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**THESIS**

**THE IMPACT OF CHANGES IN STATE IDENTITY ON  
ALLIANCE COHESION IN NORTHEAST ASIA**

by

Boncheul Koo

December 2009

Thesis Advisor:

James Clay Moltz

Second Reader:

Jeffrey W. Knopf

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COHESION IN NORTHEAST ASIA**

Boncheul Koo  
Lieutenant, Republic of Korea Navy  
B.S., United States Naval Academy, 2004

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December 2009**

Author: Boncheul Koo

Approved by: James Clay Moltz  
Thesis Advisor

Jeffrey W. Knopf  
Second Reader

Harold A. Trinkunas, PhD  
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis addresses the importance of ideational determinants of cohesion or discord in the Northeast Asian alliances in which the United States has major security interests. Numerous studies have explored the rationale, substance and purpose of these alliances. However, previous studies have been dominated by realists and related balance of power/threat/self-interest approaches and do not provide a clear explanation for unexpected developments among existing alliances. In explaining recent changes within the alliances, relatively little attention has been given to alternative approaches, such as social constructivism. By applying social constructivist theory to the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances in a comparative study, this thesis finds that the increasing divergence of PRC and DPRK identity, values, perception of common interests, and security concerns has led to growing discord and mistrust in their alliance, while the increasing convergence of thinking and common values between Washington and Seoul has become a stronger foundation for their alliance. The thesis concludes with some theoretical and practical implications, as well as policy recommendations for enhancing alliance cohesion.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APEC	Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation
BBS	Bulletin Board System
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CDIP	Combined Defense Improvement Project
CENTRIX-K	Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange-Korea
CFC	Combined Forces Command
CPX	Command Post Exercise
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
DCT	Defense Consultative Talks
DPRK	Democratic People's of Republic of Korea
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FDO	Flexible Deterrence Option
FE	Foal Eagle
FOTA	Future of the Alliance Policy Initiative
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
FMP	Force Module Package
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCC	Ground Component Command
GPR	Global Posture Review
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
IR	International Relations
KORUS	Korea-United States
KPA	Korean People's Army
MCM	Military Committee Meeting
MD	Missile Defense
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement

MRL	Multiple Rocket Launcher
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
NSC	National Security Council
NPT	Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPLAN	Operational Plan
PACOM	Pacific Command
PKO	Peace Keeping Operation
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
ROC	Republic of China
ROK	Republic of Korea
RSOI	Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration
SCAP	Strategic Consultation for Allied Partnership
SCM	Security Consultative Meeting
SIGINT	Signal Intelligence
SMA	Special Measures Agreement
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SPI	Security Policy Initiative
TPFDD	Time-Phased Forces Deployment Data
TS	Team Spirit
UFL	Ulchi Focus Lens
USFK	United States Forces in Korea
WFP	World Food Programme
WEI	Weighted Effectiveness Index
WHNS	Wartime Host Nation Support
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WRSA-K	War Reserve Stocks for Allies-Korea
WTO	World Trade Organization
WUI	Weighted Unit Value

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. PURPOSE

The research question addressed in this thesis emerged from unexpected developments among the post-Cold War alliances within the Northeast Asian region. The U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) alliance, which was created to defend the ROK, has become stronger in recent years, even as the Democratic People's of Republic of Korea's (DPRK) relative power has declined and its nuclear program frozen. At the same time, the People's Republic of China (PRC)-DPRK alliance, which defends the DPRK, has faced far greater threats from the formidable United States and ROK. Yet this alliance has weakened since the mid-1990s.

Existing International Relations (IR) theories on alliances, especially realism (which sees alliance formation and dissolution as based on the balance of power or the balance of threat), do not explain why new alliances were not formed against the U.S., the sole remaining superpower since the Soviet Union collapsed. Similarly, such theories cannot explain why existing alliances against the U.S. and its allies, such as the PRC-DPRK alliance, have been weakening. Many different schools suggest that a state's self-interest is the main motivation for its alliances. However, few theories provide a clear explanation of why Beijing seems to be recalculating its interests and why its bonds with the DPRK are steadily loosening.

The expectation of realists—that when opposition power weakens or disappears, old disagreements among allies resurface, causing either “dissension in the alliance or coalition breakdown”<sup>1</sup>—cannot explain existing alliances, such as the NATO, U.S.-ROK, and U.S.-Japan alliances. These continue to be rated as firm alliances, even though no superpower has threatened the allies or the United States since 1991. At the same time, neither the U.S.-ROK nor PRC-DPRK alliance has followed the expectations of liberal

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<sup>1</sup> Barry B. Hughes, *Continuity and Change in World Politics: Competing Perspectives* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997), 556.

theory that alliances should have a continuous process of “debate, competitions, and even conflict over the limited sources and attention” to maximize benefits of international arrangements while minimizing costs.<sup>2</sup>

The inability of existing IR theories to explain changes in the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances requires discovering new determinants of the strength or weakness of alliance cohesion, rather than focusing exclusively on power, threat, and interests. This thesis does not deny the relevance of factors emphasized by existing IR theories. However, this thesis claims that alliance cohesion in Northeast Asia is not solely a product of the “externalities of material and individualistic properties,”<sup>3</sup> and that the explanation of alliance cohesion must be supplemented by “ideational factors and processes,”<sup>4</sup> such as collective identity, culture, and norms. Specifically, this thesis calls attention to significant changes in both Chinese and South Korean collective identities that have increasingly affected their security policies, external threat perceptions, expectations regarding their alliances, and attitudes toward their allies.

## **B. IMPORTANCE**

The changes in cohesiveness of the existing alliances and their determinants are worth studying for three reasons. First, in contrast to previous studies of alliances focused on European alliance formation and dissolution, changes in existing alliances in Northeast Asia have received less attention despite the increasing importance of U.S. interests in Asia. Second, in order to supplement the deficit of existing IR theories explaining the anomalies of the U.S.-ROK and the PRC-DPRK alliances, analysts need to consider determinants other than power, threat, and self-interest for the changes in those alliances. Third, from a practical standpoint, it is important for the Obama administration

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<sup>2</sup> Jae-Jung Suh, *Power, Interest, and Identity in Military Alliance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ramzy A. Mardini, “Socializing Realism’s Balance of Power: Collective Identity as Alliance Formation in Iraq” (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 2008), 1.

<sup>4</sup> Jae-Jung Suh, Peter J. Katzenstein, and Allen Carlson, *Rethinking Security in East Asian: Identity, Power, and Efficiency* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2004), 9.

to recognize the current changes and their determinants in U.S. alliances, as well as the alliances of its potential competitors, in order to take appropriate measures to preserve U.S. interests in Northeast Asia.

In this respect, Northeast Asia's two anomalous alliances are good illustrations of dynamic changes in states' collective identities and the impact of collective identity on alliance cohesion. In other words, these two case studies can contribute to constructing a cause-and-effect relationship between an ideational factor (as an independent variable) and alliance cohesion (as a dependent variable). The main hypothesis examined in this thesis is that the PRC and ROK have gone through significant changes in their collective identities since the late 1970s and mid-1980s, respectively, and these changes have led to shifts in the cohesion of their respect alliances with the DPRK and United States.

### **C. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Three bodies of literature are relevant for this thesis and are introduced in this section. Research on the main alliances of the two Koreas provides the empirical raw materials for this thesis. Research on collective identity and alliance cohesion is used to identify the main independent and dependent variables for the study. Finally, theories of alliances supply potential alternative explanations for the changes in alliance cohesion studied here.

#### **1. The PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK Alliances**

The PRC and DPRK, as communist neighbors with ideological and cultural affinity, fought shoulder-to-shoulder against the "imperialist American invasion"<sup>5</sup> from 1950 to 1953, without having an official alliance treaty. This relationship of "flesh and blood" was officially upgraded through the "PRC-DPRK Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance" in 1961. During the Cold War, the DPRK provided the PRC with a "crucial buffer"<sup>6</sup> against U.S. military intervention, and sometimes with ideological support against the Soviet Union's revisionism. At the same time, the value of

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<sup>5</sup> Immanuel Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000), 661–662.

<sup>6</sup> You Ji, "China and North Korea: a fragile relationship of strategic convenience," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 10, No. 28 (August 2001), 387.

the PRC to the DPRK was enormous; the DPRK received legitimacy for ruling the northern part of the Korean Peninsula from its communist ally, and was able to protect its regime against formidable U.S.-led alliances thanks to the PRC's patronage.<sup>7</sup>

However, following the death of Mao Zedong in September 1976, the PRC, led by Deng Xiaoping, started to recognize the extent of changes in the non-socialist world and the revolution in science and technology that began in the previous decades. This led Deng and the other Chinese leaders to instigate an “era of reform,”<sup>8</sup> focused on political, economic, and social reform, and the “open-door policy,” based on a new Chinese ideational platform characterized as “socialism with Chinese characteristics.”<sup>9</sup> These ideational changes were continued by Deng's successors. The Chinese had reflected on and altered their “broadly accepted representation of the state,” which this thesis refers to as “collective identity,” with increasing effects on their foreign policies and relationships with their allies. As a result, Beijing signed a peace treaty with Tokyo in 1978, normalized diplomatic relations with Washington in 1979, restored friendly relations with the Soviet Union in 1989, and officially recognized the ROK in 1992, while urging Pyongyang to follow the Chinese style of reform. In addition, since the mid-1990s, Beijing has worked to counter the “China threat” perception and convince its neighbors that the PRC is a “benign and peaceful rising power.”<sup>10</sup> The Chinese have put an emphasis on their nation's reputation as a responsible power.

Since the reform policies launched in the late 1970s by Deng Xiaoping, the PRC-DPRK alliance has cooled, as witnessed by a variety of military and diplomatic developments. The North Korean leadership criticized almost every element of Deng's reform policy and sometimes called Deng a “traitor to socialism.”<sup>11</sup> This is because

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<sup>7</sup> Ji, “China and North Korea: a fragile relationship of strategic convenience,” 387–388.

<sup>8</sup> Peter R. Moody, “The Evolution of China's National Interest: Implications for Taiwan,” in *Identity and Change in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, eds., Shale A. Horowitz, Uk Heo and Alexander C. Tan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 32.

<sup>9</sup> Alan Lawrence, *China Under Communism* (London, UK: Routledge, 2008), 107–122.

<sup>10</sup> Susan L. Shirk, *China, Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007), 105–112.

<sup>11</sup> Gregory, J. Moore, “How North Korea threatens China's interests: Understanding Chinese ‘duplicity’ on the North Korean nuclear issue,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 8, No.1 (January 2008), 7.

Deng's new reform policies, based on socialism with Chinese characteristics, were conceived as threats to the ideology of "*Juche* (independence and self-reliance)" and "genuine Marxism-Leninism," which have been the central to the DPRK's collective identity.<sup>12</sup> Specifically, the chaos of the 1989 democracy movement and the Tiananmen crisis in the PRC, motivated by economic and social interaction with the outside world, gave a shock to Pyongyang and complicated the relationship with the PRC.

Moreover, Beijing has upgraded its fast-growing economic, political, and military ties with the ROK since 1992. Chinese leaders clearly no longer regard South Korea as a potential enemy and think that the older commitment, especially from the DPRK side, has been unreliable.<sup>13</sup> In addition, although the PRC, unlike Russia, did not revise its alliance treaty, many Chinese and Western analysts doubt whether the PRC-DPRK military obligations could be fulfilled in case of war against the U.S.-ROK alliance. In fact, at present, the PRC and the DPRK rarely agree on historical ties, ideological stances, political and diplomatic programs, or military exchanges.<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, the United States and ROK did not share a common ideology, culture, political system, or common interests in the region until the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Right before the war occurred in June 1950, statements by President Truman and Secretary of State Acheson that Korea was outside the U.S. defense perimeter in Asia indicated that Korea lacked significant value in terms of U.S. interests. However, during the Korean War, both countries started recognizing the necessity of an alliance, resulting in the U.S.-ROK mutual defense treaty of October 1, 1953.<sup>15</sup> However, their initial perspectives on the alliance were different. From the ROK's perspective, the alliance was essential to help recover from the war, build up its strength in the contest with its rival, and defend itself against strong physical threats from North Korea. The

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<sup>12</sup> Charles K. Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945–1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 2003), 2; Ji, "China and North Korea: a fragile relationship of strategic convenience," 390.

<sup>13</sup> Scott Zhou, "All teeth and lips – for now," *Asia Times*, October 21, 2006, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/HJ21Ad01.html> (accessed March 12, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 388.

<sup>15</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *ROK-U.S. Alliance and USFK* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2003), 37.

United States saw the alliance not only as a useful means of defending the ROK against the DPRK, but also as a meaningful signal to the rest of world of its commitment to supporting peace and democracy.

Domestic political instability in the ROK that led to the assassination of President Park Chung-hee in 1979, and international pressure with the “Third Wave” of democratization, pushed South Korea to adopt rapid democratization and globalization.<sup>16</sup> Since the mid-1980s, this transition to democracy and globalization not only improved South Korean human rights and brought about its political development, but also established healthy grounds for its relationships with democratic allies and the international community.

As the ROK economy continued to enjoy remarkable growth during the 1970s and 1980s, with a rapid expansion in middle-class and highly educated citizens, public hope for democracy, human rights, and equality started to receive attention. The ROK democratic movement peaked in 1988 with the Seoul Olympic Games.<sup>17</sup> The democratization and globalization movements in the ROK brought both challenges and opportunities to the U.S.-ROK alliance. A series of temporary turbulent moments arose in the U.S.-ROK alliance in the late 1990s through early 2000s, caused by fluctuations in South Korean collective identity, including growing anti-American sentiment as an extension of South Korean nationalism, progressive ideas in government policies, divisions in South Korean public opinion, and the younger generation’s changing perceptions of North Korea and the United States.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, through the transition of democratization and globalization, the ROK has become more inclined to get involved in regional and international affairs and encourage domestic political debates over their government policies. Today, both

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<sup>16</sup> Uk Heo and Jung-Yeop Woo, “South Korea’s Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy,” in *Identity and Change in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, eds., Horowitz, Heo, and Tan, 150–151.

<sup>17</sup> Heo and Woo, “South Korea’s Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy,” 151.

<sup>18</sup> Chung-in Moon and Seung-Won Suh, “Identity Politics, Nationalism, and the Future of Northeast Asian Order,” in *The United States and Northeast Asia: Debate, Issues, and New Order*, eds., G. John Ikenberry and Chung-In Moon (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 203–206.

countries seek to strengthen the U.S.-ROK alliance as strategically crucial in the twenty-first century, while simultaneously pursuing “common values, interests, and norms.”<sup>19</sup> In fact, Washington and Seoul agreed to expand the role of the alliance into regional and global security issues as well as non-traditional security issues beyond the theater of the Korean peninsula. Subsequently, they have attempted to upgrade and diversify military cooperation, joint exercises, diplomatic and military communication channels, U.S. military bases in Korean territory, and the ROK’s international responsibilities. For these reasons, the U.S.-ROK alliance is still rated among the most formidable, durable alliances in the world.

## 2. State Identity

This thesis examines the importance of state identity (a state’s collective identity) as an independent variable for explaining alliance dynamics. Collective identity has been comprehensively analyzed by the school of social constructivism, which argues that identity, norms, and culture influence state action and behavior. Although constructivists’ definitions of collective identity are not constant, depending on “issue, time, and place, and whether they are bilateral, regional, or global,”<sup>20</sup> and they are frequently interchanged with similar concepts of state/national identity, norms, and culture,<sup>21</sup> it is not a key point of this thesis to distinguish each definition of these terms. Instead, this thesis focuses on general ideas concerning collective identity and its formation and influence on a nation and its alliances.

Alexander Wendt defines collective identity as a “basis for feelings of solidarity, community, and loyalty and thus for collective definitions of interest.”<sup>22</sup> From his perspective, collective identity creates representations of self, others, enemies, and allies,

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<sup>19</sup> Alexander A. Arvizu, “A New Beginning for the U.S.-South Korea Strategic Alliance,” statement before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in Washington D.C. on April 23, 2008, [http://seoul.usembassy.gov/rok\\_042308.html](http://seoul.usembassy.gov/rok_042308.html).

<sup>20</sup> Alexander Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (June 1994), 6.

<sup>21</sup> Maxym Alexandrov, “The Concept of State Identity in International Relations: A Theoretical Analysis,” *Journal of International Development and Cooperation*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (September 2003), 34.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

while being shaped and reshaped by “inter-subjective internal and external structures,”<sup>23</sup> and it promotes people’s willingness to act on “generalized principles of conduct.”<sup>24</sup> Hence, changes in the collective identity of a nation mean that the nation’s view of both its domestic and international contexts has changed and, consequently, its government policies are expected to be changed.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, Peter Katzenstein—who defines identity as a “shorthand label for varying constructions of nation- and statehood”<sup>26</sup>—argues that collective identities are “produced, reproduced, and transformed as they affect the prospects for social learning and the diffusion of collective norms and individual beliefs.”<sup>27</sup> He also argues that a state is a social actor, and thus it is embedded in “social rules and conventions” that constitute its collective identity, which also interacts with different social environments domestically and internationally.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Marc Lynch uses the term “identity” in a broader context of collective definitions of self. He defines identity as “not only the concepts held by a state’s leaders, but the set of beliefs about the nature and purpose of the state expressed in public articulations of state actions and ideals.”<sup>29</sup> From his perspective, a state’s “public sphere,” formed through public contestation, can influence the state’s identity and behavior because huge public discussions or debates on identity, values, and interests in many countries are seen at certain moments, such as national crises.<sup>30</sup>

More recently, Maxym Alexandrov defines collective identity as a set of broadly accepted representations of a state, particularly in its relation to another state, together

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<sup>23</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), 21, 342.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 429.

<sup>26</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, “Introduction,” in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed., Katzenstein (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1996), 3–9.

<sup>27</sup> Suh, Katzenstein, and Carlson, *Rethinking Security in East Asian: Identity, Power, and Efficiency*, 9.

<sup>28</sup> Katzenstein, “Introduction,” in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, 9–11.

<sup>29</sup> Marc Lynch, “Abandoning Iraq: Jordan’s alliances and the politics of state identity,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2, (December 1998), 349.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 349–351.

with “corresponding beliefs about the appropriate behavior, rights or responsibilities.”<sup>31</sup> Sheldon Stryker also argues that collective identity is frequently conceptualized culturally and is equivalent to the “ideas, beliefs, and practices of a society.”<sup>32</sup> Chung-in Moon and Seung-Won Suh assert that the significance of national collective identity is its strong influence on shared norms, interests, and images of other countries, which ultimately affects a state’s behavior.<sup>33</sup> In a similar vein, Shale Horowitz, Uk Heo, and Alexander Tan define national identity in *Identity and Changes in East Asian Conflicts* as “the group that the state is supposed to serve and protect,” which is associated with “national cultural, economic, political, and geopolitical goals” that the state is supposed to promote.<sup>34</sup> They believe that national identity has strong implications for defining national interests when looking for the reasons for continuing conflicts between the ROK and DRRK, and between the PRC and the Republic of China (ROC), despite the transformation of each state’s national identity since the end of the Cold War. From their perspective, changing national identities interact with changing external conditions to influence “political competition and leadership outcomes,” and thus national security objectives.<sup>35</sup> In addition, Brad Glosserman and Scott Snyder, who reveal that Northeast Asian states’ identity crises affect their alliance system, view national identity as “values” that the majority of a state’s people want to preserve, which can be measured by public opinion on self-perception or other-perception.<sup>36</sup> They emphasize the function of state identity in foreign and security policy formulation, because today, political issues related to questions of

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<sup>31</sup> Alexandrov, “The Concept of State Identity in International Relations: A Theoretical Analysis,” 39.

<sup>32</sup> Sheldon Stryker, “Identity Competition: Key to Differential Social Movement Participation,” in Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert W. White, eds., *Self, Identity, and Social Movements* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 22.

<sup>33</sup> Moon and Suh, “Identity Politics, Nationalism, and the Future of Northeast Asian Order,” 194.

<sup>34</sup> Horowitz, Heo and Tan, eds., *Identity and Change in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Brad Glosserman and Scott Snyder, “Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia,” *Issues and Insights*, Vol. 8, No. 16 (September 2008), 1–3.

state identity have emerged as “irresistible tools for politicians to gain domestic political support,” and thus it is necessary for politicians to consider public perceptions as they influence policy formulation.<sup>37</sup>

### 3. Alliance Cohesion

Analysts have advanced both broad and narrow definitions of alliances. George Liska, a pioneer of the study of alliances, defines an alliance as “an event in politics as is conflict,” arguing that an alliance associates “like-minded actors in the hope of overcoming their rivals.”<sup>38</sup> From his view, an alliance, as a military coalition, is essential in explaining international relations. Donald Zagoria, Christopher Bladen, Ole Hosti, Terrence Hopmann and John Sullivan are other scholars who interpret alliances in a wider perspective of “collective power, ideology, communication, and national security issues.”<sup>39</sup>

In contrast, Robert Osgood, who studies alliance politics through NATO, limits his definition of an alliance to the military aspect, arguing that an alliance is common defense through the use of military power.<sup>40</sup> According to his later definition, an alliance refers to “a formal agreement that pledges states to cooperate in using their military resources against a specific state or states and usually obligates one or more of the signatories to use force, or to consider the use of force, in specified circumstances.”<sup>41</sup> In criticizing Liska’s and Zagoria’s broader definitions, George Modelski distinguishes between alliances and alignment. Modelski argues that alliances are directly concerned

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<sup>37</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, “Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia.”

<sup>38</sup> George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1962), 301.

<sup>39</sup> Donald S. Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956–1961* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 484; Ole R. Holsti, Terrence P. Hopmann and John D. Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* (Toronto, Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1973), 4; Friedman, Bladen and Rosen, *Alliance in International Politics* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1970), 121.

<sup>40</sup> Robert Endicott Osgood, *NATO, the Entangling Alliance* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 416.

<sup>41</sup> Robert E. Osgood, *Alliances and American Foreign Policy* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 171.

with defense matters and military collaboration, while “alignments” can be regarded as referring to “all type of international political cooperation.”<sup>42</sup> Julian Friedman, Christopher Bladen, Steven Rosen, K. Holsti and Glenn Snyder also distinguish alliances from other experiences of diplomatic coalitions and international cooperation, such as integration, multinational community building, and economic partnerships, due to their commitments by treaty and the degree of military integration among allies.<sup>43</sup>

In a similar manner, definitions of alliance cohesion vary from narrow to much broader interpretations, depending on the definitions of an alliance. Liska sees alliance cohesion as the degree to which allies stay together and act together, which is determined by “ideologies and diplomatic style, consultations and compromise, capabilities and pressure, and pretensions and coercion within the alliance.”<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, Friedman, Bladen, and Rosen argue that the degree of cohesion is relative to “its vitality rather than durability” and that agreement among allies regarding the sharing of costs and rewards is the most important determinant of the degree of alliance cohesion.<sup>45</sup> In addition, Holsti, who distinguishes alliances from other forms of international cooperation, asserts that alliance cohesion can be altered by three factors: changes in the essential purpose of the alliance, incompatibility of the major social and political values of the allies, and development of nuclear weapons.<sup>46</sup> From Snyder’s perspective, because alliance cohesion is determined by conflict and common interests of allies, allying states continue bargaining over levels of preparedness, war plans, or the amount of support to be provided in crisis confrontations with enemies.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> George Modelski, “The Study of Alliances: A Review,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (December 1963), 769–776.

<sup>43</sup> Julian R. Friedman, Christopher Bladen and Steven Rosen, *Alliance in International Politics* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1970), 383; K. J. Holsti, “Diplomatic Coalitions and Military Alliances” in *Alliance in International Politics* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1970), 93–103; Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 3–4.

<sup>44</sup> Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence*, 61–116.

<sup>45</sup> Friedman, Bladen and Rosen, *Alliance in International Politics*, 288.

<sup>46</sup> Holsti, “Diplomatic Coalitions and Military Alliances,” 99-103.

<sup>47</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 3.

Although alliance cohesion is constantly changing, which makes it difficult to measure at any given time, some scholars have sought to evaluate alliance cohesion in a quantitative manner. Notable are Henry Teune and Sig Synnestvedt, who developed fourteen variables as indices to measure international alignment in 1965, such as military alliances, military presence, military aid, visits by heads of state and of government, important visitors other than heads of state and of government, protests and expulsions of diplomatic personnel, educational and cultural exchanges, and anti-ally state riots.<sup>48</sup> More recently, Charles Kupchan, in examining intra-alliance behavior of the states within NATO and of the Persian Gulf states, asserts that alliance cohesion can be measured along three dimensions: joint operations or military assistance to each other, forms of compromise on policy issues through official statements and documents, and economic contributions to collective defense capability.<sup>49</sup> Victor Cha suggests that an alliance's success is measured by six aspects: how much an alliance serves as a facilitator of power accretion and projection, whether allies operate under a unified command, how much allies share common tactics and doctrine through joint training, how much allies promote a division of security roles, whether allies facilitate cooperation in production and development of military equipment, and how much allies create political support among domestic constituencies.<sup>50</sup>

Taken as a whole, this literature draws attention to three core elements of cohesion: agreement on alliance purpose, extent of military cooperation, and extent of economic contribution to the alliance.

