dominant position of the US in South Korea. Over the years, its bilateral relations with both the United States and South Korea had improved. This was good news to both the nations per se, but it posed a challenge to the US-South Korea alliance in the American perspective, because it threatened the comfortable position of the United States not only in South Korea but in the region as a whole. Unless a proper alternative was found, which would be acceptable to all the three parties, there arose a possibility that the security arrangement of the region could be hampered. The North Korean regime appeared eager to take actions that could complicate the matter further.

As discussed in the chapters, the main threat to the US-South Korea alliance was North Korea, especially after it detonated a nuclear device. The threat still remains but since the North Korean regime is caught up in its own domestic problems with international sanctions adding to its woes, it has taken a backseat. It conducted nuclear tests, missile

tests and caused tensions and panic among other countries in the region. The most important ally and the country which the North Korean regime may lend an ear to is China. China had come to the rescue of North Korea through aid and assistance and it had shared a cordial relationship with the reclusive nation. However, the role of China is also limited as North Korea had shown that it could act independent of Chinese influence a lot of times. But China is the best and closest that any nation can get to the North Korean regime and it is the best bet to bring about security. In this context, the role of China and the United States came into conflict with each other. Both the countries wanted to wield enormous influence in the region and both tried to gain mileage from solving the security issue of the region.

China's role became more crucial after it became a very important trading partner of South Korea and started spreading its economic diplomacy all over the region. On the other hand, the US by waging a long and exhaustive war in Iraq and Afghanistan, increasingly found it difficult to make its voice heard in the Asia Pacific. Its influence as the world's superpower in international politics seemed to be waning slowly. The world seemed staged for the coming of a multilateral world order. The US was aware that the nuclear threat of North Korea needed the cooperation of the Chinese government and acknowledge the fact of China as the closest that any nation could get to North Korea.

The US and China emerged as top competitors at the international level but at the same time they built up a relationship that was so intertwined through the process of globalization that they became indispensable to each other. It is in this context that the condition of South Korea has been examined. Though both the US and China were very important and essential to South Korea, they acted and made policies independent of South Korean influence. Whenever South Korea tried to influence the two powers, its success was by and large marginal.

Both the United States and China exerted pressure on South Korea for their own reasons. Amidst all these developments, the South Korean government found itself at the middle

of the road and became concerned that a mistake in decision-making would cause them the security of the nation.

South Korea appeared torn between its protector and ally, the United States, and its close neighbour and a rising world power, China. In this conundrum of a situation, it sought an alternative through which it could get the best from both the countries without inflicting much damage to its relations with either of them. Economics had become imperative in international politics and the relations between the South Korean government and China was based mainly on economic considerations whereas the relationship between the US and South Korea, which involved lots of economics, also included military commitments. South Korea's condition was such that it tried to find a way to handle the situation without offending either of the two countries. It was caught in the middle of power rivalry between the world's two most powerful nations in a region where the danger of a nuclear war was also present.

Adding to the woes of the situation was the domestic changes that were certain in any evolving society or nation. At the cost of its relations with the US, there was growing anti-Americanism in South Korea and a renewed sense of friendliness towards China. There had not been a total change in the policies of the South Korean government towards the US in favour of China. It could not take that big a risk and the US was aware of it and also rushed to mend broken fences. Under the Bush Administration, the US-South Korean relations faced many setbacks but with the coming of the Obama Administration in the US and the Lee Myung Bak Administration in South Korea, the US-South Korean security relations seemed to be changing for the better with both governments approaching each other on a friendlier and more cooperative note. The Bush Administration also could be credited for waking up the American side from its dormant and too comfortable position in the context of the Chinese role in affecting the US-South Korean alliance as it highlighted the heightened role of China in the regional politics.

As much as the Bush administration was criticized for its role in the regional politics of Northeast Asia through its security relations with South Korea, there was a possibility that the Americans might thank and acknowledge the Bush administration's role for the wakeup call on its role in South Korea which was lying dormant and for throwing light on the China threat to the US interests. It was in the tenure of the Bush administration that the focus of the policies towards South Korea started centring on China with the North Korean nuclear threat taking a backseat for once. However, this remains to be seen. Although the primary objective of the US military presence in the beginning of the US-South Korean alliance was to deter any possible attack from the communist North Korea towards South Korea, the equation has changed along with the change in international relations. China has now overtaken North Korea as the primary rationale for US security relations with South Korea and as for South Korea, with the new role of China in the region and its impact on the US-South Korean alliance, it has once again come to face the situation of déjà vu by being caught between two stronger powers.

Up to a certain point, my hypotheses are validated as South Korea searched for a safe and balanced ground to solve the quagmire it found itself in. Caught between the superpower of the world and long time ally on the one hand and the emerging global giant and neighbour and also new economic partner on the other hand, the South Korea found itself in the middle of a power tussle yet again. South Korea had been a pawn in the hands of stronger nations throughout its history and just when it was beginning to move towards a more assertive national identity in the world, it found itself sandwiched between the two most powerful nations in the world. Owing to the geographic position that it is in, the South Korean government has to find a proper alternative for the good of their country and at the same time, try to solve their problems through strategic analysis and considerations.

The study also examined the role of North Korea and China in the US-South Korea security alliance. Though the nuclear threat of the North Korean regime could not be

underestimated, the focus of the real threat to the alliance shifted from North Korea-centric policies to China-centric considerations. With the emerging role of China as the main challenge to the alliance, the once considered main concern of the alliance, the North Korean nuclear threat, became the gluing factor in the US-South Korea alliance. Thus, China and not North Korea became the primary factor for influencing and affecting the US policies towards South Korea. The rise of China in the international stage and their attempts to claim dominance at the regional level was indeed a matter of serious concern to the US policy.

The path that international relations tread on is going through a stage where soon the world may change into a multilateral world. The United States, on their part, have to understand the changes and look at the security perspectives of its nation in a similar light. The US understood the importance of China's impact on the US-South Korea alliance. Instead of dealing with it in a negative way which might hamper the security of South Korea as well as the whole region, it focussed on engaging and cooperating with it to solve security concerns in the alliance. As for South Korea, it tried to find a balanced and positive policy in which the US-South Korea alliance would not break down and also deal with China carefully so as to maintain the security and stability in the region. With regard to the US-South Korea alliance, both the nations moved ahead through cooperation and consideration for each others' security interests and tried to strengthen their alliance by making policies that were positive and favourable to both especially in the context of security. They worked together to find a peaceful solution involving China and North Korea in their security relations which could be best done through engagement, diplomacy and cooperation among all the nations.

Though repetitive at times,
a good conclusion. But
then again, too much focus
on South Korea, too little
on the US.

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V.T.c. The centrality of the United States was overlooked in this dissertation. It would have been more apt as a dissertation on International Politics, or Korean Studies, not American Studies.