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<sup>48</sup> Henry Teune and Sig Synnestvedt, "Diplomatic Coalitions and Military Alliance." in Friedman, Bladen, and Rosen, *Alliance in International Politics*, 321.

<sup>49</sup> Charles A. Kupchan, "NATO and the Persian Gulf: Examining Intra-Alliance Behavior," *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Spring 1988), 317–326.

<sup>50</sup> Kurt Campbell, Victor Cha, Lindsey Ford, Nirav Patel, Randy Schriver, and Vikram Singh, *Going Global: The Future of the U.S.-South Korea Alliance* (Washington D.C.: Center for a New American Security, 2009), 12.

#### 4. Existing IR Theories on Alliances

##### a. *Power-Based Theory*

Most previous studies on alliances are dominated by the classical realist perspective, i.e., the argument that changes in the balance of power influence alliance politics. From the balance of power perspective, balance means actual or constructed equality of military capability among the great powers, to prevent one state/alliance from achieving dominance. In *Theory of International Politics*, Kenneth Waltz defines balancing as “joining with the weaker side in an effort to prevent a hegemonic bid” and bandwagoning as “joining [a] stronger coalition.” Waltz argues that balancing should be more common in the anarchical international system.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, Hans Morgenthau argues that alliances are often formed based on the “function of preserving the status quo.”<sup>52</sup> John Mearsheimer adds that balance of power logic often causes great powers to form alliances and cooperate against common enemies.<sup>53</sup>

Using the balance of power logic, alliance cohesion is relatively flexible and weak because alliances can be formed or dissolved by great powers depending on their needs. In other words, the greater the global imbalance of power is, the greater the motive to form and maintain alliances. For this reason, Robert Kann argues that, based on balance of power, allies need to maintain a minimum level of alliance cohesion in order to sustain the alliance.<sup>54</sup> Barry Hughes expects that when opposition power weakens, old disagreements among alliance partners will resurface, causing either dissension in the alliance or coalition breakdown.<sup>55</sup>

However, the fact that numerous alliances, such as NATO, the U.S.-ROK and the U.S.-Japan alliances, continue to be evaluated as very firm alliances even though no other superpower threatens the allies or the United States, shows the limitations of

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<sup>51</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 263–265.

<sup>52</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf, 1972), 43.

<sup>53</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001), 52–53.

<sup>54</sup> Robert A. Kann, “Alliance versus Ententes,” *World Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (July 1976), 612.

<sup>55</sup> Hughes, *Continuity and Change in World Politics: Competing Perspectives*, 556.

balance of power theory. In actuality, the U.S.-ROK alliance was created not only by the demand of a strong power, the United States, but also by the strong demand of the weaker South Korea. Moreover, a realist perspective does not provide an answer to questions such as, “Why has no new alliance yet been formed against the United States as a superpower after the demise of the Soviet Union?” For these reasons, this perspective is criticized by other schools of thought for focusing only on material variables and downplaying the importance of domestic and ideational factors in alliance decisions.<sup>56</sup>

**b. Threat-Based Theory**

In addition to using the concept of power to explain alliances and alliance cohesion, some realists argue that the motivation to form alliances come not from imbalances of power due to the sudden advent of a superpower, but from a state’s threat perception.<sup>57</sup> Walt argues that a state’s alliance choice is driven by an “imbalance of threat,” which is evaluated by the other side’s “aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive capability, and the perceived aggressiveness of its intentions.”<sup>58</sup> By recasting the previous balance of power theory as the balance of threat theory, Walt redefines balancing as “allying with others against the prevailing threat,” and bandwagoning as “alignment with the source of danger,” and concludes that states usually balance and rarely bandwagon.<sup>59</sup> In such threat-based alliance theory, the greater the threat perceived by a weaker state, the stronger the motive for alliance formation and cohesion. In other words, a weaker state perceiving a strong threat has a greater motive to ally with a stronger power to balance against the perceived threat from its enemies.

However, the balance of threat theory is criticized by realists who emphasize self-interest as the motive of alliances. Critics such as Randall Schweller argue that Walt defines bandwagoning too narrowly, to encompass only the coercive or

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<sup>56</sup> Randall L. Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back in,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), 74.

<sup>57</sup> Stephan M. Walt, *The Origin of Alliance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1987), 21–26.

<sup>58</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 263–265.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

compulsory aspect of the concept.<sup>60</sup> From Schweller's perspective, the balance of threat theory does not explain why Italy declared war against France in 1940 or why Moscow declared war against Tokyo in 1945. These two cases show that, to some extent, these

states neither chose to balance against a stronger side nor acted based on threats from the other states.<sup>61</sup> Instead, they bandwagoned with the strongest side, in the hopes of making territorial or other gains.

In addition, most realists in the 1990s, including Mearsheimer, Wesson, Cohen and Snyder, expected that as the bipolar confrontation and threats diminished, NATO would lose its importance and internal cohesion.<sup>62</sup> However, reality did not turn out the way the realists expected. Since the Cold War, NATO has expanded its influence into the Eastern European countries and accepted many of them as NATO members. Numerous research studies have analyzed why the realists' expectations did not match reality. One significant reason is that although threat-based theory emphasizes threat perception, which involves cognitive perspectives such as state's intention, history, and identity, the theory focuses mainly on material variables, such as aggregate power, military capabilities, and geographic distance. Ji Hyo-Keun claims that the temporary deterioration of the U.S.-ROK alliance in the early 2000s was not due to changes in the DPRK's physical threats, but because of domestic growth in South Korean nationalism, autonomy, and self-confidence, as well as Washington's new perspective toward its allies and partners after the September 11 terrorist attacks.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," 81.

<sup>61</sup> Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," 82.

<sup>62</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, "The Long-Term Crisis of the Alliance," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Winter 1982/1983), 325–343; John J. Mearsheimer, "Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 266, No. 2 (August 1990), 35–50; Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliances, Balance, and Stability," *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Winter 1991); Robert G. Wesson, *International Relations in Transition* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990), 306.

<sup>63</sup> Ji Hyo-Keun, "Alliance Security Culture and Alliance Cohesion" (Ph.D. diss., Yonsei University, 2006), 38.

c. *Self-Interest-Based Theory*

In rejecting power or threat-based theories, some realists criticize these approaches for focusing only on security issues and failing to consider other interests that might incline a nation to ally with the stronger side. For instance, Schweller, Sweeney and Fritz reveal that bandwagoning, or allying with the stronger side, is more common in the international system because alliances are actually formed on the basis of common interests rather than power distribution alone.<sup>64</sup> By allying, states achieve their particular goals in security and non-security issues relatively easily. In other words, most states would rather not pursue balancing because it imposes high costs on them. Instead, through bandwagoning, an alliance becomes a “means to profit,” as Schweller remarks.<sup>65</sup> In addition, James Morrow, who studies asymmetric alliances, argues that security concerns like balancing power or threat are not the only determinants of a weaker state’s decision to form an asymmetric alliance with a stronger state. In Morrow’s view, some states would relinquish their autonomy to gain security by allying with the stronger side, while other states would relinquish security to gain autonomy by allying with the weaker side.<sup>66</sup> Michael Barnett and Jack Levy also find that, particularly for countries in the Third World, the realist perspectives undervalue the “role of state-society relations and internal threats and constraints,” such as political and economic problems, in alliance formation.<sup>67</sup>

David Lalman, David Newman, and Glenn Snyder enumerate the costs and benefits of alliances.<sup>68</sup> For example, Snyder lists numerous security benefits of alliances, including deterrence of attack, defense capability against attack, preclusion of alliance or alignment between the partner and the opponent, and increased control or

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<sup>64</sup> Kevin Sweeney and Paul Fritz, “Jumping on the Bandwagon: An Interest-Based Explanation for Great Power Alliances,” *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (May 2004), 429.

<sup>65</sup> Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back in,” 72.

<sup>66</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and James D. Morrow, “Sorting Through the Wealth of Notions,” *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall 1999), 61.

<sup>67</sup> Michael Barnett and Jack Levy, “Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt,” *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (Summer 1991), 369–379.

<sup>68</sup> David Lalman and David Newman, “Alliance Formation and National Security,” *International Interaction*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (January 1991), 240.

influence over the allied state.<sup>69</sup> He also enumerates the costs of alliance, including the risk of having to aid of the ally, the risk of entrapment in war by the ally, the risk of a counter-alliance, foreclosure of alternative alliance options, and the general constraints on free action inherent in coordinating policies with allies.<sup>70</sup>

In interest-based theories, alliance cohesion depends on how much allies share common interests compared with the costs they have to pay. Thus, if they want to maintain the alliance, allies try to keep it alive by advancing their own interests within it. In Snyder's view, after the alliance-formation phase, allies may bargain over "levels of preparedness, war plans, or the amount of support to be provided in crisis confrontations with the adversary, or they may entirely renegotiate the original contract."<sup>71</sup> However, one weakness of this interest-based theory is that the interest of a state or alliance is measured by material variables, especially economic calculations. In addition, from an interest-based theory perspective, allies are supposed to have continuous "debates, competitions, and even conflict over the limited resources and attention" to determine the best institutional arrangements for the future, but both the U.S.-ROK and PRC-DPRK alliances lacked such discussions in the 1990s.<sup>72</sup>

#### ***d. Collective Identity-Based Theory***

Since the late 1980s, constructivists have tried to point out deficiencies in realist interpretations of alliance persistence, highlighting instead the role of identity, norms or culture in state actions.<sup>73</sup> They argue that previous theories focused only on material factors, and ignored ideational factors and processes that create the basis of the arguments that realists advocate (in fact, most realists believe that ideational variables

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<sup>69</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 43–44.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 3.

<sup>72</sup> Suh, *Power, Interest, and Identity in Military Alliance*, 6.

<sup>73</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 32; Shaun Narine, "Economic and Security in the Asia Pacific: A Constructivist Analysis" (International Studies Association 41st Annual Conference, Mar. 14–18, 2000, <http://www.ciaonet.org/isa/nas01/index.html#txt22>).

may help explain only “deviant cases,” but they “cannot explain non-deviant cases”).<sup>74</sup> From their perspective, ideational structures mediate how actors “perceive, construct, and reproduce the institutional and material structures they inhabit,” as well as their own roles and identities within them.<sup>75</sup> This is because different peoples, groups, and government agents can interact intensively and exchange specialized information, corporate identities, missions and normative cores inside institutions. For example, Alastair Johnston—who studies the pattern of the PRC’s participation in international institutions between 1980 and 2000—argues that “microprocesses of socialization (i.e., mimicking, social influence, and persuasion)” within Chinese society helps explain the Chinese attitude and Beijing’s policy of “more cooperative and potentially self-constraining commitments” to major security institutions.<sup>76</sup>

In constructivist analyses of state behavior and relations between states, ideational factors and processes are important for tracing “whether collective actors are likely to form enmity or amity.”<sup>77</sup> Hence, an alliance is formed based on shared identity, norms, and cultures, which ultimately promote common interests. In contrast to power-, threat-, and interest-based theories that emphasize external material factors in alliance formation, constructivists emphasize the meanings and values embedded in those factors. From their perspective, even threat perception is socially constructed and reproduced in both domestic and international context. In other words, the standard for individuals and societies distinguishing between the self and the other—and what constitutes threats to the self, and how to respond—determines which factors get priority in threat assessments.<sup>78</sup> From this perspective, Peter Katzenstein theorizes that, although the balancing of power or threat is somewhat applicable to some Asian countries, realist approaches, by disregarding the long legacies of Chinese influence, anti-Japanese enmity,

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<sup>74</sup> Suh, Katzenstein, and Carlson, *Rethinking Security in East Asian: Identity, Power, and Efficiency*, 6; Alastair I. Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980–2000* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2008), xix.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>76</sup> Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980–2000*, 197.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Rousseau, *Identifying Threats and Threatening Identities : The Social Construction of Realism and Liberalism*, 4.

and deep-rooted Confucianism, fail to explain the current situation in the region.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, David Kang argues that East Asian state alignments are not necessarily determined by the material variables realists use to explain European state alignments, but are affected also by historical experiences or cultural influences like the long legacy of China's predominance in East Asia.<sup>80</sup> In studying PRC-DPRK relations during the second half of the twentieth century, You Ji concludes that strong alliance cohesion cannot be "built upon shared strategic interest [based on logics of power and threat]" alone, but must be "nurtured by common value judgment and social and political systems."<sup>81</sup> Michael Barnett attempts to verify the relationships between state identity and alliance formation by examining various cases of inter-Arab relations and the U.S.-Israeli alliance.<sup>82</sup> In contrast, some constructivists, including Wendt and Katzenstein, try to explain alliances based on the broader concept of collective identity. They argue that collective identity within alliances shapes states' interests and behavior; thus, the more collective identities are shared among allies, the greater the alliance's cohesion.<sup>83</sup>

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

This research attempts to discover the ideational determinants of cohesion or discord, besides power, threat, and self-interest, in the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances, beginning, respectively, with the Deng reform era and the ROK's transition to democracy and globalization. This thesis focuses on the changes in collective identities of the Chinese and the South Koreans in these periods because the United States and DPRK arguably did not undergo major changes in their collective identities, while their allies, the PRC and the ROK, experienced significant changes. The United States has

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<sup>79</sup> Katzenstein, "Conclusion: National Security in a Changing World," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed., Peter J. Katzenstein, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 521.

<sup>80</sup> David C. Kang, "Hierarchy, Balancing, and Empirical Puzzles in Asia International Relations," *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Winter 2003/2004), 174–180.

<sup>81</sup> Ji, "China and North Korea: a fragile relationship of strategic convenience," *Journal of Contemporary China*, 390.

<sup>82</sup> Michael N. Barnett, "Identity and Alliance in the Middle East," in *The Culture of National Security*, ed., Katzenstein, 400–401.

<sup>83</sup> Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 429.

maintained its commitment to defend democracy and free markets in the ROK from the DPRK since the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, while the DPRK retains a consistent political, historical, and cultural identity and continues to see its alliance with the PRC as necessary for survival in an uncertain regional context. The main hypothesis examined in the thesis is that the PRC and the ROK underwent significant changes in their collective identities during these periods and that the changes in their collective identities led to shifts in the cohesion of their respective alliances with the DPRK and the United States. To test this hypothesis, the thesis presents two cases studies, treating the changing Chinese and South Korean collective identities as independent variables, and the cohesion of the PRC-DPRK, and U.S.-ROK<sup>4</sup> alliances as dependent variables.

Exploring the relationship between collective identity and alliance cohesion is a challenging task. This is not only because of the relatively small number of prior research studies that have touched on the relevant issues, but also because it is difficult to define and measure the concepts that make up the ambiguous variables involved in collective identity and alliance cohesion. For this reason, this thesis uses the narrow interpretation of alliance as a formal agreement between two or more nation-states that pledge military cooperation for security purposes against an actual or anticipated enemy. Similarly, this thesis defines alliance cohesion as the degree to which allies stay together and cooperate to defend and promote their common security interests under their mutual obligations and commitments, and the thesis measures alliance cohesion mainly by its military aspects. These narrow interpretations are necessary because broader definitions are difficult to distinguish from current economic relations between the PRC and the ROK, and/or the United States and the PRC, which have been expanding despite their still antagonistic relations in the military field. In addition, it is important to remember that in measuring the ideational independent variable (collective identity) and dependent variable (alliance cohesion) the aim of the research is not to quantify each variable, but to study the trend of qualitative changes in different periods. The goal is to assess whether qualitative changes in ideational factors toward greater or lesser-shared identity produce changes in the same direction in alliance cohesion.

For the purpose of study, this thesis evaluated collective identity by examining the PRC's and the ROK's political and economic transformations, their roles in and commitments to the international community, their nationalism and self-confidence (as shown by public polls, mass media commentary, official government publications, and statements by political elites, who are the "primary creators and reproducers of a state's collective identity"<sup>84</sup>). Simultaneously, the cohesion of each alliance investigated in this study is measured by both quantitative and qualitative data in order to overcome the limitations in the lack of reliable information about the PRC-DPRK alliance and in calculating relative military capability. In other words, there is not enough information available about the PRC-DPRK military alliance, so this thesis measures the changes in that alliance with information from secondary sources, such as national newspapers, government statements, and Chinese and foreign analysts' comments and predictions. In addition, although there is sufficient reliable information about the U.S.-ROK alliance to evaluate its cohesion quantitatively, some statistical data used in many previous studies are not applicable to current changes in alliance cohesion. For example, changes in the absolute number of U.S. military forces in the ROK, which Tenue, Synnestvedt and Ji use for measuring alliance cohesion, does not reflect qualitative changes in today's slimmer but powerfully integrated military forces inside and outside the ROK territory. For these reasons, alliance cohesion in this thesis is gauged according to three dimensions: (1) the level of consensus on military security issues as indicated by official statements or political support among domestic constituencies for these issues, (2) the frequency, level, and nature of military exchanges and assistance, such as arms transfer, military-to-military contacts, and joint/combined operations, and (3) economic contributions to mutual defense security for the U.S.-ROK alliance, as well as the PRC's food and energy aid to the DPRK that could be used for military purposes.

This thesis contains five chapters. This first chapter has briefly explained the research questions and methodology, and defined the two key terms "collective identity" and "alliance cohesion," as the independent and dependent variables of the study. The

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<sup>84</sup> Anne L. Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 2009), 227.

first chapter has also discussed existing IR explanations of alliances, such as power, threat, self-interest, and state identity-based theories, and the research tools used in this thesis to measure the variables and reveal the relationships between them. Chapter II briefly summarizes realist perspectives on the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances and highlights their deficiencies to call attention to the ideational determinant of cohesion in the alliances. Chapter III examines changes in Chinese collective identity since Deng's reform era, focusing on their self-perception and their perceptions of others, including the United States, ROK, and DPRK. It then assesses the cohesion of the PRC-DPRK alliance in terms of the three dimensions, mentioned above. In a similar manner, Chapter IV first describes the forces driving changes in the South Korean collective identity through the transitions of democratization and globalization, and then analyzes how these changes have affected the U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion. Chapter V concludes the thesis by verifying the overall causal relationship between the variables and summarizing the theoretical and practical implications, as well as policy recommendations for enhancing alliance cohesion.



## **II. REALIST PERSPECTIVES OF THE PRC-DPRK AND U.S.-ROK ALLIANCES**

Realists argue that greater imbalances of power and/or threat result in greater motives to form and maintain alliances. In Northeast Asia, in particular on the Korean peninsula, the imbalance of power between the PRC-DPRK alliance and the U.S.-ROK alliances and the level of perceived threat to Beijing and Pyongyang has increased rapidly since the end of the Cold War. The realist perspective predicts that the PRC-DPRK alliance will remain as strong as it was during the Cold War era to balance against the formidable United States and growing ROK, while the U.S.-ROK alliance will lose its original rationale and purpose for the alliance and become weaker. However, this realist prediction does not provide a clear explanation for why the cohesion of the two alliances does not match their prediction and why Chinese and South Korean perception of threat and the enemy have changed independent of the shift of balance of power/threat in the region. This chapter discusses realist perspectives on the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances and points out their deficiencies, focusing on the impact of changes in Chinese and South Korean collective identities on the cohesion of the two alliances.

### **A. BALANCE OF POWER IN NORTHEAST ASIA**

To understand the balance of power in East Asia, in particular between the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK, the military balance in the region should be assessed first. Focusing exclusively on the military aspect, there is substantial evidence of a power imbalance between the PRC-DPRK alliance and the U.S.-ROK alliance. First, data presented in Table 1 on military expenditures of the United States, ROK, PRC, and DPRK show a huge gap. Although it is believed that the PRC does not release reliable information about its military spending, and outside estimates are controversial (and the gap is gradually narrowing as PRC's economy has grown), the maximum estimate of PRC's military expenditure is still far behind the United States'.

Yr	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
U.S.	306,170	331,280	296,188	263,727	256,051	342,167	387,297	480,444	511,171	548,531
ROK	11,666	13,130	13,625	15,481	15,182	16,652	17,605	19,004	21,224	23,773
PRC	10,800	13,800	12,200	13,700	16,900	23,800	33,400	40,600	52,200	63,600
DPRK	1,998	2,112	2,220	-	2,000	1,300	1,400	1,790	-	-

Table 1. Military expenditures of the U.S., ROK, PRC, and DPRK, 1990–2008.<sup>85</sup>

For this reason, Chinese government and scholars frequently assert that even after the Cold War, Washington’s military expenditures are more than the combined totals of eight other major military powers in the world, which is about two times the military spending of NATO and over 10 times that of the PRC.<sup>86</sup> In addition, the capabilities of U.S. forces throughout East Asia have improved, although the number of the U.S. military forces in East Asia has decreased since the end of the Cold War. Specifically, U.S. military assets in Guam have been upgraded quantitatively and qualitatively, and the U.S. military bases there can serve as both strategic and tactical forward bases against the PRC. Combat aircraft (e.g., B-1, B-2, and B-52 bombers) as well as naval ships deployed to the Guam military bases can reach Taiwan and Japan in two to five hours, and the Philippines and the ROK in two to five days.<sup>87</sup> The strategic and tactical importance of Guam led U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates to visit Guam in 2008; he notes that Guam’s build-up will be “one of the largest movements of military assets in decades.”<sup>88</sup>

Moreover, the overwhelming numerical superiority of DPRK military forces over the ROK Armed Forces on the Korean peninsula has been significantly attenuated, even without considering U.S. forces on the peninsula, by the ROK’s advanced military

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<sup>85</sup> Figures from 1990–1998 are in million of US dollars at constant 1995 prices and exchange rates, and figures from 1999–2008 are in million of US dollars at constant 2005 prices and exchange rates. Sources are the *SIPRI Yearbook 2000, 2009*; *The Military Balance 1997/1998, 2000, 2004, 2008*.

<sup>86</sup> Biwu Zhang, “Chinese Perceptions of American Power, 1991–2004.” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 45, No. 5 (September/October 2005), 673.

<sup>87</sup> Shirley A. Kan and Larry A. Niksch, “Guam: U.S. Defense Deployments,” *Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress*, RL22570 (May 22, 2009), 4.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

technology—in particular, air and naval power, mobility, C4ISR, logistics—and its economic growth throughout the 1990s and 2000s. In fact, although the force-to-force ratios on the Korean peninsula between the DPRK and the ROK as of 2006 is almost 3 to 1, the balance between the two countries in terms of weighted effectiveness index (WEI) /weighted unit value (WUI)—which considers capabilities of firepower, mobility, and survivability of weapons—is only 1.4 to 1 and continues to decrease significantly.<sup>89</sup> Taik-young Hamm has analyzed the dynamics of military balance between the two Koreas in terms of the “military capital stocks (i.e., the depreciated cumulative spending on defense)” from the Korean War period to the early 2000s (see Figure 1).

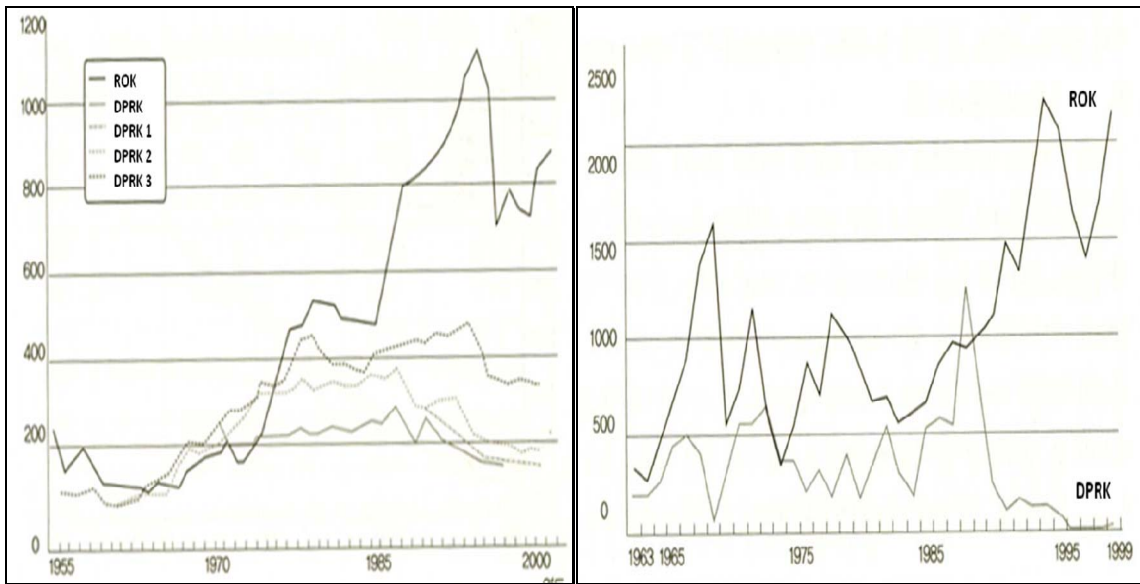


Figure 1. Military expenditures of the ROK and DPRK; military spending for arms import of the ROK and DPRK.<sup>90</sup>

He says that it is the conventional wisdom that the DPRK maintains military superiority over the ROK because “bean counts” of the military balance between the two

<sup>89</sup> Suh, *Power, Interest, and Identity in Military Alliance*, 32–36.

<sup>90</sup> Units are U.S. dollars in millions. “DPRK 1, 2, 3” are DPRK military spending measured by different institutions, including RAND (DPRK 1), Dr. Lee Sangwoo (DPRK 2), and ROK Ministry of National Defense (DPRK 3). “ROK” and “DPRK” are assessed by Hamm. Taik-young Hamm, *Bukhangunsamunjaewi Jaejomyong* [Reevaluation of North Korea’s Military Affairs] (Seoul, ROK: Hanwool, 2006), 363.

Koreas have critical flaws, arguing that ROK defense expenditures have surpassed the DPRK since 1979 and its conventional military power caught up with the DPRK in the early 1980s.<sup>91</sup> In fact, by 2005, the ROK annual defense budget was larger than the entire DPRK economy, while ROK's spending on force improvement plans alone was larger than the total DPRK defense budget.<sup>92</sup> This means that, if one factors in the U.S. forces on the peninsula, the overall military balance is more favorable to the U.S.-ROK alliance.

Second, the U.S. military presence in the region, foreign military sales (FMS), and high technology arms transfers to its allies (Japan, the ROK, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Australia) and new partners (India and some Central Asian countries) have increased Chinese fears of U.S. containment policy against them. The future use of U.S. military power to maintain dominance over the region and plans for military procurement and modernization—such as strategic flexibility, forward operating military bases, and global strike programs shown in the *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR) and *Global Posture Review* (GPR)—have increased the Chinese threat perception of the United States and its allies.<sup>93</sup> While the total amount of the U.S. FMS to its East Asian allies declined rapidly in 1993 due to the demise of Cold War sentiment and subsequent changes in the security environment, the decline was only temporary. In fact, the U.S. FMS to the region was relatively higher than to any other region in the 1990s, and increased in 2002, 2006, and 2007, as shown in Figure 2. In addition, the United States has granted Japan and the ROK the privilege status for purchasing U.S. defense goods under relatively less restrictions, so called the “NATO Plus Four group.”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Taik-young Hamm, *Arming the Two Koreas: State, Capital and Military Power* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 2–3, 136, 162–166; Taik-young Hamm, *Bukhangunsamunjaewi Jaejomyeong* [Reevaluation of North Korea's Military Affairs] (Seoul, ROK: Hanwool, 2006), 344.

<sup>92</sup> Evan Medeiros, Keith Crane, Eric Heginbotham, Norman Levin, Julia Lowell, Angel Rabasa, and Somi Seong, *Pacific Currents: The Responses of U.S. Allies and Security Partners in East Asia to China's Rise* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 65.

<sup>93</sup> Christopher P. Twomey, “Missing Strategic Opportunity in U.S. China Policy since 9/11: Grasping Tactical Success.” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (July/August 2007), 555–556.

<sup>94</sup> Jeff Abramson, “U.S. Arms Notifications Spike in 2008,” *Arms Control Today*, Vol. 39 (March 2009), [http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2009\\_03/arms\\_2008](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2009_03/arms_2008) (accessed October 10, 2009).

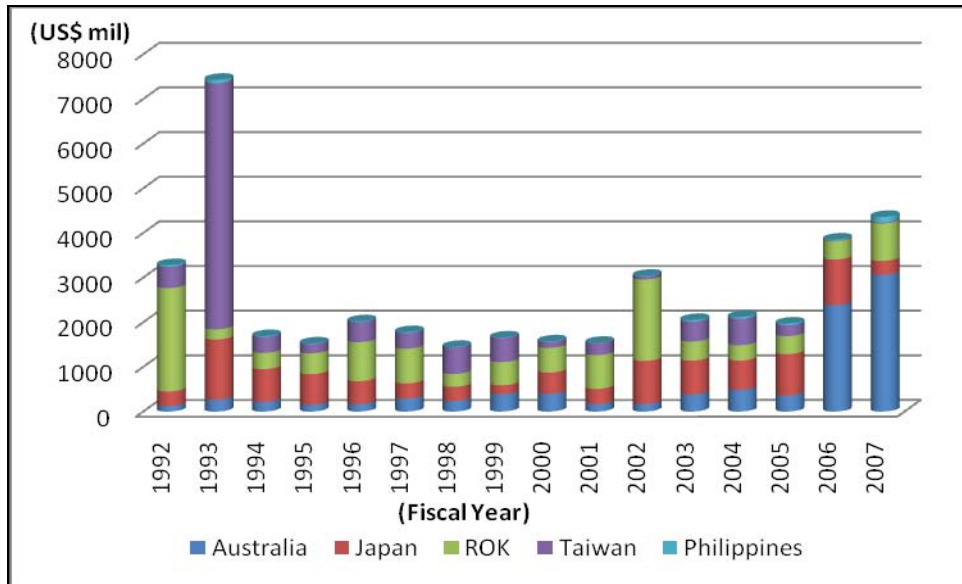


Figure 2. U.S. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) agreement to major East Asian allies.<sup>95</sup>

Although the U.S. FMS to Taiwan were the most significantly reduced among the allies in East Asia, Washington’s strategic decision in 2001 to offer huge, and qualitatively advanced arms sales to Taiwan was an enormous shock to Beijing, not only because of the size of the arms package (over U.S. \$20 billion), but also because of the items in the package, including eight diesel-electric submarines, twelve P-3C anti-submarine patrol aircrafts, thirty anti-tank helicopters (such as AH-64D Apache and AH-17 Cobra), and the most capable U.S. missile defense system, PAC-3.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, the Chinese perceive that Washington’s attempt to establish missile defense systems with U.S. allies close to the PRC and the DPRK is intended to weaken the PRC’s nuclear deterrence capabilities, and thus increases the imbalance of military power between the superpower and the rising powers in East Asia.

On the other hand, in assessing the threats to a unified Korea in the near future, the ROK’s middle- and long-term military planners have considered not only the explicit threat from the North, but also potential threats from neighbors beyond the theater of the

<sup>95</sup> The author created the figure, based on the data from U.S. Department of Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Construction Sales and Other Security Cooperation Historical Facts (as of September 30, 2007),” <http://www.dsca.mil> (accessed July 30, 2009).

<sup>96</sup> Michael S. Chase, “Taiwan’s Arms Procurement Debate and the Demise of the Special Budget Proposal.” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (July/August 2008), 705–706.

Korean peninsula, such as the PRC and Japan. This thrust has been reflected in the ROK's military modernization programs since the mid-1990s. Its future force improvement programs, shown in *Defense Reform 2020* (behind schedule due to budget shortfalls), include advanced C4ISR, unmanned aerial surveillance vehicles, cruise missiles, space programs, long-range strike capabilities, a blue-water navy, naval air-defense (AEGIS system) capabilities, nuclear-powered submarines, and strategically placed naval bases.<sup>97</sup> Although the ROK has never officially addressed the potential threat from the PRC, many Korean experts and military analysts believe that the ROK's military modernization programs are driven by the South Korean desire to be a mid-level power and prepared for any potential conflict with the PRC or Japan.

## **B. DEGREE OF PERCEIVED EXTERNAL THREAT**

Threat-based theories of alliances would predict that since the end of the Cold War, the PRC-DPRK alliance faces a new threat which it needs to balance (i.e., the U.S.-ROK/Japan alliances). From Beijing's perspective, the presence of U.S. forces in the ROK and Japan and the U.S. commitment to Taiwan pose an immense threat to the PRC and DPRK. Realists have highlighted a number of primary sources of U.S. threat to the PRC. First, during the two DPRK nuclear crises in 1994 and 2003 and the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1995-1996, Beijing was very anxious about Washington's preparation for a military strike to destroy the DPRK's nuclear facilities, which became the central security concern of the PRC.<sup>98</sup> In these crises, Washington deployed air and naval assets—including two aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines, B-1 and B-52 bombers, and F-117 stealth fighters on alert for deployment, as well as various surveillance platforms—near the Korean peninsula and the Strait.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Evan S. Medeiros et al., *Pacific Currents: The Responses of U.S. Allies and Security Partners in East Asia to China's Rise* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2008), 86–87.

<sup>98</sup> Robert S. Ross, "Comparative Deterrence: The Taiwan Strait and the Korean Peninsula," in Alastair Johnson and Robert Ross eds., *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2006), 33–34.

<sup>99</sup> Shirley A. Kan and Larry A. Niksch, "Guam: U.S. Defense Deployments," *Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress*, RL22570 (May 22, 2009), 5–6.

Second, Beijing was very concerned about U.S. intelligence and surveillance activities in the PRC territories, and frequently criticized them as provocative actions. Even before the 2001 EP-3 incident, there were many cases when Beijing sent PLA Navy ships and Air Force aircraft to search and intercept U.S. surveillance ships, aircraft, and even carrier groups, and expelled U.S. diplomats from the PRC after accusing them of collecting military intelligence. For instance, the *USS Bowditch*, a U.S. surveillance ship operating in the Yellow Sea (the West Sea of the ROK), was closely tracked by a PLA Navy Jianghu III-class frigate and reconnaissance plane in March 2001.<sup>100</sup> More recently, in March 2009, the PLA sent Y-12 maritime surveillance aircraft, a frigate and a couple of patrol ships, as well as fishery patrol ships to monitor two U.S. ocean surveillance ships, the *USNS Victorious* and *USNA Impeccable*.<sup>101</sup>

Third, the May 7, 1999 bombing of the PRC embassy and the Chinese collateral damage (three Chinese diplomats killed and 20 injured) in Belgrade, Yugoslavia by U.S.-led NATO forces, despite President Clinton's "immediate and profuse" apology, caused Chinese anger at the United States to boil over and increased U.S. threat perceptions and anti-American sentiment in the PRC. Beijing allowed the Chinese protesters to violently attack U.S. diplomatic facilities and American restaurants in the PRC and cancelled all scheduled diplomatic meetings with the United States for the rest of the year.<sup>102</sup> This kind of anti-American sentiment and their threat perception of U.S. containment policy against the PRC became more severe a couple of weeks after the bombing incident, when U.S. Secretary of Defense Cohen introduced "Theater Missile Defense Architecture Options for the Asian-Pacific Region" and argued that this option could be transferred to "key U.S. allies," including Japan, the ROK, and Taiwan.<sup>103</sup>

On the other hand, threat-based theories argue that the U.S.-ROK alliance has become weaker since the post-Cold War, even though the presence of highly militarized North Korean forces near the DMZ continues to be perceived as a major threat to the

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<sup>100</sup> Kan, "U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress," 30, 43, 50.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>102</sup> Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, 212–214.

<sup>103</sup> Kan, "U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress," 39.

ROK. A number of provocative actions by the DPRK temporary increased tension in the Korean peninsula, such as DPRK's nuclear crises in 1993-1994 and 2002-2005, DPRK's submarine infiltration in 1998, and naval clashes on the Yellow Sea in 1999 and 2002. This is because the U.S.-ROK alliance has faced lessening perceived threat from the declining DPRK in terms of its economy, political stability, conventional military capabilities, and even its nuclear capabilities. The United States has enjoyed hegemonic power in the region and the power of the ROK has significantly improved and surpassed the North.

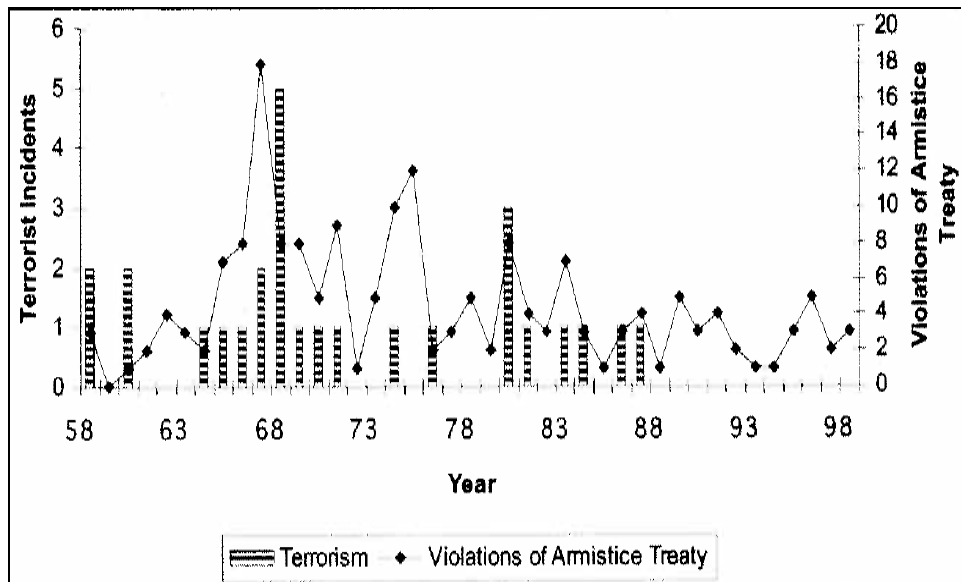


Figure 3. Numbers of DPRK terrorist incidents and violations of armistice treaty.<sup>104</sup>

Threat-based realists highlight the fact that the numbers of the armistice agreement violations and support for terrorist incidents by the DPRK have gradually declined since the 1980s, as shown in Figure 3. They argue that those provocative actions could not change the imbalance of power and/or threat between the ROK (U.S.-ROK alliance) and DPRK (PRC-DPRK alliance). As a result, during Kim Dae-jung and Roh

<sup>104</sup> Yongho Kim, "North Korea: A Perpetual Rogue State?" in John Ikenberry and Chung-In Moon eds, *The United States and Northeast Asia: Debate, Issues, and New Order* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 151.

Moo-hyun's administrations, Seoul changed its view of the DPRK from a major source of threat to a "long-lost brother in need of ROK's assistance."<sup>105</sup>

### C. CONCLUSION

To summarize, realists argue that in Northeast Asia, especially in the Korean peninsula, the imbalance of power/threat between the PRC-DPRK alliance and the U.S.-ROK alliance and the level of perceived threat to the PRC and DPRK has grown. This suggests that the PRC-DPRK alliance will remain as strong as it was during the Cold War to balance against the formidable power and growing threat of the U.S.-ROK alliance, with its superior military technology, economy, resources for mobilization and international support. The PRC-DPRK alliance has attempted to increase its power in order to deter or defeat the U.S.-ROK alliance. For this reason, realists believe that Beijing would accept Pyongyang and its material capabilities, including nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles (weapons of mass destruction, or WMDs), as an effective tool to balance against the U.S.-led alliances in North East Asia.<sup>106</sup> At the same time, realists argue that the United States and ROK will lose their shared rationale for the alliance (i.e., ROK's defense against North Korean aggression) and thus become weaker than during the Cold War era.

However, these realist views do not provide a convincing explanation for why the PRC-DPRK alliance has actually weakened since the end of the Cold War era in the face of greater threats from the United States and ROK. Nor do these theories explain why the actual U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion has become stronger than it was during the Cold War. In addition, few realists have attempted to study the reasons that Chinese and South Korean public attitudes toward threat and enemy have changed independently of the shift in the balance of power/threat in the region. For instance, the majority of the South Korean public no longer see DPRK's nuclear capability as a direct threat to themselves,

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<sup>105</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 2-3.

<sup>106</sup> Christopher P. Twomey, "Explaining Chinese Foreign Policy toward North

Korea: Navigating between the Scylla and Charybdis of proliferation and instability." *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 17, No. 56 (August 2008), 419-420.

and the characterization of the DPRK as “the main threat” was removed from the *ROK Defense White Paper* at a time when the DPRK’s second nuclear crisis was a hot international issue. Furthermore, balance of power/threat logic still has some limitations in explaining why many Chinese analysts doubt if Beijing’s military obligation could be fulfilled in case of war on the Korean peninsula, and why Washington and Seoul have sought to transform their alliance from the singularly focused mission of defending the ROK against the DPRK to a more robust values-based one that looks beyond the Korean peninsula. The following chapters focus on ideational factors influencing the Chinese and South Korean leadership and public and explain how these factors have changed Beijing’s attitudes toward Pyongyang and Seoul’s attitudes toward Washington.

### III. CHINESE IDENTITY AND THE PRC-DPRK ALLIANCE

With the powerful momentum of Deng's reform policy that coincided with the end of the Cold War, China has faced rapid economic development, the need for political transformation, and subsequent changes in Chinese identity. As the PRC's economy has grown and the quality of life in the PRC has improved, the Chinese people have become confident, leaving behind their long legacy of a "victim mentality (*shouhaizhe xintai*),"<sup>107</sup> and have embraced the PRC's new international status as a regional and global "responsible great power." These evolving ideational changes have been continued by Deng's successors and the new Chinese generations, who apply pragmatic standards to themselves, their allies and their enemies. Simultaneously, the Chinese people have begun to consider not only their self-image but also other's perceptions of them. In order to convince its neighbors that the PRC is a "benign and peaceful rising power," the PRC has increasingly attempted to counter the "China threat" perception, accepted the values and norms of the international system, and acted in support of existing international arrangements.<sup>108</sup> This section explains the main factors that have shaken up the traditional characteristics of Chinese collective identity, and analyzes how changes in Chinese self-perception and their perceptions of others, including its traditional ally, the DPRK, have impacted the Chinese view of the Sino-DPRK alliance and shifted Beijing's policy with regard to Pyongyang.

#### A. CHINESE "SELF-PERCEPTION"

##### 1. Growing Self-Confidence and "Responsible Great Power" Mentality

Deng's reform and subsequent economic growth are the most significant indigenous factors that have instilled self-confidence into China's identity. The Chinese people, having experienced rapid economic growth and improvement in their quality of life, are now the most optimistic people in the world. Growing Chinese self-confidence is

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<sup>107</sup> Evan S. Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6 (November/December 2003), 23.

<sup>108</sup> Shirk, *China, Fragile Superpower*, 138.

reflected in various aspects of Chinese collective identity. Politically and economically, as China's economy has grown since the early 1980s, more Chinese people have indicated satisfaction with Deng's reform and the Chinese political and economic models. The Hoover Institution's 1999 survey of six Chinese cities found that the greatest number of the Chinese respondents choose their political system as the best model.<sup>109</sup> According to the Pew Global Attitude Project's 47-nation survey from 2002 to 2007, the PRC had the most optimistic prospects for the next generation. A full 84 percent of Chinese people—compared to 30 percent of Americans, 17 percent of the French, and 10 percent of the Japanese—say that when their country's children grow up, they will be better off than people are today.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, 83 percent of Chinese people express satisfaction with the national condition in 2007, up from 48 percent in the 2002 survey and the biggest increase among the 47 nations studied.<sup>111</sup> This sense of satisfaction derives from the perceived success of the PRC's economic and social development over the past two decades.

Diplomatically and socially, a century-old Chinese “victim mentality,” based on humiliation originating with the Western powers' colonization of Chinese territory in the nineteenth century, is slowly disappearing. During Mao's era, Chinese schoolchildren were taught about “China's century of humiliation” and Chinese politicians frequently used the term to provoke nationalistic public sentiment. However, in the past 10 years, Chinese politicians and mass media have used the term “century of humiliation” much less than during Mao's era.<sup>112</sup> For this reason, Evan Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel argue that for over a decade, the PRC has exhibited a “stark departure” from the tradition of Chinese passivity and isolation and the “victim mentality.”<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Wenfang Tang, *Public Opinion and Political Change in China* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2005), 74.

<sup>110</sup> The Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Global Opinion Trends 2002–2007: 47-Nation Pew Global Attitudes Survey,” July 24, 2007, 4, <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/257.pdf> (assessed July 28, 2009).

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>112</sup> Goldstein, “Parsing China's Rise,” 75.

<sup>113</sup> Medeiros and Fravel, “China's New Diplomacy,” 22.

On the other hand, ever since the term “responsible major power” was first used by PRC’s Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in 1992, many Chinese scholars and politicians have openly discussed what roles a responsible major power should play to “self-confidently” transform the PRC and the Chinese away from their tragic history of victimization.<sup>114</sup> As a result, the meaning of “responsibility” in the eyes of the Chinese leadership and people has changed over time. The term, which meant “responsibility to support and promote international struggles” in Mao’s revolutionary era, now means the responsibility of a world power, which implies active and constructive participation in multilateral institutions, supporting international laws and norms, and contributing to regional and world “peace and development.”<sup>115</sup> Figure 4 shows that references to the PRC’s self-categorization, or emergent identity, as a “responsible major power” in official statements and media by Chinese leaders and scholars has increased rapidly.

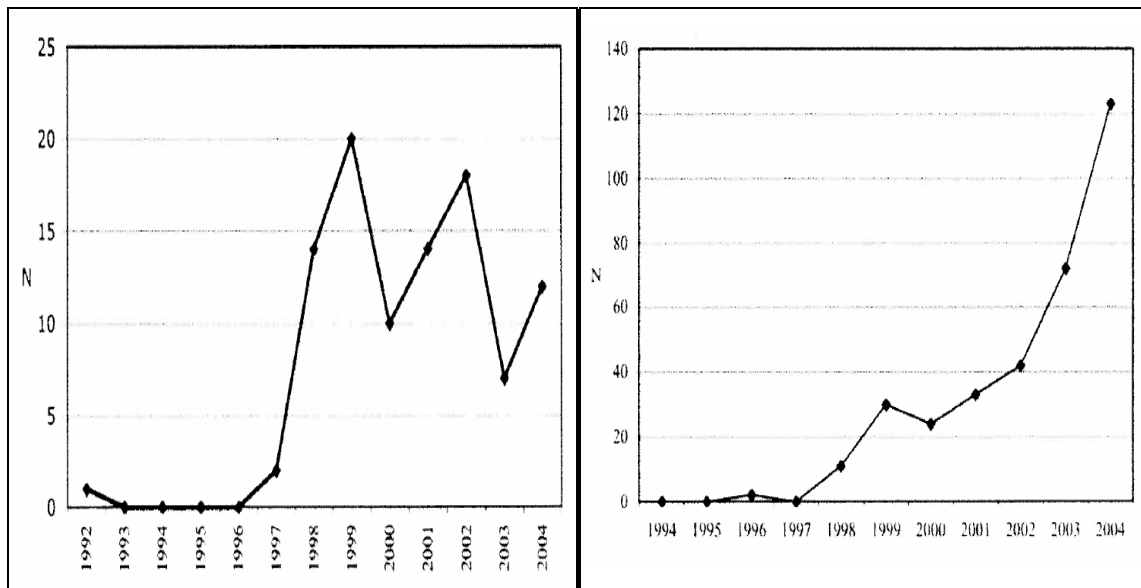


Figure 4. Frequency of articles using the term “responsible major power” in the *People’s Daily* and in Chinese academic articles, 1994–2004.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Goldstein, “Parsing China’s Rise,” 75; Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980–2000*, 146.

<sup>115</sup> Gerald Chan, *China’s Compliance in Global Affairs: Trade, Arms Control, Environmental Protection, Human Rights* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, 2006), 28–32; Andrew Scobell, “Is There a Civil-Military Gap in China’s Peaceful Rise?” *Parameters*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Summer 2009), 4.

<sup>116</sup> Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980–2000*, 147.

The more the Chinese people are exposed to the new norm of a free market and to regional and international communities, the more they consider not only awareness of themselves, their governance, and their state, but also other's perception of themselves. In addition, the more the PRC pursues economic prosperity, the greater its commitment to securing the norms of free trade, capital flow, and transparency. At present, Chinese political and economic elites are well aware that reliable economic growth cannot be sustained without interaction with other regional and international actors with a wary eye on the PRC's rapid economic and military growth. Specifically, the majority of Japanese, South Koreans, Taiwanese, and Americans see the PRC's rapid military and economic growth as a potential threat. The 2007 Pew Global Attitude Project's 47-nation survey indicates that overall assessment of the rise of the PRC have declined in most non-African countries since 2002, due to growing concerns with the PRC's military modernization that attenuate positive perspectives on the PRC's economic growth.<sup>117</sup> For this reason, Beijing has worked hard since the 1990s to counter the "Chinese threat" perception prevailing among its neighbors and sought to build its reputation as a "good global citizen and regional neighbor."<sup>118</sup>

## 2. The Public's Greater Awareness

China's growing self-confidence has played a significant role in increasing Chinese nationalism and public activism in domestic and international affairs, encouraging the Chinese public to raise political, historical, and even economic demands in the name of patriotism.<sup>119</sup> For the CCP, it is hard to be free of nationalistic public demands when making foreign policy, because patriotism or nationalism is a major ideological factor that the CCP has encouraged to consolidate its regime legitimacy. For this reason, Yanan He argues that patriotism or nationalism has gradually replaced

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<sup>117</sup> The Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Global Public Opinion in the Bush Years (2001–2008)," December 18, 2008, <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/263.pdf> (assessed July 28, 2009), 2; "Rising Environmental Concern in 47-Nation Survey: Global Unease with Major World Powers," July 27, 2007, <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/256.pdf> (assessed July 30, 2009), 39–46.

<sup>118</sup> Susan L. Shirk, *China, Fragile Superpower*, 11.

<sup>119</sup> Yanan He, "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japan Conflict," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 16, No. 50 (February 2007), 3.

communism as the “ideological foundation of the CCP’s regime legitimacy.”<sup>120</sup> Although the PRC’s leadership and politicians are less susceptible to public opinion than their counterparts in democracies, the Chinese public has become more capable of influencing Beijing’s domestic and foreign policy. Unlike the Chinese public under Mao’s rule, today’s Chinese public is exposed to better and more varied sources of information through the Internet, newspapers and magazines. With these information sources, the Chinese people are more aware and more engaged in domestic and international affairs.<sup>121</sup> For instance, according to the 1999 Six-Chinese Cities survey conducted by the Hoover Institution, 43 percent of respondents disagree with the idea that the government should decide whether an idea or a theory can be published, and 54 percent say the government should not constrain political dissent.<sup>122</sup>

Although the PRC’s authoritarian political system exercises strong censorship over its people, Chinese officials and politicians have gradually realized that the state and party cannot completely control, monitor, or distort all the information, ideas and opinions available in the media, and in particular the Internet. For instance, the 1999 Belgrade Embassy bombing, the 2001 U.S. EP-3 incident, the spread of SARS epidemic in south China in 2003, and the Uighur-Han Chinese ethnic conflict in 2008 and 2009 are good examples of how fast and profoundly Chinese “netizens” can share information about sensitive political and diplomatic issues using discussion groups such as bulletin board systems (BBS) and instant messages. It is increasingly difficult for the 30,000 Chinese cyber-cops to monitor and block such messages. In addition to the Internet, the number of newspapers and magazines published in the PRC has increased dramatically, from under a hundred government- and CCP-run newspapers in 1979, to approximately 2,000 newspapers, 9,000 magazines, 273 radio stations and 352 TV stations in 2007 (see Figure 5).<sup>123</sup> Susan Shirk describes the newly commercialized Chinese media and

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<sup>120</sup> He, “History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japan Conflict,” 6.

<sup>121</sup> Jongpil Chung, “Comparing Online Activities in China and South Korea,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 48, No. 5 (September/October 2008), 740–741.

<sup>122</sup> Tang, *Public Opinion and Political Change in China*, 71.

<sup>123</sup> Cheng Li, “Democracy Gaining Momentum in China,” *Brookings Newsletter*, June 4, 2009, [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0604\\_china\\_democracy\\_li.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0604_china_democracy_li.aspx) (accessed July 14, 2009).

Internet and the growing population of the Chinese netizens as a “media revolution,” arguing that the media revolution has spread rapidly and widely, loosened the CCP’s censorship, and “radically transformed domestic politics and complicated the domestic context for making foreign policy in China.”<sup>124</sup>

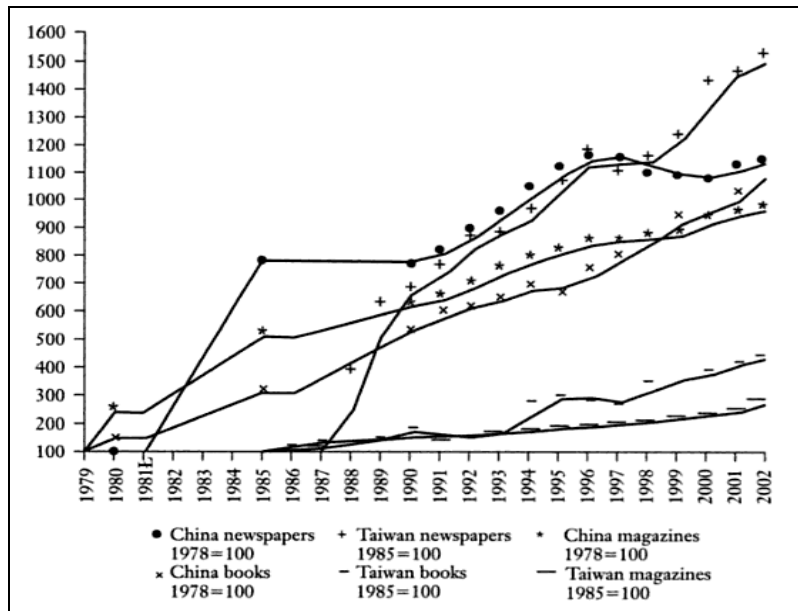


Figure 5. The PRC’s Media Growth in Comparative Perspective, 1985–2002.<sup>125</sup>

### 3. The Public’s Louder Voice and Activism in Politics

There has been growing public discussion of domestic and global affairs and these have influenced Beijing’s policymaking process. Open debates on sensitive issues, such as human rights, democracy, nonproliferation, and missile defense, were unheard of even ten years ago. Today, Chinese intellectuals and the official media have engaged all these issues in nationwide TV talk shows, books, and websites, seeking to influence and shape Beijing’s policy.<sup>126</sup> Meanwhile, many cases demonstrate how the Chinese public uses the Internet and web-based petitions to share prohibited information, coordinate online-movements, and organize street protests. Although many of these cases have not changed

<sup>124</sup> Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, 79–81.

<sup>125</sup> Tang, *Public Opinion and Political Change in China*, 85.

<sup>126</sup> Cheng Li, “Assessing China’s Political Development,” in Cheng Li ed., *China’s Changing Political Landscape* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2008), 3.

PRC domestic policy, they have successfully attracted greater attention from the central government and from party and local officials. For instance, in addition to anti-Japanese and anti-American protest on Chinese websites, the case of *Sun Zhigang* and the “BMW incident” illustrate how the Chinese people have created much louder public voices using the Internet and have criticized corrupt government officials and major domestic policies, including the migrant permit system and judicial system.<sup>127</sup> Currently, Chinese netizens use a strategy called the “Internet manhunt” to gather information on corrupt officials’ misconduct and activities. This information is posted to websites in order to protect people’s rights, and the netizens have frequently called on the CCP to prosecute these corrupt officials.<sup>128</sup> In addition, Chinese netizens have criticized the “Green Dam,” a new government policy that prevents children from accessing pornographic and other harmful Internet content. Critics claim that the policy is aimed at consolidating the central government’s heavy censorship of the Internet. On July 1, 2009, Beijing postponed the installation of the Green Dam software in response to growing criticism by both Chinese netizens and Western governments and corporations.<sup>129</sup>

As the PRC’s economy has grown, the mostly middle class and college educated netizen-base has also expanded. One of the greatest risks to the CCP is political instability that might be amplified by netizens interested in various social issues, including unemployment, social inequality between the rich and poor and between urban (coastal) and rural (hinterland) areas, fraud and corruption, the democratic movement, nationalism, ethnic unrest, environmental degradation, and public health issues.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> The Sun Zhigang Incident occurred in spring 2003 when a Chinese man named Sun Zhigang was beaten to death in the Custody and Repatriation Center of Guangzhou City after being detained as a suspected illegal migrant. After this incident was first reported by the *Southern Metropolitan Daily* on April 25, 2003, and later on Sina.com, the Chinese people (including students, scholars, and lawyers) generated over 4,000 comments on it within only two hours. Eventually, the PRC State Council decided to abolish the migrant permit system and transform the detention centers into relief care centers. Similarly, the “BMW Incident” resulted in huge web-based petitions to the PRC government when a woman relative of a high-ranking Chinese government official was given very light sentence for intentionally killing one farmer and wounding 12 onlookers with a BMW car in October 2003. Jongpil Chung, “Comparing Online Activities in China and South Korea,” 743–744.

<sup>128</sup> Yiyi Lu, “Internet Manhunts,” *The World Today*, Vol. 65, No. 8/9 (August 2009), 16–17.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.; Willy Lam, “The Net Revolution: Chinese Netizens vs. Green Dam,” *China Brief*, Vol. 9, No. 14 (July 2009), 2–3.

<sup>130</sup> Tang, *Public Opinion and Political Change in China*, 84.

## **B. CHINESE PERCEPTIONS OF “OTHERS”**

### **1. Chinese Pro-Western Attitudes and Increasing Involvement in International Institutions**

The more Chinese people become satisfied and confident in their own political and economic systems, the more open-minded they become to Western ideologies and systems. The 2001–2008 Pew Global Attitude Project’s global public opinion survey shows that 89 percent of the Chinese have strong enthusiasm for globalization, compared to 53 percent of Americans and 71 percent of the Japanese, and more than a half of the Chinese respondents have a positive view of U.S. culture, technology, and ideas.<sup>131</sup> Since the early 1980s, the Beijing looked for a new model from foreign countries, one with a greater emphasis on efficiency, individualism, pragmatism and global standards. The more Chinese students and scholars leave for developed foreign countries to continue their education, the more foreign-educated “returnees” will join the numerous official and private think-tanks in the PRC that have played a crucial role in shaping public discourse and Beijing’s foreign policy.<sup>132</sup> According to Xinhua, a PRC state news agency, 1,360,000 Chinese nationals have studied abroad in the past three decades (approximately 37 percent in the United States). Some 370,000 foreign-educated Chinese students and scholars had returned to the PRC by the end of 2008.<sup>133</sup> Of the upcoming generation “Fifth Generation” of PRC leaders who will replace Hu Jintao’s ruling group in 2012, 16.5 percent (i.e., 17 leaders) had undertaken foreign study in the United States, Japan, and other Western countries.<sup>134</sup> A significant fact is that the better-educated people are, either in the PRC or in foreign countries, the more a pro-Western culture and institutions develop.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> The Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Global Public Opinion in the Bush Years (2001–2008),” 9; The Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Rising Environmental Concern in 47-Nation Survey,” July 24, 2007, 10.

<sup>132</sup> Cheng Li, “China’s New Think Tank: Where Officials, Entrepreneurs, and Scholars Interact,” *China Leadership Monitor* No. 29 (Summer 2009), [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/articles/2009/summer\\_china\\_li/summer\\_china\\_li.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/articles/2009/summer_china_li/summer_china_li.pdf) (accessed August 15, 2009), 3–6.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>134</sup> Li, “China’s Lost Generation,” 106.

<sup>135</sup> Tang, *Public Opinion and Political Change in China*, 77.

With increasing interaction since the 1980s between Chinese and Westerners in bilateral and multilateral institutions, Chinese perceptions of others, and especially of Western powers and their institutions, have changed from antagonistic to moderate and even friendly. For example, the PRC's membership in international institutions and organizations increased steadily and dramatically since the beginning of Deng's reform era. In addition, the PRC's membership in international non-government organizations (INGOs) also has increased steadily, from 71 in 1977 to 403 in 1986, 1,136 in 1997, and 1,275 in 2000.<sup>136</sup> Figure 6 and Table 2 illustrate that the PRC became progressively more involved in international organizations, including arms control regimes, and particularly after the death of Mao in 1979. The amount of PRC official rhetoric about "hegemony" is remarkably reduced since Deng's era (except for periods immediately after the 1999 Belgrade Embassy bombing and the 2001 U.S. EP-3 incident).<sup>137</sup>

The PRC also joined the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and applied for membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1989. Beijing joined the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group in 1991, followed by the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1993 and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, Beijing has reached bilateral agreements with Washington pledging adherence to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) guidelines. Alastair Johnston, in examining Chinese perceptions of international institutions, concludes that increasing participation by Beijing in international arms control institutions established on a "non-realpolitik, and even anti-realpolitik ideology" beginning in the early 1980s

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<sup>136</sup> Chan, *China's Compliance in Global Affairs: Trade, Arms Control, Environmental Protection, Human Rights*, 46–47.

<sup>137</sup> Suh, Katzenstein, and Carlson, *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency*, 39, 43; and Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, 99.

<sup>138</sup> As of 2009, the PRC has not yet ratified the CTBT, along with the other nine signatories (including the United States and Israel). CTBTO Preparatory Commission, <http://www.ctbto.org/?textonly=1> (accessed Nov 1, 2009).

prove that the PRC has become “more cooperative and [has made] potentially self-constraining commitments” to major security institutions.<sup>139</sup>

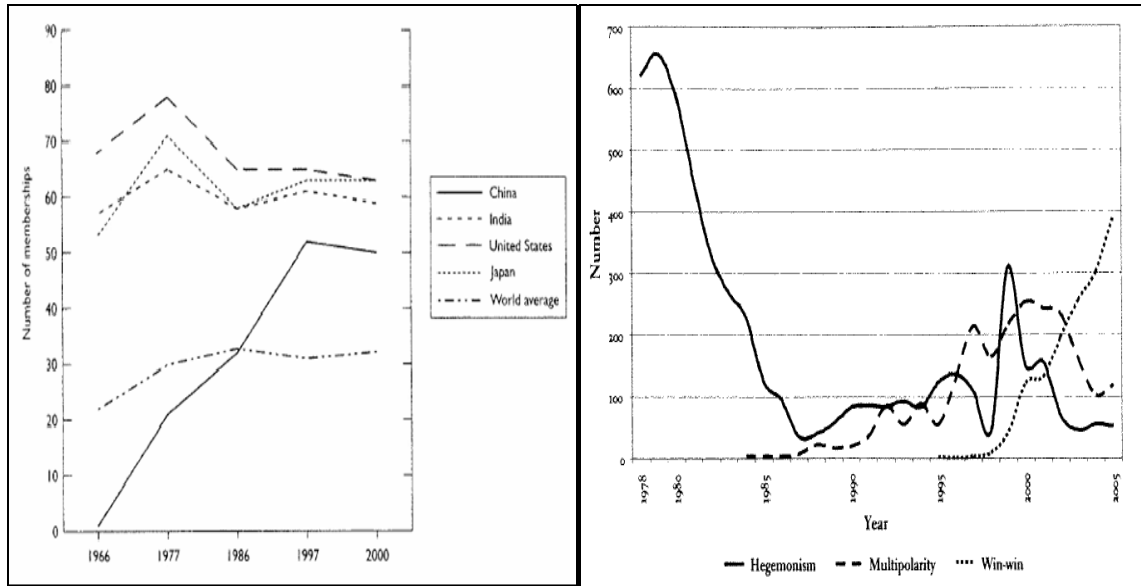


Figure 6. The PRC’s International Organizational Membership, 1966-2000; Frequency of the term of “hegemonism,” “multipolarity,” and “win-win” in the *People’s Daily*, 1978–2005.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>139</sup> Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980–2000*, 32–44, 197.

<sup>140</sup> Suh, Katzenstein, and Carlson, *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency*, 39; and Shirk, *China: Fragile Super Power*, 99.

Name of Treaty	Accession	Signature	Ratification
Geneva Protocol	-	1952	1952
Latin America Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone	-	1973	1974*
Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCCW)	-	1981	1982
Antarctic Treaty	1983	-	-
Outer Space Treaty	-	1983	1983
Biological Weapons Convention	-	1984	1984
Convention on Assistance in Case of Nuclear Accident	1986	-	-
Convention on Early Notification of Nuclear Accident	1986	-	-
South Pacific Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone	-	1987	1998*
IAEA Application of Safeguard in the PRC	-	1988	1989
Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material	1989	-	-
Seabed Treaty	1991	-	-
Non-Proliferation Treaty	1992	-	-
Chemical Weapons Convention	-	1993	1997*
Convention on Nuclear Safety	-	1994	1996
London Convention on Nuclear Dumping	1994	-	-
CCCW Protocol II (landmines) and Protocol IV (lasers)	-	1996	1998*
Africa Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone	-	1996	1997*
Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)	-	1996	-
Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone	-	1999	-

Table 2. The PRC's arms control treaty accessions, signature, and ratification.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>141</sup> The author created the table based on the sources from Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions*, 36; Arms Control Association, "Arms Control and Proliferation Profile: China," <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/chinaprofile> (accessed November 1, 2009); The Government of the People's Republic of China, *China's Endeavors for Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation* (Beijing, PRC: Information Office of the State Council of the PRC, 2005), (<http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/index.htm> (accessed November 1, 2009)). \* means the year of the instrument of ratification deposited.

## 2. Chinese Perceptions of the DPRK

Unlike Mao, who shared revolutionary and ideological values with Kim Il Sung and his army from the Japanese colonial era to the Cold War era, Deng and his successors have undertaken pragmatic and reformative policies and increasingly respected the values and norms of the international institutions that Beijing has been involved in. A majority of the Chinese now believe that their nation is transforming from a weak, developing country to a regionally and globally responsible power.<sup>142</sup> As a responsible great power, Beijing has begun to express clear disdain for illegal and irrational practices of foreign countries and has worked proactively with the international community since the late 1990s to defeat terrorism, the illegal drug trade, and the production of counterfeit U.S. and PRC currency.

Despite its traditional relationship of alliance with the DPRK, Beijing has come to oppose allowing Pyongyang to act freely in violation of the norms and rules of the international community. For instance, Beijing condemned the DPRK's interest in terrorism, including the 1983 Rangoon bombing that killed 21 ROK officials, including four Cabinet members, and the 1987 explosion of a Korean civil airliner that killed all 115 passengers.<sup>143</sup> Although Beijing undertook passive measures and also prepared to support the DPRK in case of attack by the United States during the first DPRK nuclear crisis in 1994, it did seek to maintain stability in the region and urged Pyongyang to cooperate with the international community and to stop threatening regional stability. Nevertheless, the DPRK's response was much more aggressive, threatening the ROK with a harsh rhetoric of "*Bulbada* (sea of fire)" in Seoul. Escalated tensions with Washington, Seoul, and Japan aroused Beijing's concern.<sup>144</sup>

Despite Jiang Zemin's successful visit to the DPRK in 2001—the first official visit to Pyongyang by a PRC president since Beijing normalized relations with Seoul in

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<sup>142</sup> Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, 107.

<sup>143</sup> Gregory, J. Moore, "How North Korea threatens China's interests: Understanding Chinese 'duplicity' on the North Korean nuclear issue," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 8, No.1 (January 2008), 6.

<sup>144</sup> Horowitz, Heo and Tan, *Identity and Change in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, 140.

1992—the DPRK’s second nuclear crisis in 2002 badly damaged the PRC’s interests and reputation again. This contributed to the increasingly negative image of the DPRK in Chinese minds. In particular, Beijing has been furious with Pyongyang’s public disregard of Beijing’s “wishes and advices” since the early 2000s and its continuing provocative behavior and rhetoric toward the United States and South Korea.<sup>145</sup> Almost every Chinese person took great national pride in China’s playing an “unprecedented leadership role in the historic event” of the Six-Party Talks begun in August 2003 to resolve a controversial regional security issue. Pyongyang’s embarrassing and distrustful behavior both inside and outside the Six-Party Talks has frequently damaged Beijing’s leadership role and disappointed international expectations of Beijing.<sup>146</sup> Despite significant achievements from the “September 2005 Joint Statement of Principle” and the “February 2007 Agreement” of the Six-Party Talks, the DPRK’s detonation of a nuclear device in October 2006 and its second nuclear test in May 2009 seriously damaged the situation. After the DPRK nuclear test, Beijing immediately criticized Kim Jong-il, using the term “brazen” which it has only used five times in the past, and against the United States, Japan, and Taiwan.<sup>147</sup> Former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called this response to the DPRK’s nuclear test a “significant turn” of its policy toward the DPRK and stated “I cannot conceive of even a short time ago China agreeing to call North Korea’s behavior a threat to international peace and security...and I think it’s very unusual and quite significant that China has decided to [support sanctions against North Korea.]”<sup>148</sup>

A number of signs indicate significant changes in the perception of Pyongyang and Sino-DPRK ties at all levels of Chinese government and society. At the government levels, although Beijing has officially announced that it supports Pyongyang, “Beijing’s support” is no longer “unconditional,” as it was during the Cold War era, but only

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<sup>145</sup> Tania Branigan, “North Korea’s nuclear test puts China in a tight spot,” *Guardian* (May 29, 2009), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/29/china-beijing-north-korea-nuclear-test> (accessed August 27, 2009).

<sup>146</sup> Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, 123–125.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>148</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice En Route Moscow, Russia,” October 21, 2008, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/74892.htm> (accessed March 1, 2009).

“conditional.”<sup>149</sup> Many Chinese officials recall that Pyongyang frustrated Beijing by siding with the Soviet Union during the Sino-Soviet conflict in the 1960s and 1970s, and threatened Beijing by establishing contact with Taipei and making a deal to take waste from Taiwan’s nuclear power program in response to Beijing’s recognition of Seoul and its rejection of aid to Pyongyang in the 1990s. After a series of such incidents between the two countries, Chinese officials and think-tanks mentioned indirectly that the main source of instability on the peninsula would come not from the United States, the ROK, or Japan, but from its traditional ally, the DPRK, which has greater chances of a political coup, economic collapse, missile test, development of nuclear weapons, and social unrest.<sup>150</sup> Even Jiang Zemin, who visited Pyongyang to restore Sino-DPRK relations and revitalize the DPRK’s economy in 2001, said in his Crawford, Texas summit with President Bush in 2002 that he did not know if Kim Jong-il was a peaceful man.<sup>151</sup> Similarly, Hu Jintao told U.S. officials in private meetings in 2005 that he was impatient with Kim Jong-il and frustrated with the DPRK’s self-defeating policies.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, after the DPRK’s second nuclear test in May 2009, the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman referred the DPRK as a mere “neighbor” and Sino-DPRK ties as “normal relations between states.”<sup>153</sup> The PRC’s state-run media have cautiously begun to criticize the DPRK’s behavior as “irrational” and intended to increase tension in the region. Alternative policies are sometimes proposed, although Beijing still restricts the private press and academic journals from publicly raising doubts about DPRK policy.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Evgeniy P. Bazhanov and James Clay Moltz, “China and the Korean Peninsula,” in Moltz and Alexandre Mansourov eds., *The North Korean Nuclear Program: Security, Strategy, and New Perspectives from Russia* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 178.

<sup>150</sup> Suh, Katzenstein and Carlson, *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency*, 58

<sup>151</sup> Scott Snyder, “China-Korea Relations: Regime Change and Another Nuclear Crisis,” *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 5, No.1 (April 2003), 95.

<sup>152</sup> International Crisis Group, “China and North Korea: Comrades Forever?” Asia Report N °112. Seoul/Brussels. February 1, 2006, 7.

<sup>153</sup> Willy Lam, “Beijing Mulling Tougher Tactics Against Pyongyang,” *China Brief*, Vol. 9, No. 12 (June 2009), 3.

<sup>154</sup> International Crisis Group, “China and North Korea: Comrades Forever?” 7; Medeiros and Fravel, “China’s New Diplomacy,” 30.

At the intellectual level, many liberal Chinese scholars have frequently suggested that Beijing take tougher measures, such as cutting aid to and trade with the DPRK, abrogating the mutual defense treaty (as Russia did in the mid-1990s), and enhancing relationships and military ties with Washington, Seoul and Japan.<sup>155</sup> They argue that the PRC should no longer side with internationally recognized bad regimes, such as Kim Jong-il's, because the international community is watching and assessing its leading role as a responsible great power. In 2009, the "year of the Sino-DPRK friendship," many influential Chinese scholars, including Zhang Liangui at the Central Party School, Sun Zhe at Tsinghua University, and Zhan Debin at Fudan University, began to publicly express their new perceptions of the DPRK as a "nuclear state" to foreign and domestic media like Reuters, CCTV, *China Daily*, and *Global Times*. These scholars say that the DPRK's opaque intentions and capabilities, including its nuclear weapons, are not merely a poke in the eye to the United States, the ROK, or Japan. The DPRK also places economic, diplomatic, and military burdens on Beijing to such extent that it will become a "grave national security threat" to the PRC, and particularly to the northeastern industrialized Chinese provinces.<sup>156</sup> A survey of 20 top Chinese foreign policy experts conducted by the state-run *Global Times* after the DPRK's nuclear test in May 2009 shows that exactly half of the Chinese experts supported Beijing's involvement in harsher UN sanctions against the DPRK, reflecting a great shift in Chinese expert perception of the DPRK.<sup>157</sup>

Changes in Chinese perceptions of the DPRK are found not only among political and economic elite groups, but also in common public opinion. As the Chinese gain pride in their economic and social achievements, China's younger generation has adopted a more pragmatic and nationalistic, less ideological and historical standard in its perception of other countries. From the young people's perspective, the DPRK is a trouble-maker in

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<sup>155</sup> Lam, "Beijing Mulling Tougher Tactics Against Pyongyang," 3.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>157</sup> Scott Snyder, See-won Byun, "China-Korea Relations: Pyongyang Tests Beijing's Patience," *Comparative Connections*, Vol.11, No.2 (July 2009), 104.

the region.<sup>158</sup> For instance, when asked if they were interested in visiting the DPRK, most Chinese college students answered “No.”<sup>159</sup> In addition, the rapidly growing number of young, vocal Chinese netizens also clearly follows the trend of being anti-Kim Jong-il with criticism and personal opinions posted on chat rooms, blogs, instant messages and bulletin boards. After informal conversations about the DPRK with numerous middle and lower-level Chinese officials, scholars, journalists, businessmen and common people, Russian experts conclude that many Chinese do not expect a bright future for Kim Jong-il’s regime, no longer feel a commitment to Pyongyang, do not want to become involved again in any conflict on the Korean peninsula, and do not consider the DPRK as a brother to be supported unconditionally.<sup>160</sup>

### 3. Chinese Perceptions of the United States and ROK

In contrast to its decreasing emphasis on relations with the DPRK, Beijing has put a greater value on its fast-growing economic, political, and military ties with the United States and the ROK, showing clearly that it no longer regards them as enemies. Since Beijing’s recognition of Washington in 1979 and of Seoul in 1992, Sino-American and Sino-ROK ties have improved remarkably in literally every respect, including military-to-military contacts. Sino-DPRK ties, meanwhile, have become more complicated, with decreasing Chinese commitment to Pyongyang. In addition to the remarkable growth of the PRC-ROK economic relationship, more than 200,000 South Koreans live in the PRC, and more than 30,000 South Koreans were studying in the PRC as of 2003, while 53,000 Chinese live in the ROK as of 2005.<sup>161</sup> The Sino-ROK relationship was upgraded from a

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<sup>158</sup> Andrew Horvat, “Overcoming the Negative Legacy of the Past: Why Europe is a Positive Example for East Asia,” *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Summer/Fall 2004), 143–146.

<sup>159</sup> Bazhanov and Moltz, “China and the Korean Peninsula,” 175; Jih-Un Kim, “Neighbors Are Charming to Each Other?: A Study of South Korea-China Mutual Perception,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA’s 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, “Exploring the Past, Anticipating the Future,” in New York, February 15, 2009, 3.

<sup>160</sup> Bazhanov and Moltz, “China and the Korean Peninsula,” 176–177.

<sup>161</sup> Robert S. Ross, “Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia,” in William Keller and Thomas Rawski eds., *China’s Rise and the Balance of Influence in Asia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007), 130–136; Korean Statistical Information Service, “Foreign Residence Statistics in 2005,” [http://www.kosis.kr/planstic/stat\\_theme/use\\_index.jsp](http://www.kosis.kr/planstic/stat_theme/use_index.jsp) (accessed Sep 1, 2009).

“cooperative partnership” to a “comprehensive cooperative partnership” in July 2003, and to a “strategic cooperative partnership” in 2008.<sup>162</sup> For this reason, Sino-ROK relations are regarded as among the most successful cases of PRC engagement, and many China experts argue that the PRC is now at the “breaking point” with the DPRK.<sup>163</sup> This change in Chinese perspectives on the two Koreas is also reflected in Chinese public opinion polls. According to the 2006 Pew Global Attitude Project’s 6-nation survey, more Chinese people (31 percent) have an unfavorable view of the DPRK, while only 18 percent have a negative view over the ROK.<sup>164</sup>

On the other hand, Chinese attitudes toward the world’s dominant power, the United States, have also become moderate, although the majority of Chinese still consider the United States as the greatest threat to themselves. According to the 1999 Hoover Institution survey, Chinese respondents picked the U.S. and Japan’s economic models as the first (40 percent) and second (29 percent) best models in the world, and choose the U.S. political model as the second best model, after to China’s own political system.<sup>165</sup> The Pew Global Attitude Project’s 2007 public opinion survey also indicates that 44 percent of the Chinese believe that the United States, like the PRC, considers the interests of other nations when setting its foreign policy, while only 24 percent of the British and 35 percent of the Japanese agree.<sup>166</sup> Most of the time Chinese security thinkers and decision-makers are satisfied with U.S. policy toward the Korean peninsula, including force deployments, as long as it provides regional stability, helps prevent arms races, and keep Kim Jong-il from provocative and aggressive behavior.<sup>167</sup>

In sum, the PRC faced a series of major domestic and international changes in the 1980s and 1990s. These changes affected the PRC’s collective identity. The Chinese no

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<sup>162</sup> “China and South Korea agree to expand ties,” *The New York Times*, August 25, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/25/world/asia/25iht-seoul.1.15606743.html> (accessed June 1, 2009).

<sup>163</sup> Tkacik, “Sea of Blood, Year of Friendship: China-North Korean Relations in 2009,” 6; Jae Ho Chung, “China’s “Soft” Clash with South Korea,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (May/June 2009), 481.

<sup>164</sup> The Pew Global Attitudes Project, “China’s Neighbors Worry About Its Growing Military Strength” 6-National Pew Global Attitudes Survey, July 24, 2007, 4.

<sup>165</sup> Tang, *Public Opinion and Political Change in China*, 74.

<sup>166</sup> The Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Rising Environmental Concern in 47-Nation Survey,” 20.

<sup>167</sup> Wortzel, “PLA ‘Joint’ Operational Contingencies in South Asia, Central Asia, and Korea,” 347.

longer maintain the traditional “lips and teeth” relationship with the DPRK. Scott Snyder argues that “there is no question that the lips and teeth relationship between Pyongyang and Beijing has been obscured by the dynamic double-digit growth in Sino-South Korean trade and investment over the past decade.”<sup>168</sup> The lack of a mutually beneficial agenda, the DPRK’s domestic problems, nuclear uncertainties, and improving Sino-ROK and Sino-American relations have prevented the PRC-DPRK alliance from improving.<sup>169</sup>

### **C. PRC-DPRK ALLIANCE COHESION**

Using a narrow, military-focused definition of alliance cohesion, this thesis examines how much Beijing and Pyongyang have stayed together and cooperated to defend and promote their common security interests under the “1961 PRC-DPRK Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.” The treaty explicitly states that “in case one of the contracting parties should be exposed to an armed attack by one or several states and thereby involved in war, the other party must immediately and through all means grant military and other assistance.”<sup>170</sup> Despite a lack of reliable information about the Sino-DPRK alliance, this thesis attempts to measure its cohesion according to three dimensions: (1) the level of consensus on security issues between the two allies, (2) the frequency, level, and nature of military exchanges and assistances, such as arms transfers, military-to-military contacts, and joint operations, and (3) PRC food and energy aid to the DPRK, which could be used for military purposes.

#### **1. Compromise on Security Issues**

Deng and his successor Jiang Zemin set the aim of the PRC’s foreign policy as establishing a favorable security environment for stable economic growth and obtaining a proper international status for the PRC. In order to do so, both leaders put economic prosperity at the top of the national agenda. Domestically enhancing Chinese socialism

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<sup>168</sup> Snyder, “China-Korea Relations: Regime Change and Another Nuclear Crisis,” 95.

<sup>169</sup> Taeho Kim, “Strategic Relations Between Beijing and Pyongyang: Growing Strains and Lingering Ties,” in James Lilley and David Shambaugh eds., *China’s Military Faces the Future* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 304.

<sup>170</sup> Kay Moller, “China and Korea: the Godfather, Part Three,” *Journal of Northeast Asia Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (December 1996), 36.

and diplomatically improving its relations with many Western countries are included under the “five principles of peaceful coexistence” and Deng’s 24 Character Strategy (meaning “observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at and maintain a low profile; and never claim leadership”).<sup>171</sup> Given this framework for PRC foreign policy, Beijing’s security policy toward the Korean peninsula has shifted to maintaining the status quo on the Korean peninsula, rejecting Korean forced or coerced reunification.<sup>172</sup> As a consequence, there is significant evidence of an increasing gap in the perspectives of the security environment between Beijing and Pyongyang. First, despite Pyongyang’s request, in 1991 Beijing supported United Nations representation for both Koreas and opened diplomatic relations with the ROK in 1992.

Second, while Beijing has frequently used supportive rhetoric for Pyongyang, that rhetoric has not increased Beijing’s substantive commitment. In fact, the spokesman for the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing in 1995 said that “China does not believe the friendship treaty between Beijing and Pyongyang is a treaty requiring the dispatch of military force,” after Russian President Boris Yeltsin declared the Soviet-North Korean treaty had little value and indicated his desire to renegotiate the pact.<sup>173</sup> In addition, PRC Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said at a public forum in Seoul in 1997 that the PRC was not willing to intervene automatically if the DPRK were to start a war.<sup>174</sup> This kind of official Chinese rhetoric indicates Beijing’s reluctant attitude to enhance its military relationship with Pyongyang. Their position became even clearer when Premier Li Peng, the second most powerful politician in the PRC under Deng and Jiang, explicitly emphasized in 1997 the DPRK as only “one of [China’s] neighbors” and stated Beijing

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<sup>171</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People’s Republic of China 2007*, <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/070523-China-Military-Power-final.pdf> (accessed July 20, 2009), 7.

<sup>172</sup> Bazhanov and Moltz, “China and the Korean Peninsula,” 173.

<sup>173</sup> Horowitz, Heo and Tan, *Identity and Change in East Asian Conflicts: The Cases of China, Taiwan, and the Koreas*, 138–139; Eric A. McVadon, “Chinese Military Strategy for the Korean Peninsula,” in James Lilley and David Shambaugh eds., *China’s Military Faces the Future* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 280.

<sup>174</sup> McVadon, “Chinese Military Strategy for the Korean Peninsula,” 280; Lee Jong Sok, *Bukhan-Joongkook Gwangyeo*[North Korea-China Relations], 1945–2000 (Seoul: Joongshim, 2000), 120.

would not expand its political and military ties with Pyongyang, approve any kind of secret contacts between them, or provide the DPRK with the newest weapons and equipment.<sup>175</sup> More recently, in 2003, Beijing proposed to Pyongyang again that they renegotiate the “mutual assistance” terms of the 1961 treaty. (Pyongyang refused Beijing’s proposal, stating that the “time is not good” to discuss the matter).<sup>176</sup>

Third, during 1995 and 1998, when the DPRK underwent its worst famines (which raised international attention to the country’s situation and led to a serious infusion of international humanitarian support and aid), Beijing did not resume senior-level mutual visits used as a major channel between Beijing and Pyongyang to discuss security issues, but rather pursued friendly, cooperative relations with other Western and neighboring countries.<sup>177</sup>

Fourth, the PRC seems to have been frustrated by Pyongyang’s unexpectedly extreme behavior and decision to ignore constant warnings by the PRC. These factors produced “grave concern” for the Chinese, especially when the DPRK conducted a series of missile and nuclear tests in the 2000s.<sup>178</sup> Eventually Beijing undertook tougher measures against Pyongyang, including voting for UN Resolution 1695 in 2006 and UN Resolution 1874 in 2009. In addition, high level PRC officials, including Hu Jintao and Beijing’s ambassadors to the UN, frequently mention both officially and unofficially that the DPRK will face serious consequences if it keeps engaging in bad behavior and threatening regional stability.<sup>179</sup> Today, many Chinese analysts expect that if Pyongyang continues with further nuclear tests and keeps ignoring tough warnings from Beijing and other countries, Beijing might revoke its barely-maintained mutual defense treaty with Pyongyang.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> McVadon, “Chinese Military Strategy for the Korean Peninsula,” 280.

<sup>176</sup> International Crisis Group, “China and North Korea: Comrades Forever?” 16.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>178</sup> Moore, “How North Korea threatens China’s interest: Understanding Chinese ‘duplicity’ on the North Korean nuclear issue,” 10.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> Zhou, “All teeth and lips – for now.”

Lastly, Beijing reportedly has unilateral contingency plans in the event of instability in the DPRK without sharing them with Pyongyang. As not much information has been released about the People's Liberation Army (PLA) contingency plans, it is difficult to interpret Beijing's real intentions toward the DPRK regime. Many Chinese experts believe that the PRC's unilateral preparation of military operations in the vicinity of the DPRK as well as within DPRK territory shows that Beijing lacks confidence in Kim Jong-il's regime.<sup>181</sup> Beijing reportedly prepared approximately 50,000-75,000 PLA troops to support the DPRK when tensions between Washington and Pyongyang peaked in May 1994. However, Western analysts assert that Beijing's primary intention was not to defend the DPRK against a possible U.S. strike in accordance with the 1961 Sino-DPRK treaty, but rather to stabilize northeastern regions in the PRC, prevent North Korean refugees from flooding its borders, and prevent U.S.-DPRK military actions from escalating into war. Unclear movements by PLA troops near the Sino-DPRK border in 2003, when U.S.-DPRK tension increased again due to the DPRK's second nuclear crisis, also raise questions about the current state of the Sino-DPRK military alliance. In this regard, foreign newspapers recently asserted that some of the PLA's major military exercises, such as the Peace Mission, an annual Sino-Russian exercise conducted in northeastern China since 2005, "may be intended to intimidate the DPRK."<sup>182</sup>

## **2. Military Exchanges and Assistance**

The gap between Beijing's and Pyongyang's perspectives on ideology, politics, economics and geostrategy has widened since the end of the Cold War. One of the most critical changes in the PRC-DPRK alliance is the frequency, level, and nature of military exchanges and assistance, such as arms transfers, military-to-military contacts and joint operations. Today, the distant and limited relationship between the PLA and North Korean People's Army (KPA) no longer resembles their "flesh and blood" or "brother-in-arms" relationship of the 1950s to the 1970s. Indeed, the precise amount of cooperation

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<sup>181</sup> Michael Horowitz, "Who's Behind That Curtain? Unveiling Potential Leverage over Pyongyang," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Winter 2004/2005), 27.

<sup>182</sup> Stephen Blank, "Peace-Mission 2009: A Military Scenario Beyond Central Asia," *China Brief*, Vol. 9, No. 17 (August 2009), 8.

between them remains uncertain, although the 1961 Sino-DPRK Treaty persists.<sup>183</sup> Many China experts, such as Andrew Scobell and Taeho Kim, argue that the PLA-KPA “military exchange, joint operations, and substance” relationship has been weakening since Kim Il Sung died in 1994 and the two countries’ leaders walked farther in opposite directions.<sup>184</sup>

Regarding arms transfers, the SIPRI Arms Transfer Database from 1950 to 2008 in Table 3 shows that Soviet weapons and technologies were available and more attractive to Pyongyang than those available from the PRC during the Cold War era. For instance, the DPRK relied mostly on the Soviets for advanced weapon systems, including MiG-29s, Su-25s, SA-7/16s, and T-62/72s, with relatively little reliance on the PRC.<sup>185</sup> While contributing a relatively small amount compared to the USSR, the PRC stopped its “official” transfer of conventional weapons to the DPRK in the mid-1980s “in consideration of its policy toward military stability on the Korean peninsula.”<sup>186</sup> This is arguably a notable indicator of discord in the PRC-DPRK alliance. Even after the Soviet Union collapsed, Beijing rejected a number of Pyongyang’s requests to transfer whole weapon systems, instead providing spare parts, repair tools, and other logistics materials.<sup>187</sup> For instance, in March 2003 the PRC turned down the DPRK’s request for weapons to prepare for a U.S. military threat, and even rejected Kim Jong-il’s request for military aid and anti-missile defense systems during his visit that same year. Instead, Beijing has agreed to “sell” military hardware, such as trucks and naval components, to the DPRK.<sup>188</sup> Beijing has often been sarcastic about Pyongyang’s absurd requests for large quantities of advanced arms and software, much of which it cannot afford. For

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<sup>183</sup> McVadon, “Chinese Military Strategy for the Korean Peninsula,” 288; Horowitz, “Who’s Behind That Curtain? Unveiling Potential Leverage over Pyongyang,” 27.

<sup>184</sup> Andrew Scobell, *China and North Korea: Comrades-In-Arms to Allies at Arm’s Length* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institution, 2004), 8–9.

<sup>185</sup> SIPRI Arms Transfer Database, <http://armstrade.sipri.org/> (accessed July 1, 2009).

<sup>186</sup> Kim, “Strategic Relations Between Beijing and Pyongyang: Growing Strains and Lingering Ties,” 305.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*,” 304–309.

<sup>188</sup> International Crisis Group, “China and North Korea: Comrades Forever?” 18.

example, KPA Marshal O Chin U requested more Luda-class destroyers and diesel submarines than the PLA Navy itself had in the early 1990s.<sup>189</sup>

Year	USSR (Russia) to DPRK		PRC to DPRK	
	Weapon designation	No. of delivered or produced (license)	Weapon designation	No. of delivered or produced (license)
<b>1950s (after Korean War, 1953)</b>	MiG-15UTI (trainer)	50	An-2 (transport)	100
	P-10 (radar)	20	MiG-15 (fighter)	80
	Artillerist (patrol)	2	MiG-17 (fighter)	200
	Il-28 (bomber)	47	Yak-18 (trainer)	50
	Yak-11 (trainer)	10	Il-28 (bomber)	40
	Tral (minesweeper)	8		
	240mm MRL	200		
	200mm MRL	200		
	MiG-17 (fighter)	100		
	P-20 (radar)	5		
	Il-12 (transport)	10		
	P-4/6 (FAC)	29/27		
	SO-1 (patrol)	8		
	<b>1960s</b>	IS-2 (tank)	60	P-6 (FAC)
140/122mm MRL		150/500	Type-062 (patrol)	23
W-class submarine		4	HY-1 (coast defense)	6
S-75 (SAM)		15		
SA-2 (SAM)		450		
Mi-4A (helicopter)		25		
130/122mm towed gun		172/500		
T-43 (minesweeper)		2		
Top Bow (radar)		3		
An-24 (transport)		10		
BTR-152/50/40 (APC)		250/50/250		
Il-14 (transport)		15		
MiG-19/21 (fighter)		20/150		
PT-76 (tank)		100		
R-13S (SRAAM)		882		
S-75/SA-2B (SAM)		30/1,500		
SU-100 (anti-tank)		100		
ASU-57 (anti-tank)		200		
T-54/55 (tank)		700/250		
KS-1 (anti-ship MSL)		108		
Osa (FAC)		12		
Styx (anti-ship MSL)		136		
SS-C-2 (coast defense)		9		
ZSU-57 (AAV)		250		
SO-1 (patrol)		(11)		
P-4 (FAC)		(10)		

<sup>189</sup> McVadon, "Chinese Military Strategy for the Korean Peninsula," 288.

Year	USSR (Russia) to DPRK		PRC to DPRK	
	Weapon designation	No. of delivered or produced (license)	Weapon designation	No. of delivered or produced (license)
1970s	SSM launcher	19	Type-62 (tank)	50
	An-2 (transport)	20	Type-59 (tank)	50
	Komar (FAC)	6	Cross slot (radar)	10
	Su-7B (FGA)	28	Type-037 (patrol)	6
	AT-1 (anti-tank)	400	BT-6A (trainer)	50
	T-55/62 (tank)	50/500	Type-021 (FAC)	4
	ZSU-23-4 (AAV)	100	YW-531 (APC)	(500) until 1992
	MR-104 (radar)	2	Anti-ship MSL	(112) until 1989
	Square Tie (radar)	2	R-class submarine	(23) until 1995
	BMP-1 (IFV)	100		
	152mm towed gun	200		
	Osa (FAC)	2		
	BTR-60PB (APC)	100		
	MiG-21 (fighter)	24		
	R-13R (SRAAM)	144		
	Shershen (FAC)	4		
	Scud-B (SSM)	(16)		
SA-7 (SAM)	2,500			
Mi-2 (helicopter)	108			
1980s	T-62	(470)	130mm towed gun	50
	MR-104 (radar)	15	130mm MRL	100
	Styx (anti-ship MSL)	85	A-5 (FGA)	40
	Square Tie (radar)	18	F-6 (fighter)	100
	Mi-8T (helicopter)	20	F-7B (fighter)	30
	Osa (FCM)	2	HN-5A (SAM)	(500) until 1994
	5V27 (SAM)	176		
	Scud TEL (launcher)	12		
	Scud-B (SSM)	48		
	Big Back (radar)	2		
	BMP-1 (IFV)	122		
	MiG-23 (fighter)	60		
	R-17/S-200 (SSM)	48/48		
	R-23R (BVRAAM)	250		
	ZSU-23 (AAV)	48		
	Mi-8/14/24 (helicopter)	50/5/47		
	ST-68 (radar)	3		
	MiG-29 (FGA)	(25)		
	R-23R (BVRAAM)	200		
	R-60 (SRAAM)	450		
Su-25 (ground attacker)	36			
SA-7 (SAM)	(1,500)			
AT-4 (anti-tank)	(1,000)			
1990s	R-27 (BVRAAM)	50	N/A	N/A
	MR-104 (radar)	6		
	Styx anti-ship MSL	35		
	Square Tie (radar)	4		
	Anti-tank MSL	(7,050)		
	SA-7 (SAM)	(500)		
SA-16 (SAM)	(1,450)			
2000s	BTR-80A (IFV)	32	N/A	N/A

Table 3. Transfers of major conventional weapons in comparative perspective, the USSR-DPRK and PRC-DPRK.<sup>190</sup>

<sup>190</sup> Based on the information from SIPRI Arms Transfer Database.

Examining the frequency, nature, and level of political and military contacts between the PRC and DPRK is also a good way to evaluate alliance cohesion.<sup>191</sup> As shown in Figure 7, between 1989 and 2008 there were less than 10 mutual visits every year, except during 2006 when the PRC was engaged in the Six Party Talks. During 1998 and before Jiang’s visit in 2001, both countries had almost no discussion of mutual security issues. During the larger number of visits in 1994-1995 and 2003-2007, most Chinese delegations focused on dealing with the DPRK’s nuclear weapons programs. In those periods, the number of PRC-DPRK military-to-military contacts between major officials like presidents, defense ministers, and high-ranking officers of the PLA and KPA in fact decreased (see Table 4).

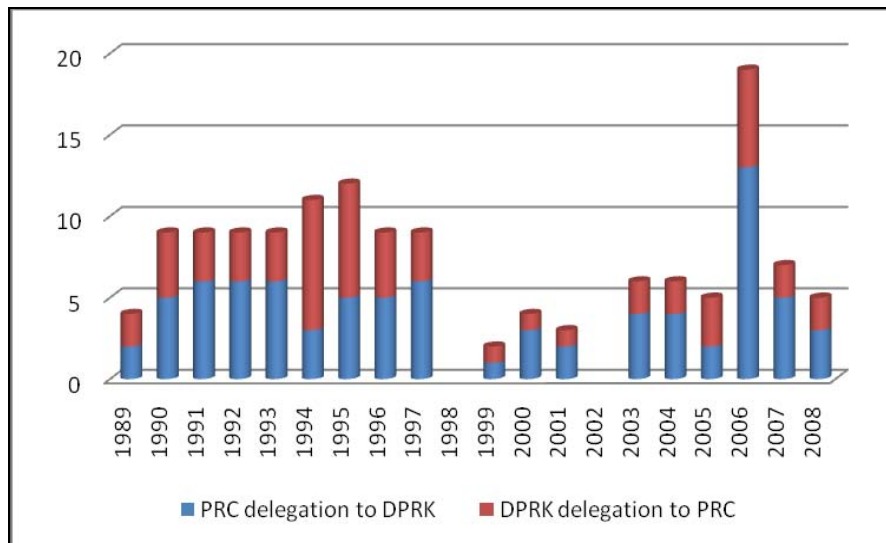


Figure 7. Frequency of PRC-DPRK political and military contact, 1989–2008.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>191</sup> Kim, “Strategic Relations Between Beijing and Pyongyang: Growing Strains and Lingering Ties,” 305–309.

<sup>192</sup> The author created the graph based on data from the following sources: Kim, “Strategic Relations Between Beijing and Pyongyang: Growing Strains and Lingering Ties,” 303–312; The chronologies in quarterly issues of Comparative Connections published by Pacific Forum-CSIS from 1999 to 2008; Christopher Twomey, “Explaining Chinese Foreign Policy toward North Korea: navigating between the Scylla and Charybdis of proliferation and instability,” *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 17, No. 56 (August 2008). No data available for 1998 and 2002.

<b>Year</b>	<b>To DPRK</b>	<b>To PRC</b>	<b># of visits</b>
<b>1989</b>	GS Zhao Ziyang (Wu Xuequin, Zhu Liang) CMC VC Liu Huaqing	COGS Choe Kwang GS Kim Il-sung	4
<b>1990</b>	GS Jiang Zemin DM Qin Jiwei PLAN PC Li Yaowen	GS Kim Il-sung DCOGS Li Chong Chan	5
<b>1991</b>	Nanjing MRPC Shi Yuxiao PLAN Commander Zhang Lianzhong	DM Oh Jin U	3
<b>1992</b>	SP Yang Shangkun Jinan MRC Zhang Wannian Jinan MRPC Song Qingwei GSD ED Director He Ping PLAN PC Wei Jinshan	KPAN Commander Kim Il Chul DCOGS Chun Jae Sun	7
<b>1993</b>	DM Chi Haotian DCOGS Li Wenqing General Hong Xuezhi	General Ok Bong Rin	4
<b>1994</b>	Shenyang MRC Wang Ke	General Kim Hak Sam DDM Kim Jong Kak COGS Choe Kwang General Oh Yong Bang	5
<b>1995</b>	MDN DFAB Sun Qixiang AMS PC Zhang Gong Guangzhou MRPC Shi Yuxia	DDM Kim Jong Kak	4
<b>1996</b>	ILD Deputy Director Dai Bingguo North Sea FC Wang Jiying Shenyang MRPC Jiang Futang	General Jung Chang Yol	4
<b>1997</b>	MNDFAB Col. Li Donghui GLD PC Zhou Kunren	DCOGS Li Bong Juk	3
<b>1998</b>			0
<b>1999</b>			0
<b>2000</b>	NPC Chairman Li Peng DM Chi Haotian	NDC Chairman Kim Jong-il (secret visit)	3
<b>2001</b>	President Jiang Zemin	NDC Chairman Kim Jong-il	2
<b>2002</b>			0
<b>2003</b>	Director of GDP	DC Gen. Cho Myong-rok	2
<b>2004</b>	Delegation of Chinese People's Volunteer Army	NDC Chairman Kim Jong-il(secret)	2
<b>2005</b>			0
<b>2006</b>	President Hu Jintao Deputy Dept. Director of AMS Shao Hua	DNC Chairman Kim Jong-il (secret) DCOGS of KPA	4
<b>2007</b>		KPA military delegation Secretary of KPA Chae Tae-bok	2
<b>2008</b>			0

Table 4. The PRC-DPRK military-to-military contacts, 1989–2008.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.; Abbreviation: AMS (Academy of Military Science); CMC (Central Military Commission); COGS (Chief of General Staff); DCOGS (Deputy Chief of General Staff); DM (Defense Minister); DDM (Deputy Defense Minister); FAB (Foreign Affairs Bureau); FC (Fleet Commander); GLD (General Logistics Department); GS (General Secretary); MND (Ministry of National Defense); MRC (Military Region Commander); PC (Political Commissar).

The majority of regular visits by Chinese officials and PLA officers are symbolic goodwill visits, not task-oriented meetings on salient military and security issues.<sup>194</sup> There are significantly fewer high-level visits since the early 1990s and Beijing seems to have been careful not to attach significance to these visits. For example, when Pyongyang attempted to use the visit of a PLA Navy ship in 1996 as a propaganda tool to exaggerate its military relationship with Beijing, PRC officials and PLA officers minimized the significance of their visit, characterizing it as a “normal part of the minimally acceptable commemoration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the PRC-DPRK friendship agreement.”<sup>195</sup>

In contrast, the PRC has improved its military relationships with the United States, ROK and even Japan since the mid-1990s. Figure 8 indicates the frequency of military-to-military contacts ranging from working-level to high-level contacts between the PLA and the United States starting in 1993, when President Clinton reopened military-to-military ties for the first time since the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. Except in 1999 and 2001 when the PRC embassy in Belgrade was bombed by NATO and the EP-3 incident occurred, both countries have been actively involved military-to-military contacts. Since 1997, both countries have participated in the Defense Consultative Talks (DCT) almost every year, and the U.S. Undersecretary of Defense and Commander of U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) visits the PRC, while a PLA delegation of recently promoted generals and flag officers visits the United States. It is significant that U.S.-PRC military-to-military contact did not decrease during the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1994–1995, and both sides realize the usefulness of military-to-military contacts as tools of “communication, conflict avoidance, and crisis management.”<sup>196</sup> In fact, the number of contacts and the range of topics they deal with quickly increased and have expanded immediately after critical incidents like the 1999 bombing and the 2001 EP-3 collision.

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<sup>194</sup> Kim, “Strategic Relations Between Beijing and Pyongyang: Growing Strains and Lingering Ties,” 305–309.

<sup>195</sup> McVadon, “Chinese Military Strategy for the Korean Peninsula,” 288.

<sup>196</sup> Kan, “U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress,” 16–19.

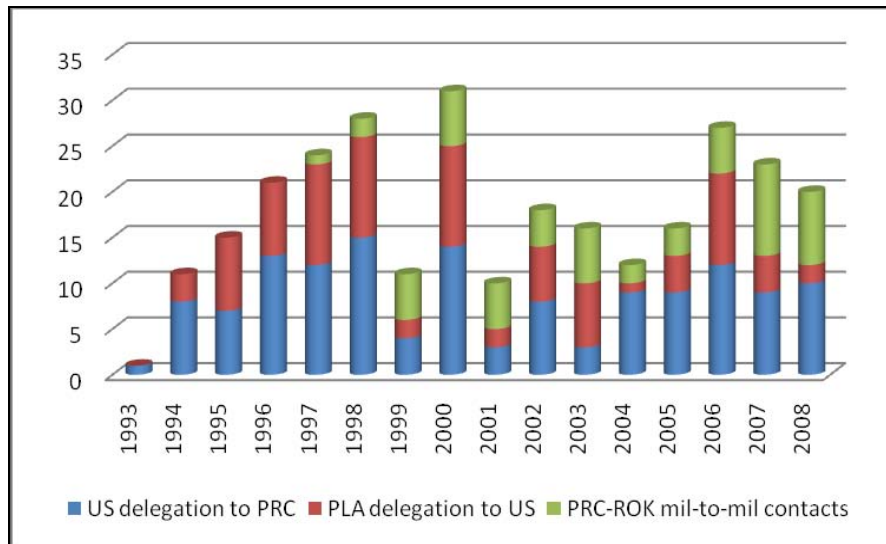


Figure 8. Frequency of military contacts between the PRC and United States/ROK.<sup>197</sup>

The PRC-ROK military relationship also began to deepen in 1999 with an unprecedented visit to Seoul by PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian in response to the ROK Defense Minister Cho Song-tae’s visit to Beijing earlier that year. President Kim Dae-jung and Premier Zhu Rongji’s agreed to pursue a “full-scale cooperative partnership” that included military ties in 2000. These visits reflect significant changes in Beijing’s military relationship with Seoul and a break from its traditional consideration of Pyongyang.<sup>198</sup> The top leaders of the two countries began to discuss military exchange programs, including naval ship visits and joint military exercises. In 2001, ROK Army Chief of Staff General Kil Hyoung-bo made the first visit to the PRC since the end of the Korean War, followed by a precedent-setting visit by Chairman of the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff General Cho Yung-kil and his staff.<sup>199</sup> Foreign Ministers and Defense Ministers of each country have met almost every year since 2000, and in 2002 delegations of the

<sup>197</sup> The author created the graph based on data from the following sources: Shirley A. Kan, “U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress,” *CRS Report for Congress*, RL32496 (April 15, 2009); ROK Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper* (issued from 2000 to 2008).

<sup>198</sup> Scott Snyder, “China-Korea Relations: Upgrading Communication Channels, Messages Are Getting Clear,” *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 2, No.1 (April 2000), 67.

<sup>199</sup> Scott Snyder, “China-Korea Relations: The Insatiable Sino-Korean Economic Relationship: Too Much for Seoul to Swallow?” *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (October, 2000), 85; “China-Korea Relations: The Winds of Change: Fresh Air or Pollution?” *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 3, No.1 (April 2001), 96.

PLA, including Chief of the General Staff of the PLA Army General Fu Zuanyou, visited Seoul to discuss bilateral military exchanges and regional security issues. In November 2008, both militaries finally decided to establish naval and air force hotlines after holding discussions for over a year. After the DPRK conducted nuclear tests on May 25, 2009, ROK Minister of Defense Lee Sang-hee visited Beijing to meet Vice President Xi Jinping, who is slated to succeed Hu Jintao in 2012, and Defense Minister Liang Guanglie. During the meeting, Xi stated that “Beijing look[s] forward to boosting friendship and cooperation [with Seoul], which will be beneficial to peace, stability and development in this region.”<sup>200</sup>

### **3. The PRC’s Food and Energy Aid to the DPRK**

Foreign aid is the most significant factor in maintaining economic and social stability in the DPRK. Many countries have offered humanitarian aid to the DPRK, especially during and after the 1996-1998 famine. Analysts in these countries and observers in the World Food Programme (WFP) suspect that Kim Jong-il used the foreign aid for military purposes, and thus sought to provide North Korean with food only under specific and strict conditions. However, as Pyongyang’s only traditional, responsible ally, Beijing has unconditionally provided a huge amount of aid, without regard for the DPRK’s possible use of the assistance.<sup>201</sup> This said, changes in the amount of the PRC aid to Pyongyang is an important indicator reflecting the cohesion of the PRC-DPRK alliance. Table 5 shows the amount of PRC energy aid (coal, crude oil, diesel, and heavy fuel oil) and grain aid since 1991.

Although the PRC provided large amounts of energy and food aid immediately after their recognition of Seoul in 1992, Chinese leaders subsequently decided to cut off the supply of food export to the DPRK. This led to a significant decrease in food aid in 1994 and 1995. Kim Jong-il threatened to withdraw from the NPT in 1994, instigating the DPRK’s first nuclear crisis. Aid increased slightly in 1999, mainly due to increasing

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<sup>200</sup> Lam, “Beijing Mulling Tougher Tactics Against Pyongyang,” 3.

<sup>201</sup> Jayshree Bajora, “The China-North Korea Relationship,” *Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Newsletter*, February 16, 2009, [http://www.cfr.org/publication/11097/chinanorth\\_korea\\_relationship.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/11097/chinanorth_korea_relationship.html) (accessed August 4, 2009).

food aid during the 1996-98 famine. The famine aroused Chinese concerns about an influx of North Korean refugee if the DPRK were to collapse. Surprisingly, Beijing increased only energy aid to the DPRK during the famine, while food aid stayed flat. In fact, the amount that Beijing initially offered in May 1996 was only 10 percent of the DPRK’s demand for 200,000 tons of food aid.<sup>202</sup> After Beijing’s attempt to reduce aid to Pyongyang in mid-1996, Pyongyang’s reaction was extreme; it threatened Beijing by redeveloping ties with Taiwan, and eventually received another 100,000 tons of food from the PRC.

Yr	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Oil</b>	1100	1100	1050	830	1020	N/A	50	80	400	14	45	47	10	N/A
<b>Food</b>	300	620	740	310	150	120	150	100	150	40	200	330	220	130
<b>WFP<sup>1</sup></b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	50	360	400	600	460	950	350	290	300

Table 5. Amount of the PRC’s oil and grain aid.<sup>203</sup>

Based on this trend of decreasing and inconstant PRC aid to the DPRK, Eberstadt argues that a primary reason Kim Jong-il’s regime has not collapsed since North Korea’s most serious famine is not because of the PRC’s implicit aid—which remained steady between 1998 (U.S. \$339 million) and 2003 (U.S. \$341 million)—but because a number of new sources of capital emerged for Kim Jong-il. These alternative sources include a huge amount of unconditional aid from the ROK, consistent with its “Sunshine Policy,” and illicit transactions from the DPRK’s international counterfeiting, weapons trafficking and drug trafficking.<sup>204</sup> In addition, the PRC has decreased free, “grant-type aid” to the DPRK of the type the USSR provided for its communist allies during the Cold War era.

<sup>202</sup> Moore, “How North Korea threatens China’s interest: Understanding Chinese ‘duplicity’ on the North Korean nuclear issue,” 8.

<sup>203</sup> The author created the table based on data from the following sources: Data between 1991 to 1995 from Korea Trade Investment Promotion Agency, “North Korea trade factsheet,” <http://www.kotra.or.kr/main/trade/nk/material/select/jsp>; Data between 1996 to 2005 from Jaewoo Choo, “Mirroring North Korea’s Growing Economic Dependence on China,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (March/April 2008); WFP data from Mark Manyin and Mary Nikitin, “Assistance to North Korea,” *Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress*, R40095 (May 20, 2009). Figures include sales at a special “friendship price,” and units are thousand metric tons (1,000 MT) for both oil and food). WFP means the U.N. World Food Programme’s food aid to the DPRK.

<sup>204</sup> Eberstadt, “Why Hasn’t North Korea Collapsed?” 276–277.

The PRC has instead increased sales of strategic goods and direct investment, providing the DPRK with food, energy and commodities at a “friendship price” or as a long-term loan, as shown in the Table 6.<sup>205</sup> An interesting trend identified in the table is that the ratio of the PRC’s aid to its overall exports to the DPRK has dropped rapidly since “pragmatic” leader Hu Jintao assumed the presidency in 2002.

<b>Year</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>PRC’s export (U.S. \$ mil)</b>	329	451	571	467	628	795
<b>Aid to DPRK (U.S. \$ mil)</b>	48.4	27.6	69.1	16.0	10.9	14.6
<b>Ratio (aid/export)</b>	14.7	6.1	12.1	3.4	1.7	1.7

Table 6. The PRC’s annual grant-type aid to the DPRK, 1994–2004.<sup>206</sup>

In a policy paper presented to the PRC’s Politburo after Pyongyang admitted developing highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons to U.S. diplomat James Kelly in 2002, Chinese top-level officials spoke freely about cutting energy and food aid even more, and discussed opening their border to more North Korean refugees. This eventually resulted in a three-day shutdown of the Sino-DPRK oil pipeline.<sup>207</sup> Similarly, after Pyongyang declared possession of nuclear weapons and its intention to withdraw from the PRC-chaired Six-Party Talks in February 2005, Beijing decided not to give “any further financial aid in the form of cash payments.” The PRC restricted its oil and food aid to Pyongyang due to “Chinese frustration with North Korea and the lack of accountability in how the aid was spent.”<sup>208</sup> Moreover, Beijing cooperated with Washington in freezing North Korean financial assets at Macau China’s Banco Delta Asia (BDA) which has been designated a “primary money laundering concern” and is accused of helping Pyongyang launder counterfeit U.S. and Chinese currencies.<sup>209</sup>

<sup>205</sup> Choo, “Mirroring North Korea’s Growing Economic Dependence on China,” 363–364.

<sup>206</sup> The table comes from Jaewoo Choo, “Mirroring North Korea’s Growing Economic Dependence on China,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (March/April 2008), 364.

<sup>207</sup> Moore, “How North Korea threatens China’s interest: Understanding Chinese ‘duplicity’ on the North Korean nuclear issue,” 8.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>209</sup> Kan and Niksch, “Guam: U.S. Defense Deployments,” 9–10 .

Recently, in response to the DPRK's 2006 missile and nuclear tests, Beijing cut off a significant amount of oil to the DPRK, a clear signal of the price of ignoring Beijing's warnings. The PRC also ordered Chinese banks to temporarily stop financial transfers to the DPRK and closed three of the four customs offices in northeastern China that handled trade with the DPRK.<sup>210</sup> Simultaneously, Beijing sided with the UN Security Council in passing a resolution imposing sanctions on Pyongyang, including bans on sales to or exports from the DPRK of military goods, nuclear or missile-related items, and even luxury goods; they also began searching trucks crossing the Sino-DPRK border.<sup>211</sup> In 2009, Beijing, along with the ROK and Japan, suspended heavy fuel oil shipments to Pyongyang, fuel designated as energy assistance to the DPRK in the September 2005 Six Party Talks. China has not delivered the remaining amount, 55,000 metric tons of heavy fuel oil equivalent.<sup>212</sup>

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

From a realist perspective, the security environment around the PRC-DPRK alliance since the end of the Cold War has become more unstable due to an imbalance of power and increasing threats from the United States and its allies in East Asia. The United States has attempted to maintain its hegemonic power in the region by improving both strategic and tactical capabilities of U.S. forces in Japan, the ROK, the Philippines, Okinawa and Guam, and by improving its allies' capabilities. The growing capabilities of potential enemies and rivals' military power are constant threats to the PRC and DPRK, particularly when Sino-U.S./Japan/Taiwan and DPRK-U.S./ROK relationships deteriorate, as they did during the Taiwan Strait crises, DPRK nuclear crises, the Belgrade bombing and the EP-3 incidents. For these reasons, realists would expect the Sino-DPRK alliance to remain as strong as in the Cold War era.

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<sup>210</sup> Zhou, "All teeth and lips – for now"; Moore, "How North Korea threatens China's interest: Understanding Chinese 'duplicity' on the North Korean nuclear issue," 11.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Mark Manyin and Mary Nikitin, "Assistance to North Korea," *Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress*, R40095 (May 20, 2009), 5–8.

In contrast, this thesis finds that Chinese self-perceptions, their perceptions of others, and Beijing's perspective on Korean peninsula security issues have altered. Consequently, the PLA's missions, roles, and strategy in the region have also changed, based not only on realist material variables but also on ideational variables that have emerged in the Chinese leadership and public. Since Deng's era, and particularly since the end of the Cold War, growing Chinese self-confidence and activism in domestic and international affairs, the PRC's increasing commitment to international security and economic institutions, and China's increasingly favorable perspective on the United States and South Korea have transformed Beijing's approach to Korea issues from belligerent, coercive and revolutionary to moderate, patient and pragmatic. Despite their limited participation in China's politics, the Chinese public's increasing efforts to acquire information about domestic and international affairs and the growing influence of public opinion on Beijing's decision-making process continue to create new challenges for Beijing in managing its alliance with Pyongyang. The PRC's obligation to provide military assistance to the DPRK, in accordance to the 1996 PRC-DPRK Treaty, and to side with Pyongyang against the international community has become a huge, growing burden on Beijing. For this reason, substantial cooperation between the PRC and the DPRK on mutual security issues and military exchanges and assistance, including arms sales, food and energy aid, has declined. In short, the PRC-DPRK alliance cohesion has weakened.

Table 7 summarizes the values of the key variables of material (realist) and ideational (constructivist) approaches. The table demonstrates that the cohesiveness of the PRC-DPRK alliance during the post-Cold War era cannot be explained exclusively by external threats and interests. It can only be explained by a combination of external security interests and changes in the Chinese collective identity that result from domestic and international political and economic conditions.

<b>Period</b>	<b>Military balance b/w PRC-DPRK and US-allies</b>	<b>Degree of perceived external threat (from US/ROK)</b>	<b>Degree of Chinese self-perception as “responsible power”</b>	<b>Degree of Chinese perceptions of others (international community, U.S., ROK)</b>	<b>Degree of Chinese attitude toward DPRK</b>	<b>Actual PRC-DPRK alliance cohesion</b>
<b>Cold War</b>	Balanced	High	Low	Hostile	Favorable	Strong
<b>Post-Cold War</b>	In favor of US-led allies	High	High	Moderate to friendly	Moderate to unfavorable	Moderate to weak
<b>Theoretical prediction of future PRC-DPRK alliance cohesion</b>	(Realism) Stronger	(Realism) Stronger	(Constructivism) Weaker		(Outcome) Weaker	

Table 7. Values of key material and ideational variables and expectations of the PRC-DPRK alliance cohesion in comparative perspective.

## **IV. SOUTH KOREAN IDENTITY AND THE U.S.-ROK ALLIANCE**

The ROK's rapid economic development after the 1970s under authoritarian regimes, democratization beginning in the mid-1980s, and extreme changes in the international security environment of the Korean peninsula following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 have significantly affected South Korean collective identity, altering their self-perceptions and perceptions of others. South Koreans have become confident of their accomplishments, gradually overcoming their long-held "shrimp among whales" mentality and embracing their growing stature on the world stage as a major regional player. At the same time, these ideational changes have shifted South Korean perspectives on its traditional ally (the United States) and enemies (the DPRK and PRC). This creates new challenges and opportunities for the U.S.-ROK alliance. This chapter first assesses the main factors producing a new, different South Korean collective identity since the South Koreans have experienced rapid economic growth and vibrant democratization. It then examines these factors in detail, focusing on how they have affected South Koreans' self-perception and their perspective of the United States, the DPRK, and the PRC, while transforming Seoul's policy toward the U.S.-ROK alliance. This chapter argues that rising South Korean self-confidence and nationalism, growing activism in domestic and international affairs, and increasing commitment to democratic and free market values have constructively transformed South Korean attitudes toward the United States, consolidating shared values between the two countries and enhancing alliance cohesion.

### **A. SOUTH KOREAN "SELF-PERCEPTION"**

#### **1. Growing Self-Confidence and Nationalism**

The ROK's miraculous economic growth since the 1970s, the so-called "miracle of the Han river," has produced the most significant impact on the self-confidence of South Koreans. The ROK's economy is rated as one of the world's most successful and marked the world's eleventh largest economy; it joined the "rich man's club," the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in 1996 and enjoyed

an overall growth rate of nine percent for three decades until the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis.<sup>213</sup> The Asian financial crisis damaged the reputation of ROK's economy as an exemplar of development, it revealed a record of flawed practices in its financial sectors and increased its vulnerability to foreign currencies. However, the ROK economy recovered from the recession astonishingly quickly compared with other bankrupt countries. The ROK paid off the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout loans sooner than expected and quickly regained its former GDP per capita (as of 2008, the ROK's GDP per capita is approximately U.S. \$27,600).<sup>214</sup> Since the early 2000s, with the growing confidence of the South Korean economy in the international markets, the ROK has sought to create free trade agreements (FTAs) with the United States, PRC, Japan and NATO, hoping to be a hub of a Northeast Asian economy.<sup>215</sup>

From a diplomatic standpoint, a turning point in Seoul's diplomatic posture came with the 1986 Asian Games and 1988 Olympics. When Seoul hosted its largest-ever international event in 1998, it expanded its relations with both Western democracies and communist countries, including the Soviet Union, the PRC, and many socialist countries in Eastern Europe; the ROK also became increasingly vigorous on the world stage to project its new national image.<sup>216</sup> The ROK received membership in the United Nations, along with the DPRK, in 1991. Seoul's peace overtures to Pyongyang, including inter-Korea exchanges and economic cooperation, resulted in the "1992 Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and North" and the "Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."<sup>217</sup> More recently, the successful inter-Korean summits in 2000 and 2007, the ROK's "better

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<sup>213</sup> Medeiros et al., *Pacific Currents: The Responses of U.S. Allies and Security Partners in East Asia to China's Rise*, 65.

<sup>214</sup> Woosang Kim, "Korea as a Middle Power in the Northeast Asian Security Environment," in G. John Ikenberry and Chung-In Moon eds., *The United States and Northeast Asia: Debate, Issues, and New Order* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 123.

<sup>215</sup> Michael H. Armacost, "Introduction," in Armacost and Daniel Okimoto eds., *The Future of America's Alliances in Northeast Asia* (Stanford, CA: Asia-Pacific Research Center, 2004), 22.

<sup>216</sup> Chae-Jin Lee, "South Korean Foreign Relations Faced the Globalization Challenges," in Samuel S. Kim, ed., *Korea's Globalization* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000), 171-172.

<sup>217</sup> Eric Larson, Norman Levin, Seonhae Baik, and Bogdan Savych, *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004), 12-15.

than expected” performance in the 2002 World Cup tournament it co-hosted with Japan, and the ROK’s hosting of the upcoming G-20 economic summit in 2010 also significantly shore up South Korean self-confidence.<sup>218</sup>

From a military perspective, the ROK’s growing economy and technology have helped the rapid modernization of the ROK Armed Forces with a series of defense reforms that began in the early 1980s. For two decades, the ROK has been among the top 15 countries with regard to military expenditures.<sup>219</sup> Currently, the ROK Ministry of Defense is pursuing a U.S. \$292 billion program to transform its military forces, called Defense Reform 2020. With the ROK’s advanced military capabilities and the decline of the DPRK’s relative power, South Koreans have begun to think that they can and should be more involved in their own defense as well as in global security issues like counter-terrorism, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, and nonproliferation.

The ROK’s growing self-confidence is reflected in South Koreans’ self-perception. Many surveys show that the majority of South Koreans have optimistic views of their future. For instance, a 2007-2008 Pacific Forum CSIS survey indicates that 95 percent of South Korean respondents say that they are proud of being Korean and expect that the ROK will be better off in 10 years.<sup>220</sup> In addition, public opinion surveys conducted by the Pew Global Attitude Project show that most South Koreans believe that their lives will improve over the next five years (67 percent in 2002 and 68 percent in 2007) while less than 10 percent have pessimistic views in both surveys.<sup>221</sup> At the same time, increased South Korean self-confidence is also reflected in increased nationalistic sentiment. Testimonials to growing South Korean nationalism include massive anti-Japanese movements in response to the Japanese nationalistic statements on the issue of

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<sup>218</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, “Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia,” 17; Myo-ja Ser, “Korea to host G-20 summit in 2010,” *Joong Ang Ilbo*, September 26, 2009, <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2910585> (accessed September 30, 2009).

<sup>219</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *SIPRI Yearbook 2009: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 182.

<sup>220</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, “Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia,” 20.

<sup>221</sup> The Pew Global Attitude Project, “What the World Thinks in 2002,” 22; The Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Global Opinion Trends 2002–2007,” 24.

Dokdo/Takeshima and the revision of Japanese history textbooks, anti-American candlelight vigils protesting accidental incidents and misconduct by U.S. forces in the ROK, protests against the re-emergence of Chinese historical distortions, and extreme nationalistic enthusiasm during the Olympics and the World Cup games.<sup>222</sup> Nationalism has grown particularly strong since the 2002 election of Roh Moo-hyun as president with high levels of support from the nationalistic younger generation, now in their 30s and 40s, that is assuming a leadership role in South Korean society. In his campaign, Roh emphasized national pride, restoration of the ROK's sovereignty, and "Korea first" sentiments that appealed to the younger generations.<sup>223</sup>

The new spirit of South Korean nationalism also affects the ROK public's perspectives of the United States, the PRC, and the DPRK. It frequently increased resentment of U.S. security policy on the Korean peninsula, leading to calls for more symmetrical relations with the United States, greater sympathy for the DPRK, and interest in enhancing Korean or Asian values.<sup>224</sup>

## **2. Democratization and the Growing Influence of Public Opinion**

During almost 30 years of South Korean authoritarian rule, public participation in domestic politics was suppressed and human rights were seriously limited. Presidents Park Chung-hee and Chun Doo-hwan justified their policies by exaggerating the threat from the DPRK and appealing to people's concern for social order and continued economic prosperity via state-controlled public education and the media.<sup>225</sup> However, since the late 1970s, with the growth in the ROK's economy, the middle class, the well-educated and civil society all increased significantly.<sup>226</sup> The growing middle class eagerly sought political freedom and liberty, with violent protests against human rights abuses and suppression by the authoritarian regimes, especially that of President Chun,

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<sup>222</sup> Moon and Suh, "Identity Politics, Nationalism, and the Future of Northeast Asian Order," 203–204.

<sup>223</sup> Heo and Woo, "South Korea's Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy," 159.

<sup>224</sup> Armacost, "Introduction," 19.

<sup>225</sup> Heo and Woo, "South Korea's Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy," 151.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

who took power by military coup in 1979 after the assassination of President Park and authorized the brutal Kwangju Massacre in May 1980. After a series of nationwide student demonstrations, President Chun agreed to direct elections for president, and in 1987 ROK Army General Roh Tae-woo was elected president in Korea's first direct election. (The election was tainted, however, as Roh was nominated by the outgoing military ruler President Chun, and the polling process of the 1987 presidential election was marred by corruption.) Five years later, in 1992, Kim Young-sam became the first civilian president chosen in a free and fair election, thus ending the 30-year legacy of authoritarian rule. Since then, South Koreans have experienced remarkable and vibrant democratization, exercising new civil rights and political freedoms and expressing divergent, progressive political viewpoints that would have been suppressed under earlier regimes.<sup>227</sup>

During the rapid democratization of the 1990s, government power became decentralized with increased public information and institutional accountability.<sup>228</sup> For example, South Korean local governments were established in 1991 and their officials have been elected by popular vote since 1995, increasing local activism and public participation.<sup>229</sup> In addition, South Koreans started to organize civil society organizations and request transparent investigations of many politically sensitive cases that would never be revealed under prior authoritarian (central) governments. Such cases include the death sentences of alleged DPRK's spies, the No Gun Ri incident during the Korean War, government-authorized political conspiracies against opposition politicians, and the Kwangju Massacre. In fact, almost 74 percent of current domestic NGOs in the ROK were organized between 1987 and 1996.<sup>230</sup>

In contrast to the Cold War era (in particular under the authoritarian government for almost three decades) when it was almost impossible for the ROK's public to

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<sup>227</sup> Chang Hun Oh and Celeste Arrington, "Democratization and Changing Anti-American Sentiment in South Korea," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (March/April 2007), 330–334.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>230</sup> Katharine H. S. Moon, "Challenging U.S. Military Hegemony," 177.

influence foreign and security policies, one of the most significant results of the ROK's democratization has been the increasing importance of public opinion in the management of domestic and foreign policies. The ROK is one of the most technologically advanced and Internet-connected countries in the world.<sup>231</sup> With a large population in a relatively small territory, increasing sources of media, and particularly the Internet, have given the South Korean public greater awareness and opportunity for on- and offline participation in politics. Many examples, including the 2002 presidential election and massive anti-American candlelight vigils in 2002 and 2008, show the heavy impact of a new form of grassroots participation by millions of South Korean netizens on government policies, public opinion and public protests.<sup>232</sup>

Furthermore, South Koreans have consolidated their democracy with two peaceful power transitions from the ruling party to the opposition party, in 1997 (President Kim Dae-jung's election) and 2007 (President Lee Myung-bak's election).<sup>233</sup> The ROK's democratization relaxed political restrictions, extended the ideological spectrum and expanded public participation in the domestic politics, allowing legalization of numerous previously prohibited political interest groups. As a result, South Koreans say that their democratic values have brought significant benefits to them, and the ROK has been rated as a "stalwart defender of democracy in Asia" by Western democracies.<sup>234</sup>

### **3. From a Weak Country to a Major Player in the Region**

Historically, the ROK suffered from a series of conflicts among regional and global powers trying to maintain their spheres of influence over the Korean peninsula, a major geostrategic point in East Asia.<sup>235</sup> For this reason, many scholars argue that

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<sup>231</sup> As of 2006, 70 percent of South Korean households have broadband access to the Internet, compared with 45 percent of Japanese and 33 percent of American households. Medeiros et al., *Pacific Currents: The Responses of U.S. Allies and Security Partners in East Asia to China's Rise*, 63.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, 745.

<sup>233</sup> Oh and Arrington, "Democratization and Changing Anti-American Sentiment in South Korea," 330–334; Heo and Woo, "South Korea's Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy," 151–152.

<sup>234</sup> Bruce Klingner, "Supporting Our South Korean Ally and Enhancing Defense Cooperation," *WebMemo* No. 1859 (March 2008), <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/wm1859.cfm> (accessed October 20, 2009), 1.

<sup>235</sup> Kim, "Korea as a Middle Power in the Northeast Asian Security Environment," 124.

Korean identity was jeopardized by multiple sources in the twentieth century, including Japanese colonialism, the Korean War and subsequent national division, and the Cold War.<sup>236</sup>

However, after the 1990s, the ROK’s growing capabilities and self-confidence in the areas of economy, politics, diplomacy, and military have made South Koreans believe that their country, as a middle power, would be able to play a greater role of defending itself and promoting regional and global peace and prosperity. In particular, President Kim Young-sam advocated that the ROK would become a world-class country through *Segyehwa* (globalization).<sup>237</sup> Although the Asian financial crisis encouraged some South Koreans to oppose further globalization, his successor President Kim Dae-jung believed that the ROK’s ruined economy could recover by implementing global standards and continuing to emphasize both democracy and a free market economy, as “two wheels of a cart” for successful globalization.<sup>238</sup> As a result, the ROK’s participation in international organizations, both at the governmental and popular levels (NGOs), has increased markedly since the 1980s (see Table 8).

Year	1960	1977	1984	1987	1989	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Gov’t	19	39	37	39	41	47	48	50	51	52
NGO	102	371	642	761	820	1,034	1,072	1,138	1,200	1,250

Table 8. The ROK’s membership in international governmental and civilian organization, 1960–1998.<sup>239</sup>

South Koreans believe that their country should take a more active leadership role in the regional and world economies and should be open to the international community. A public opinion survey conducted by Pacific Forum CSIS shows that almost 80 percent

<sup>236</sup> Meredith Woo-Cumings, “Unilateralism and Its Discontents: The Passing of the Cold War Alliance and Changing Public Opinion in the Republic of Korea,” in David Steinberg ed., *Korean Attitudes toward the United States: Changing Dynamics* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2005), 65.

<sup>237</sup> Samuel S. Kim, *Korea’s Globalization* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000), 2.

<sup>238</sup> Kim, *Korea’s Globalization*, 3.

<sup>239</sup> B. C. Koh, “Segyehwa, the Republic of Korea, and the United Nation” in Samuel Kim, ed., *Korea’s Globalization* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000), 200.

of the South Korean respondents welcomed foreign investment and influence in the ROK and 95 percent think that their country should take a more active role in world affairs. The Pew Global Attitude Project's poll also indicates that 85 percent show strong enthusiasm for globalization.<sup>240</sup> More recently, President Lee Myung-bak, who declared "Global Korea" as a foreign policy objective to enhance the ROK's leadership role in regional and global security affairs, successfully hosted the ASEAN summit in 2009 and is preparing the ROK to host the G-20 summit, another big international economic event, in November 2010.

From a military standpoint, South Koreans increasingly see active participation in international security issues as their duty as a major player in the international community. For this reason, over 80 percent of the public strongly supports (and few oppose) the use of their troops in regional and global security matters like UN peacekeeping operations and participation in multinational coalitions approved by the United Nations.<sup>241</sup> In sum, South Koreans largely shared a collective identity as a rising middle power that strongly supports democracy, a free market economy and globalization.

## **B. SOUTH KOREAN PERCEPTIONS OF "OTHERS"**

### **1. South Korean Perceptions of the DPRK**

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 accelerated the isolation of the DPRK and shifted the balance of power in the ROK's favor. South Korean pride and confidence in their diplomatic, economic, and military superiority vis-à-vis the economically stagnant DPRK soared in the early 1990s. As a result, their fear of the DPRK diminished and their sympathy and pity for North Koreans increased.<sup>242</sup> These changes in South Korean perceptions of the DPRK are reflected in Seoul's DPRK policy and in public opinion.

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<sup>240</sup> The Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Global Public Opinion in the Bush Years (2001–2008)," 9; Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 20.

<sup>241</sup> Norman D. Levin, *The Shape of Korea's Future* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1999), 20–21.

<sup>242</sup> Armacost, "Introduction," 18.

At the governmental level, President Roh Tae-woo's administration undertook the policy of "Nordpolitik" and started to implement active engagement toward Pyongyang, resulting in the 1992 "Basic Agreement" and "Joint Declaration" between the ROK and DPRK that institutionalized a Joint Military Commission and Joint Control Commission to implement substantial, practical commitments by both sides.<sup>243</sup> President Kim Young-sam advocated a more liberal approach to the DPRK than the previous authoritarian governments. Seoul proposed a summit meeting between President Kim Young-sam and the DPRK's leader Kim Il Sung to improve inter-Korean relations in 1994. (However, the summit was cancelled due to the sudden death of Kim Il-sung.) This misfortune was followed by Four-Party talks to open a dialogue among regional powers in 1996. President Kim Young-sam supported direct talks between Washington and Pyongyang and approved the shipment of 150,000 tons of rice to the North in 1995, the first ROK direct assistance to the DPRK.<sup>244</sup>

From President Kim Dae-jung's and Roh Moo-hyun's perspectives, it was impossible to change the DPRK unless South Koreans first changed their perspective on the DPRK.<sup>245</sup> They believed that South Korean fears of the DPRK had been shaped by the framework of the Cold War, which held them to a containment policy against the North. President Kim Dae-jung introduced a new, comprehensive approach emphasizing patience, the "Sunshine Policy," and his successor President Roh Moo-hyun continued this policy. Removing the characterization of the DPRK as "the main threat" from the *ROK Defense White Paper* in 2004, President Roh went even further, advocating that South Korea help Pyongyang resolve the security concerns that motivated its missile tests and efforts to acquire nuclear weapons.<sup>246</sup> Under this new policy, Seoul significantly expanded the range and scope of inter-Korean exchanges. In order to gain public support, these two administrations reinforced optimistic views of the DPRK. They supported

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<sup>243</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 15.

<sup>244</sup> Heo and Woo, "South Korea's Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy," 157.

<sup>245</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 17.

<sup>246</sup> Patrick M. Morgan, "Re-Aligning the Military and Political Dimensions of the ROK-US Alliance: The Possibilities," *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Fall 2007), 74.

tighter inter-Korean relations as essential to national security and to a future role for a reunified Korea as a stabilizer of the region, all of which encouraged nationalistic sentiment in the South Korean people.

As a consequence, South Korean public attitudes toward the DPRK have fluctuated widely since the 1990s. Prior to the 2000 summit, almost half of South Koreans viewed Kim Jong-il as a dictator. Immediately after the summit, that figure dropped to less than 10 percent, and over 97 percent indicated that they would welcome a visit by Kim Jong-il to Seoul.<sup>247</sup> This trend accelerated when Pyongyang accepted North-South family reunions for the first time and the North-South railroad project in 2000. In addition, the historic scene of both Koreas' athletes marching together under a single flag at the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics stirred up the South Koreans' "brotherhood" attitude toward North Koreans.<sup>248</sup> Despite the second DPRK's nuclear crisis in the early 2000s, a 2006 Gallup World Poll found that 53 percent of South Korean respondents did not feel a serious threat from the DPRK's nuclear weapons, while 43 percent did feel threatened.<sup>249</sup> Even after the DPRK's nuclear test in October 2006, many progressive South Koreans, including Presidents Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, argued that the DPRK nuclear test occurred not because of the ROK's Sunshine Policy but because of the Bush administration's coercive DPRK policy that made Pyongyang consider nuclear weapons as its "last resort to survive."<sup>250</sup>

But, Seoul's friendly approaches to Pyongyang have failed so far due to the DPRK's insincere feedback to the ROK's cooperative gestures and its continued provocations, leading to a decline in public support for the engagement policy and more negative South Korean attitudes toward the North. For example, during the DPRK's first

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<sup>247</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 22.

<sup>248</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 28.

<sup>249</sup> Cheonleon Lee, "Gallup World Poll: South Korea's Political Dilemma," *Gallup*, September 22, 2006, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/24679/gallup-world-poll-south-koreas-political-dilemma.aspx> (accessed July 15, 2009).

<sup>250</sup> Gi-wook Shin and Kristin C. Burke, "North Korea and Contending South Korean Identities: Analysis of the South Korean Media; Policy Implications for the United States." *Academic Paper Series On Korea*, Vol. 1 (February 2008), <http://www.keia.org/Publications/OnKorea/2008/08Gi-WookBurke.pdf> (accessed Nov 17, 2009), 150–151.

nuclear crisis, Pyongyang frequently brought politically sensitive issues to the negotiating table to split U.S.-ROK relations. At the same time, only minimal progress was seen on the most urgent and important issues, like the transparency of the DPRK's nuclear policy and its international obligations as a member of the NPT.<sup>251</sup> Pyongyang rejected the South Korean name for the light water reactor that KEDO had promised to install in the DPRK in return for giving up its nuclear program. Pyongyang also rejected the exchange of special envoys between the two Koreas, fueling South Korean resentment at being treated as an outsider and excluded from negotiations on critical Korean security issues.<sup>252</sup> When a South Korean commercial ship bearing rice aid arrived in the DPRK in 1995 and was forced to raise the DPRK flag, South Koreans severely criticized Pyongyang's behavior.<sup>253</sup> In addition, despite the fact that inter-Korean summits raised hopes among progressives that the cherished vision of a "unified" Korea might finally be possible, the Sunshine Policy, based not on Kim Dae-jung's initial principle of reciprocity but rather on the idea of "provide first and expect later," was increasingly criticized by both the South Korean public and the Bush administration.<sup>254</sup> Figure 9 shows how *Chosun Ilbo*, the most popular South Korean newspaper, framed issues in their coverage of the DPRK before President Kim Dae-jung's administration (1992-1998) compared to their coverage during and after his administration (1998-2003). This shows that the South Korean public had begun to emphasize the need for greater reciprocity in the relations with the North.<sup>255</sup> During this period, other major progressive and nationalistic South Korean newspapers, such as *Hangyoreh Daily*, also toned down their strong rhetoric toward the ROK's engagement with the DPRK.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 15–18.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 17–22.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> Heo and Woo, "South Korea's Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy," 158.

<sup>255</sup> Shin and Burke, "North Korea and Contending South Korean Identities: Analysis of the South Korean Media; Policy Implications for the United States." 158–162.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

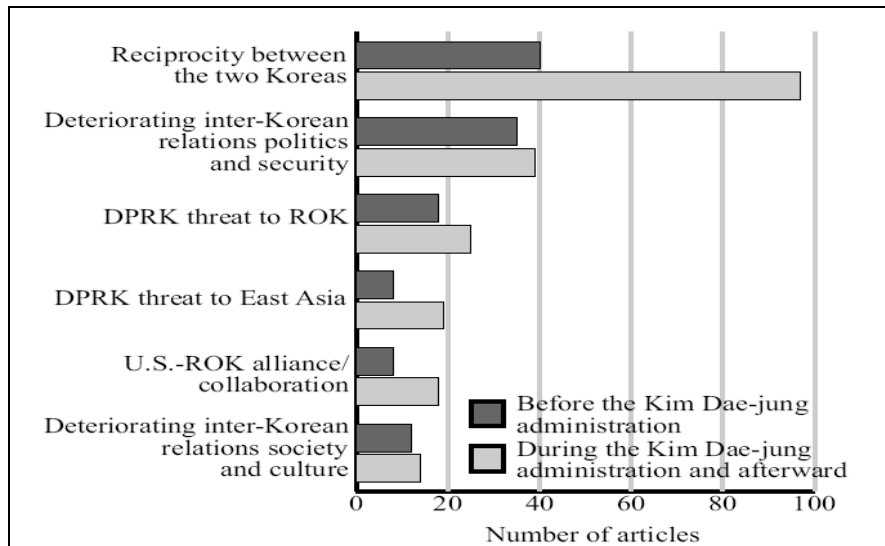


Figure 9. Frequency of the most prevalent news frames regarding inter-Korean issues in *Chosun Ilbo*, before the Kim Dae-jung administration (1992–1997) compared with during and after his administration (1998–2003).<sup>257</sup>

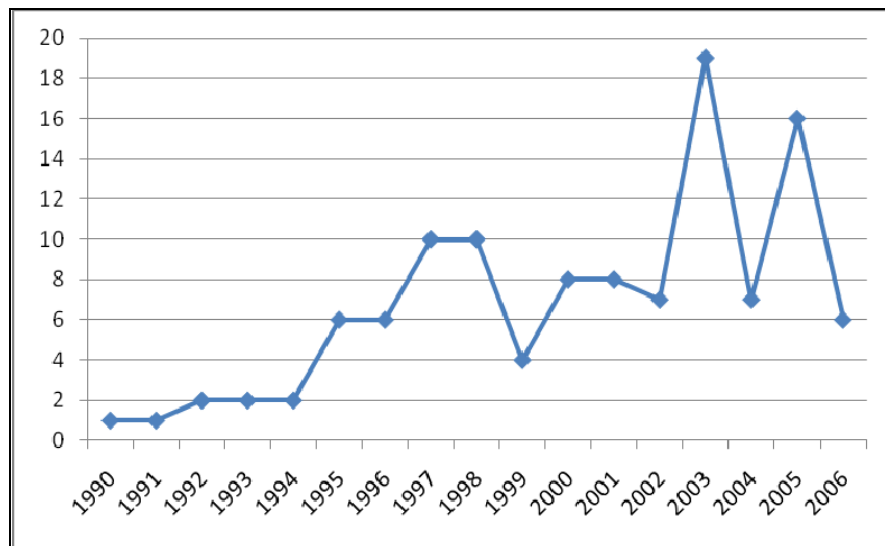


Figure 10. Frequency of North Korean Provocative Actions, 1990–2006.<sup>258</sup>

Furthermore, South Koreans lost patience with North Korea’s provocative actions between 1998 and 2006, including the 1998 DPRK’s submarine incident, a series of

<sup>257</sup> The figure is from Shin and Burke, “North Korea and Contending South Korean Identities: Analysis of the South Korean Media; Policy Implications for the United States.” 161.

<sup>258</sup> The author created this graph based on data from Hannah Fischer, “North Korean Provocative Actions, 1950–2007,” *CRS Report for Congress*, RL30004 (April 20, 2007).

*Taepodong* missile and nuclear tests, naval clashes in the Yellow Sea in 1999, 2002, and 2009 in the vicinity of the Northern Limited Line (NLL), and constant DMZ provocations. In contrast to South Koreans' expectations, such incidents did not seem to decrease despite Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun's warm overtures to the North (see Figure 10).

More recently, South Korean patience was further reduced by the shooting death of a South Korean female tourist at the Mount Keumgang resort in July 2008. Pyongyang, claiming the tourist had entered a forbidden area, did not apologize or allow South Korean investigators to enter the DPRK, but instead blamed Seoul for the incident and demanded an apology from the South.<sup>259</sup> In addition, at the inter-Korean military dialogue in October 2008, the Lee administration's first opportunity to discuss mutual actions to prevent similar incidents and reopen inter-Korean talks, the meeting time was taken up with complaints about leaflets disparaging the North Korean leadership distributed by South Korean NGOs with ties to North Korean refugees.<sup>260</sup> Hence, after a period when views of the North improved, South Korean perceptions of the DPRK have started returning to their previously negative state.

## **2. South Korean Attitudes Toward the PRC**

Like South Korean views of the DPRK, their views of the PRC are ambivalent and conflicted because the PRC still looms large as a major uncertainty for security. From an economic perspective, since the 1992 normalization, the trade between the two countries increased by a factor of 628 in 26 years, making the PRC South Korea's number one trading partner.<sup>261</sup> By 1995, the PRC was the largest single destination for South Korean foreign direct investment (FDI). More than a half of South Korean FDI since 2003 has flowed into the PRC (ROK's cumulative investment in the PRC surpassed

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<sup>259</sup> Jonathan Watts, "South Korea tourist shot dead in North Korea," *Guardian*, July 11, 2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jul/11/korea> (accessed August 30, 2009)

<sup>260</sup> Scott Snyder, "Lee Myung-bak's foreign policy: a 250-day assessment," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (March 2009), 95.

<sup>261</sup> Jae Ho Chung, "China's 'Soft' Clash with South Korea." *Asian Survey*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (May/June 2009), 470.

that in the United States in 2004).<sup>262</sup> From a diplomatic perspective, the PRC grew steadily more important than other ROK neighbors because the PRC, as the DPRK's only ally, has been the best source of advice on intra-Korean issues and the best communication channel supplementing Seoul's limited direct contacts with Pyongyang.<sup>263</sup> In social and cultural perspectives, with their geographical proximity and cultural affinity, the total number of tourists between the two countries also soared up from 9,000 in 1988 to more than 4.8 million in 2006, surpassing that between the United States and ROK.<sup>264</sup> Based on those increasing interaction, both the ROK and the PRC continue to seek expansion of their political, economic, social and cultural partnerships.

As a result, South Korean attitudes toward the PRC and Chinese have significantly improved since the 1992 normalization. For instance, 38 percent of South Koreans picked the PRC as their most important economic partner in 1996, 43 percent in 1998, 53 percent in 2002, and 67 percent in 2007.<sup>265</sup> Many South Korean and Chinese analysts describe the Seoul-Beijing relationship in the 1990s as a "honeymoon" in which mutual understanding and physical interaction flourished.<sup>266</sup> In 2001, 73 percent of South Korean respondents had a favorable view of the PRC, while only 66 percent expressed

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<sup>262</sup> Brian Bridges, "The Political Economy of China-Korea Relations," in Joseph Chai, Y. Y. Kueh, and Clement Tisdell eds., *China and the Asia Pacific Economy* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 1997), 214; Ross, "Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia," 130.

<sup>263</sup> Morgan, "Re-Aligning the Military and Political Dimensions of the ROK-US Alliance: The Possibilities," 75.

<sup>264</sup> Chung, "China's 'Soft' Clash with South Korea." 470.

<sup>265</sup> Victor Cha, "Shaping Changes and Cultivating Ideas in the U.S.-ROK Alliance," in Armacost and Daniel Okimoto eds., *The Future of America's Alliances in Northeast Asia* (Stanford, CA: Asia-Pacific Research Center, 2004), 133; Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 25.

<sup>266</sup> Jae Ho Chung, "How China respond to trade sanctions: Decoding the Sino-South Korean 'Garlic War'," in David Zweig and Chen Zhimin eds., *China's Reforms and International Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 186.

favorable attitudes toward the United States.<sup>267</sup> For this reason, some analysts have argued that the ROK will inevitably side with the PRC as its natural ally, forsaking the alliance with the United States.<sup>268</sup>

However, South Korean attitudes toward the PRC are greatly affected by a wide range of issues, such as economic competition, tainted Chinese products, unresolved historical disputes, domestic identity, and Beijing's treatment of North Korean refugees.<sup>269</sup> From an economic standpoint, South Korean business communities are increasingly concerned about their growing vulnerability to cheap, plentiful Chinese products in overseas markets and their growing trade dependency on the PRC. For instance, PRC trade as a portion of ROK's total trade increased from approximately 3 percent in 1995 to almost 20 percent in 2006.<sup>270</sup> Trade disputes between the two countries have also increased. For example, during the so-called "garlic war" between the PRC and the ROK in 2000, South Korean resentment soared due to massive, unfair, retaliatory tariffs on other South Korean goods in the Chinese markets that caused more than U.S. \$100 million in losses.<sup>271</sup> For this reason, although the ROK has given credit to the PRC's role as a world economic powerhouse, 66 percent of South Koreans believe that a rising China will be an economic competitor to the ROK rather than a partner (31 percent).<sup>272</sup>

From a historical perspective, Beijing undertook a "Northeast Asia Project" to incorporate ethnic minority histories, including Korea's ancient Koguryo kingdom, into the broader Chinese history. Almost every South Korean saw the project as a hegemonic attempt by the PRC, and the perception of the PRC as a threat spread rapidly in the

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<sup>267</sup> Ross, "Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia," 136.

<sup>268</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 18.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>270</sup> Chung, "China's 'Soft' Clash with South Korea," 471.

<sup>271</sup> Ross, "Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia," 129.

<sup>272</sup> Weston Konishi and Mark Manyin, "South Korea: Its Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Outlook," *Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress*, September 30, 2009, 14.

ROK.<sup>273</sup> Like the PRC during the Korean War, ancient Chinese dynasties (such as the *Tang* dynasty), frequently attempted to prevent a united Korean peninsula. In light of this history, South Koreans keep a wary eye on the PRC's ambiguous intentions toward the Korean peninsula and its DPRK contingency plans.<sup>274</sup> A number of South Korean public opinion surveys conducted by major South Korean news services indicate that South Korean attitudes toward the PRC have deteriorated in the 2000s. According to polls in 2002 by the *Sisa Journal*, in 2005 by *Joong-ang Ilbo*, and in 2008 by *Kyunghyang Shinmoon*, favorable South Korean views of the PRC decreased from 41 percent in 2002, to 29 percent in 2005, to 15 percent in 2008.<sup>275</sup> A 2007 *KBS* public opinion poll shows that almost 60 percent of South Koreans say they do not like the PRC, and the Pew Global Attitude Project found that unfavorable views of the PRC were held by 42 percent of South Koreans in 2007 and 48 percent in 2008.<sup>276</sup>

### **3. South Korean Attitudes Toward the United States and the U.S.-ROK Alliance**

During the last half century, the United States and ROK have had prosperous, successful relations that have brought mutual benefits. Based on their formidable alliance, the ROK has been able to enhance its security and promote its interests in recovering from the Korean War, becoming economically and militarily superior to its rival on the Korean peninsula, and gaining enough power to deter a North Korean threat. Simultaneously, the United States has been able to maintain regional peace and stability and promote its supreme values of democracy and free markets in the region. During the Cold War era, neither Americans nor South Koreans doubted the rationale, substance and purpose of their alliance, and thus the alliance remained stable and predictable despite friction over South Korean human right abuses, democratization, and U.S.-ROK trade

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<sup>273</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 18.

<sup>274</sup> Paul B. Stares and Joel S. Wit, "Preparing for Sudden Change in North Korea," Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Special Report No. 42, January 2009, 18.

<sup>275</sup> Chung, "China's 'Soft' Clash with South Korea," 473.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid*; The Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Global Public Opinion in the Bush Years (2001–2008)," 2; The Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Global Unease with Major World Powers," 39.

issues.<sup>277</sup> However, the end of the Cold War, along with the ROK's rapid economic growth and vibrant democratization, has affected the foundation of the alliance, changing South Korean public perceptions and attitudes toward both themselves and the United States.

Various factors have shaped South Korean attitudes toward the United States and U.S.-ROK alliance, including history, democratization, South Koreans' growing self-confidence, demographic changes in the ROK, inter-Korean relations, and misunderstandings between Seoul and Washington. First, historically, South Korean views of the United States were a "complex of mixture of feelings," from "gratitude, fondness, and respect" to "lingering sense of resentment and distrust" as the United States has played a critical role in different stages of Korea's history, including colonization, independence, U.S. military rule, the Korean War, military modernization, economic development, and democratization.<sup>278</sup> On the one hand, the United States was perceived as a "liberator" of Koreans from Japanese colonialism after World War II, as a "sponsor" of an independent ROK in 1948, as a "protector" against the DPRK during the Korean War, and as a de facto military, economic, and political "security guarantor" during the Cold War era.<sup>279</sup> On the other hand, the United States was perceived as seeking its own interests without regard for Korean interests when Washington rejected Korea's request for American protection against Japanese colonialism in the early 1900s, made ambiguous plans for the post-war Korea at the Cairo Conference in 1943, and put Korea under international trusteeship with the Soviet Union despite the strong Korean demand for independence.<sup>280</sup> Other self-interested U.S. actions include tacit support of the South Korean authoritarian regimes and their coercive suppression, in particular during the

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<sup>277</sup> Tae-Hwan Kwak and Seung-Ho Joo, "Introduction," in T. Kwak and S. Joo, eds., *The United States and the Korean Peninsula in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 2.

<sup>278</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 7–12.

<sup>279</sup> Norman Levin, *Do the Ties Still Bind?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004), 6.

<sup>280</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 26.

Kwangju Massacre in 1980s, Washington's strong pressure on Seoul to open its agriculture, financial, and service markets, and the imposition of "Super 301 legislation" to decrease U.S. trade deficits.<sup>281</sup>

Second, from a political perspective, democratization has promoted a vigorous civil society and political freedom, increasing a domestic political divergence between the ROK's pro-unification groups and conservatives. This affects the decision making process in ROK foreign policy toward the United States and the DPRK.<sup>282</sup> With the rise of new, progressive South Korean political elites (the so-called the "386-generation"<sup>283</sup>), frictions between Washington and Seoul have become more frequent and the nature of the U.S.-ROK alliance has become increasingly controversial.<sup>284</sup> With growing national pride and the demographic shift to a younger generation raised in the prosperous, democratic ROK, South Koreans seek to improve ROK's status on the international stage, demand less dependence on foreigners in defending their security interests, and hope to transform the U.S.-ROK security relationship from a patron-client relationship to a more equal, symmetric relationship.<sup>285</sup>

Third, from a diplomatic standpoint, U.S. foreign policies toward East Asia and inter-Korean relations have played a critical role in shifting the South Korean perspective on the United States. For instance, during the DPRK's first nuclear crisis in 1993-1994, Washington's attempt to open direct talks with Pyongyang to find a peaceful, diplomatic resolution raised South Korean concerns of being excluded from a "process that directly affected critical South Korean national interests but over which the ROK had little

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<sup>281</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 26.

<sup>282</sup> Choong Nam Kim, "Changing Korean Perceptions of the Post-Cold War Era and the U.S.-ROK alliance," *Asia Pacific* No. 67 (April 2003), 5.

<sup>283</sup> The "386-generation" refers to those who were in their thirties ("3"0s) when the term was coined, attended college in the 1980s ("8"0s), were born in the 1960s ("6"0s), and now serve in positions of power in Korean society. *Double-Tongued Dictionary*, [http://www.doubletongued.org/index.php/dictionary/386\\_generation/](http://www.doubletongued.org/index.php/dictionary/386_generation/) (accessed November 19, 2009).

<sup>284</sup> Cha, "Shaping Changes and Cultivating Ideas in the U.S.-ROK Alliance," 121-122.

<sup>285</sup> Morgan, "Re-Aligning the Military and Political Dimensions of the ROK-US Alliance: The Possibilities," 76-77.

influence.”<sup>286</sup> With this feeling, South Koreans criticized both Seoul and Washington for their lack of diplomatic coordination regarding their DPRK policies. The Kim Young-sam administration was criticized for its lack of an “independent” South Korean policy toward the DPRK and for putting “ROK’s national security subordinate to the global interests of the United States.”<sup>287</sup> As a result, South Korean public opinion toward the United States deteriorated between 1994 and 1995. This is indeed an irony in light of realist expectations that the ROK would seek close ties with the United States in response to unstable security conditions during the 1993-1994 DPRK nuclear crisis. Similarly, a majority of South Koreans believed that the United States’ hawkish DRPK policy after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and a series of harsh comments about the DPRK by President George W. Bush, who characterized North Korea as a “rogue state” and part of the “axis of evil,” were designed to increase tension on the Korean peninsula. Many South Koreans, including government officials, blamed the Bush administration for the stalemate in inter-Korean relations.<sup>288</sup>

Fourth, these factors have shifted South Korean attitudes toward the United States more widely, frequently, and effectively since the 1990s, due to the explosive use of the media and the Internet in particular.<sup>289</sup> With access to a variety of media sources, South Koreans reportedly average approximately five hours a day in media consumption activities, and the younger they are, the more information they seek from the Internet.<sup>290</sup> In the ROK, the Internet has been the catalyst for shaping public opinion and organizing public group activities, such as massive protests. Seoul, unlike Beijing, has not attempted to control and censor the Internet and netizens’ online activities.<sup>291</sup> Reporting by progressive South Korean media like OhMyNews, PRESSian News, and *Hangyoreh*

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<sup>286</sup> Woo-Cumings, “Unilateralism and Its Discontents: The Passing of the Cold War Alliance and Changing Public Opinion in the Republic of Korea,” 62–63.

<sup>287</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 23.

<sup>288</sup> Campbell et al., *Going Global: The Future of the U.S.-South Korea Alliance*, 11.

<sup>289</sup> Balbina Y. Hwang, “Minding the Gap: Improving U.S.-ROK Relations,” *Backgrounder* No. 1814 (December 2004), <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/bg1814.cfm> (accessed October 10, 2009), 3.

<sup>290</sup> Larson, et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 99–100.

<sup>291</sup> Chung, “Comparing Online Activities in China and South Korea,” 733.

*Daily* often contains strong nationalistic and even sensationalist overtones and distorted information. Such media reports increase serious misperceptions about both Washington's and Seoul's intentions, and inflame public sentiment.<sup>292</sup> These media have been often misused for political purposes, including anti-government and anti-American demonstrations.

Taking all these factors into account, South Korean attitudes toward the United States have changed since the end of the Cold War, fluctuating especially in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. Figure 11 shows South Korean attitudes toward the United States (left) and the U.S.-ROK alliance (right) between 1988 and 2002, based on surveys conducted by the U.S. State Department, Gallup Korea, and other major South Korean news services.

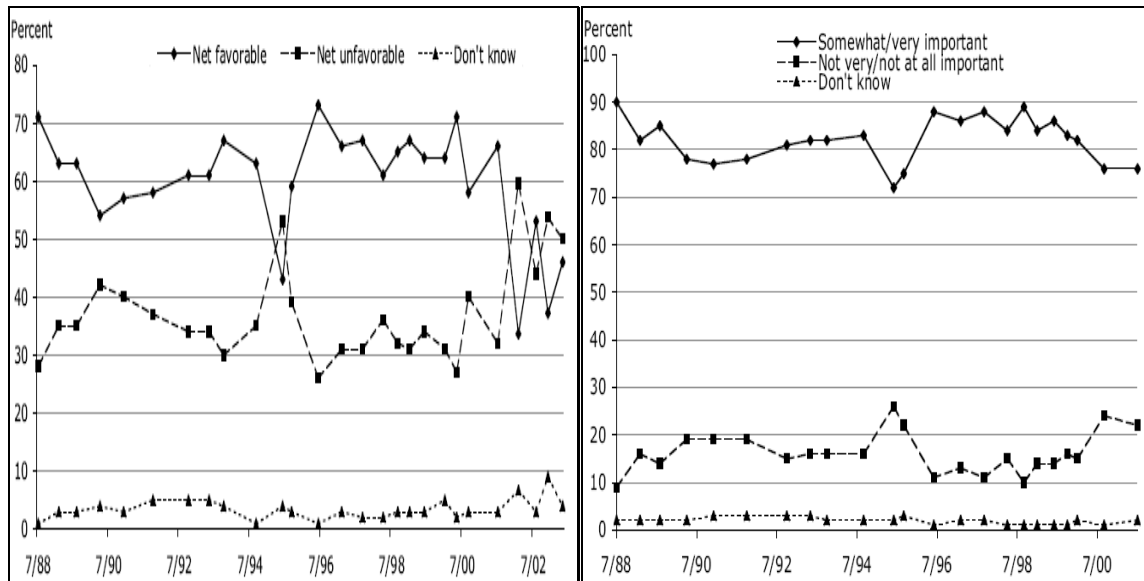


Figure 11. Trends in South Korean attitudes toward the United States and the U.S.-ROK alliance.<sup>293</sup>

The decline of favorable perspectives on the United States in 1994–1995 is accounted for by increasing South Korean resentment of the unilateral approach to the

<sup>292</sup> Hwang, “Minding the Gap: Improving U.S.-ROK Relations,” 1–2; Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 100.

<sup>293</sup> The figures from Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 45, 51.

DPRK during the nuclear crisis and a confluence of the usual factors of trade frictions and public outrage over incidents involving U.S. military personnel stationed in the ROK. This decline was reversed quickly when Washington praised the significance of the ROK's role in regional security affairs and confirmed its strong commitment to the ROK's defense. In addition, President Kim Dae-jung, whose policy toward the DPRK differed significantly from his predecessor's, anticipated that direct talks between Washington and Pyongyang would become a part of his Sunshine Policy. Thus, his administration actively encouraged Washington to engage with Pyongyang. President Clinton and his special advisor and policy coordinator William Perry strongly welcomed the ROK's Sunshine Policy, which increased the sense of coherence between Washington and Seoul regarding their DPRK policies.<sup>294</sup> Moreover, President Kim Dae-jung repeatedly emphasized the importance of U.S. forces in the ROK (USFK), based on the U.S.-ROK alliance and its vital role in ROK security even after unification. In addition to the growing coherence between Washington and Seoul on security issues, South Koreans hurt by the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis appreciated the key role of the United States and U.S.-led IMF bailout funds in their economic security. For these reasons, South Koreans with favorable attitudes toward the United States soared from 61 percent in 1998 to 71 percent in 2000.<sup>295</sup>

However, generally positive South Korean views of the United States throughout most of the 1990s faced a series of turbulent moments after the inter-Korea summit in 2000 and the U.S.-ROK summit between Bush and Kim Dae-jung in 2001. The inter-Korean summit stirred up South Korean hope for unification, increasing both South Korean confusion over its national identity and its perceptions of its ally and enemy, and domestic divergence over Seoul's approach toward the United States and DPRK. President Kim Dae-jung and his successor Roh Moo-hyun persuaded South Koreans to alter their perceptions of North Koreans from "enemies seeking to conquer the South" to "brothers and sisters needing South Korean help" in order to achieve their number one

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<sup>294</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 45, 51..

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

national objective, unification.<sup>296</sup> The 2001 U.S.-ROK summit revealed significant discord and distrust between the two governments regarding how to deal with the DPRK.<sup>297</sup> As a result, many South Korean public opinion polls conducted by major South Korean media in the early 2000s indicated a negative shift in South Korean attitudes toward the United States. Almost half of the South Korean respondents blamed Bush's "hawkish and arrogant" attitude more than Kim Jong-il for the inter-Korean reconciliation deadlock, growing tension on the peninsula, and even the DPRK's nuclear tests.<sup>298</sup> For example, a Korean Gallup Poll in 2002 reported that some 53.7 percent of South Koreans held "unfavorable" and "somewhat unfavorable" attitudes toward the United States, and in the 2003 *Sisa Journal* poll, 62.9 percent of South Korean respondents said that the Bush administration's DPRK policy was not helpful for the stability of the Korean peninsula. A Samsung Economic Research Institute poll reported that those with favorable feelings toward the United States had deteriorated from 36 percent in 2001 to 24.5 percent in 2003.<sup>299</sup> A *KBS* poll showed that 43 percent of South Koreans blamed the United States for the DPRK's 2006 nuclear test, while only 37 percent blamed Pyongyang.<sup>300</sup>

Many scholars and government officials in both countries have argued that these temporary shifts in South Korean perspectives on the United States in the early 2000s should not be exaggerated.<sup>301</sup> They assert that the polls can be misleading and the massive South Korean public disaffection regarding the United States fluctuates widely within short periods of time, a ubiquitous phenomenon seen in many other nations

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<sup>296</sup> Larson et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 45, 51.39.

<sup>297</sup> Kwak and Joo, "Introduction," 3.

<sup>298</sup> Kim, "Changing Korean Perceptions of the Post-Cold War Era and the U.S.-ROK alliance," 5.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>300</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 23.

<sup>301</sup> Woo-Cumings, "Unilateralism and Its Discontents: The Passing of the Cold War Alliance and Changing Public Opinion in the Republic of Korea," 66–68; Morgan, "Re-Aligning the Military and Political Dimensions of the ROK-US Alliance: The Possibilities," 77; Hahm Chaibong, "Anti-Americanism, Korean Style," in David Steinberg ed., *Korean Attitudes toward the United States: Changing Dynamics* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2005), 220–221.

beginning in 2001.<sup>302</sup> In fact, in contrast to the negative picture painted by some surveys that report only “positive” and “negative” choices, many other surveys that offered additional “neutral” or “don’t know” choices indicate that the majority of South Koreans have a neutral perspective on the United States, and individuals’ views vary from issue to issue depending on their personal, internal experiences (see Table 9).<sup>303</sup>

Choice	Dec. 1999	Nov. 2000	Jan. 2001	Mar. 2002	Jun. 2003	May 2004
Positive	38.7	30	15.9	23	25.4	22.8
Neutral	31.6	51	36.7	46	46.9	60.1
Negative	29.6	19	47.6	29.5	27.6	16.2
Don’t Know	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.4	N/A	-

Table 9. Changing South Korean perceptions of the United States.<sup>304</sup>

Moreover, given constant shifts in the ROK’s domestic politics due to the severe divergence on political, economic, and social issues, the apparent conflict in the U.S.-ROK alliance in the early 2000s was not due to significant divergence between South Korean and American national interests. Rather, it resulted from the Bush administration’s unilateralism, and the lack of mutual understanding of each country’s new security environment and priorities, and problems that could be resolved by further deep dialogue and compromise.<sup>305</sup> In fact, under President Kim Dae-jung’s administration, Washington and Seoul officially answered the question of the future direction of their alliance, which has been raised by both governments since 1992. The 32<sup>nd</sup> U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) Joint Communiqué in 2002 explicitly stated that the “[U.S.-ROK] alliance will serve to maintain peace and stability

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<sup>302</sup> Morgan, “Re-Aligning the Military and Political Dimensions of the ROK-US Alliance: The Possibilities,” 77.

<sup>303</sup> Oh and Arrington, “Democratization and Changing Anti-American Sentiment in South Korea,” 332.

<sup>304</sup> The table is from Chang Hun Oh and Celeste Arrington, “Democratization and Changing Anti-American Sentiment in South Korea,” 332.

<sup>305</sup> Morgan, “Re-Aligning the Military and Political Dimensions of the ROK-US Alliance: The Possibilities,” 73–74.

in Northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole, even after the immediate threat to stability has receded on the Korean peninsula.”<sup>306</sup> In 2002, despite increasing strain on U.S.-ROK relations after a series of massive anti-American demonstrations and the presidential victory of progressive party leader Roh Moo-hyun, a critic of Washington’s Northeast Asia policies, overall U.S.-ROK relations were cordial and the new South Korean president quickly changed his attitudes toward the United States and undertook several significant steps to modernize the U.S.-ROK alliance.<sup>307</sup>

Many statistical data also show that, despite some negative South Korean perceptions of the Bush’s administration, South Korean attitudes toward Americans and the U.S.-ROK alliance have been generally warm. The exception is the years 2001 and 2002, when huge anti-American candlelight vigils were held in the ROK in response to a regrettable statement by Washington and how the USFK handled the case of two South Korean schoolgirls who were killed by an U.S. Army armored vehicle.<sup>308</sup> A RAND analysis of South Korean attitudes finds that, despite rapid fluctuation of South Korean nationalism and/or anti-American sentiment in the early 2000s, over the last 15 years approximately 75 to 90 percent of South Koreans maintain strong support for the U.S.-ROK alliance.<sup>309</sup> Recent figures show that over 90 percent of South Koreans believe that the presence of U.S. military bases in the Korean peninsula is important to regional stability, even after unification.<sup>310</sup> According to Gallup Korea polls and *Chosun Ilbo* polls, the proportion of South Koreans with “very favorable” and “somewhat favorable” views of the United States rose from 33.6 percent in February 2002 to 37.2 percent in

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<sup>306</sup> Jae-Jung Suh, “Korean Bases of Concern,” *Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) Policy Report*, April 2, 2008, <http://www.fpiif.org/fpiftxt/5111> (accessed July 10, 2009).

<sup>307</sup> Bruce Klingner, “Evolving Military Responsibilities in the U.S.-ROK Alliance,” *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Fall/Winter 2008), 26.

<sup>308</sup> Given that President Clinton had officially apologized to the Japanese people when American soldiers raped a Japanese teenage girl a few years earlier, South Korean resentment increased after Washington and USFK refused to apologize in this case. Heo and Woo, “South Korea’s Response: Democracy, Identity, and Strategy,” 159.

<sup>309</sup> Larson, et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 39.

<sup>310</sup> Nae-Young Lee, “Public Opinion about ROK-U.S. Relations,” in *Challenges Posed by the DPRK for the Alliance and the Region* (Washington, D.C.: Korea Economy Institute, 2005), 3–4; Glosserman and Snyder, “Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia,” 26.

December 2002, and to 53.7 percent in November 2004.<sup>311</sup> The U.S. Department of State's INR polls also indicate that South Koreans who see the United States as their closest security partner in five to 10 years increased from 52 percent in 1996, to 60 percent in 2000-2002, to almost 90 percent in 2007.<sup>312</sup> In addition, according to the 2007-2008 poll conducted by Pacific Forum CSIS and Asia Foundation, 77.8 percent of South Korean respondents had positive attitudes toward Americans, and this result is higher than for the Japanese respondents (63.1 percent).<sup>313</sup> Many other polls conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs (CCGA), East Asia Institute (EAI), and the Pew Global Attitude project in 2008 also indicate that recent South Korean perspectives on the United States have become more favorable, coming close to Cold War-era figures.<sup>314</sup> Moreover, a 2009 survey conducted by the U.S. Department of State shows that 62 percent of South Koreans pick the United States as the most "beneficial political and diplomatic partner" to their security interests, in comparison to other key regional powers such as the PRC (19 percent) and Japan (10 percent).<sup>315</sup>

Interestingly, the younger South Korean generations who experienced rapid democratization, globalization, the Asian financial crisis, the DPRK nuclear crises, massive anti-American demonstrations, the emergence of a rising China, continued conflicts with the PRC and Japan over history, and the global economic downturns in the 1990s and 2000s seem to have adjusted their self-perceptions and views of South Korea's neighbors in a more pragmatic manner. In other words, young South Koreans worry less about the North Korean threat and much more about strategic benefits to their economy and security from close ties with the United States.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Oh and Arrington, "Democratization and Changing Anti-American Sentiment in South Korea," 328.

<sup>312</sup> Cha, "Shaping Changes and Cultivating Ideas in the U.S.-ROK Alliance," 133; Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 25.

<sup>313</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 19.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*; The Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Global Public Opinion in the Bush Years (2001-2008)," 3.

<sup>315</sup> Konishi and Manyin, "South Korea: Its Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Outlook," 7.

<sup>316</sup> Levin, *Do the Ties Still Bind?* 15.

Another significant change in the South Korean public's view of the U.S.-ROK alliance is that the U.S.-ROK alliance is no longer a politically polarizing issue in the ROK's domestic politics. Even South Korean progressives recognize that the U.S. alliance has contributed to national and regional security.<sup>317</sup> South Koreans have realized that a healthy, symmetric relationship in the alliance requires mutual contributions to common interests, and thus that they should focus not only on what they can receive from the United States but consider also what its ally demands from them. For this reason, approximately 80 percent of South Korean respondents support the U.S.-ROK agreement on "strategic flexibility" for USFK and the majority of South Koreans advocate evolution of the alliance "from a singularly focused mission to a more robust value-based relationship" that looks beyond the Korean peninsula.<sup>318</sup>

From the constructivist perspective, numerous factors have developed in American and South Korean societies over the past decades that promote convergence between the two countries. Politically, South Koreans strongly support American values of respect for democracy, the rule of law, and freedom of expression. The ROK, in fact, has been rated as a model of successful democratization.<sup>319</sup> At the same time, remarkable political improvements in the ROK have changed American perceptions of the ROK as a small, divided, poor, authoritarian country devastated by war. The ROK is now perceived as a small but strong and dynamic country, an exemplar of American style democratization and economic development. President Kim Dae-jung's life history and his contribution to the ROK's democratization were appreciated by a majority of Americans. The robust common values of democracy and freedom have helped promote U.S.-ROK relations.<sup>320</sup> As a result, many U.S. government officials, scholars, and students have started to emphasize feelings of affinity between the United States and

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<sup>317</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 27.

<sup>318</sup> Klingner, "Evolving Military Responsibilities in the U.S.-ROK Alliance," 25; Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 27.

<sup>319</sup> Hwang, "Minding the Gap: Improving U.S.-ROK Relations," 2.

<sup>320</sup> Victor D. Cha, "America's Alliances in Asia: The Coming 'Identity Crisis' with the Republic of Korea?" in Donald Boose, Jr., Balbina Hwang, Patrick Morgan, and Andrew Scobell, eds., *Recalibrating the U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institutes, 2003), 28.

ROK. For instance, then-Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Kurt Campbell stated before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in September 1998 that the U.S.-ROK alliance should be more than a “treaty commitment” as both countries had maintained a “mutually beneficial partnership built on a shared stake in democracy and free markets.”<sup>321</sup> Similarly, then-Ambassador to the ROK Stephen Bosworth valued the strong development of ROK’s democracy, noting in 1998 that “democracy ha[d] become in a real sense the cement of the overall relationship [between the United States and ROK].”<sup>322</sup>

Economically, the ROK’s economy, until the Asian financial crisis a powerful example of the developing state, has since pursued intensive reforms to transform itself from a Japanese-style state-centric economy into an American-style free market economy.<sup>323</sup> Bilateral trade between the two countries surpassed U.S. \$83 billion in 2007, making the United States the fifth largest trading partner for the ROK, while the ROK is the seventh largest trading partner for the United States. Both governments signed the Korean-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (KORUS-FTA) in 2007, which would increase U.S. GDP by at least \$10 billion and create more than 345,000 jobs in the United States.<sup>324</sup>

In addition, from the social and cultural perspectives, American values and ways of thinking have been spread widely and rapidly in the ROK by the hundreds of thousands of South Korean students with American educations. Currently over 93,000 South Korean students (from elementary school to graduate level) are in the United States

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<sup>321</sup> Statement by Dr. Kurt Campbell, *Hearing on U.S. Policy Toward the Korean Peninsula*, Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, September 10, 1998.

<sup>322</sup> Cha, “America’s Alliances in Asia: The Coming ‘Identity Crisis’ with the Republic of Korea?” 28.

<sup>323</sup> Hahn, “Anti-Americanism, Korean Style,” 223.

<sup>324</sup> Bruce Klingner, “Trade Dispute Undercuts Obama’s Korea Trip,” *WebMemo* No. 2702 (November 2009), <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/wm2702.cfm> (accessed November 22, 2009), 2.

to receive American educations.<sup>325</sup> South Korean foreign students in 2002 alone surpassed Japanese foreign students; South Koreans are the third largest group of foreign students in the United States, after Indian and Chinese students.<sup>326</sup> The large number of South Korean foreign students in the United States is significant considering the relative size of the ROK's population compared to India and China's. In addition, over one million ethnic Koreans resided in the United States as of 2003, approximately 1.4 million American and South Korean tourists visit each other each year, and the number of South Korean immigrants to the United States continues at a high level. More than 530,000 American tourists visited the ROK in 2003. Approximately 30,000 American soldiers and their family members, along with 50,000 American civilians employed in the ROK, play a critical role in introducing Korean values and culture to the United States.<sup>327</sup> As a result, when asked which country has the most similar values, over one-third of the South Korean respondents chose the United States, while much less than one-third named either Japan or China.<sup>328</sup>

In sum, the ROK's successful economic development, democratization, and globalization have created a new South Korean collective identity. The people see their nation as a confident, democratic, pragmatic and global major player, and have changed their perspective on their traditional ally and enemies. South Koreans no longer believe that the North Korean military, ideology, and identity would allow the DPRK to unify the Korean peninsula. Although the North Korean regime continues as a source of regional threats and instability, South Koreans treat the North Korean people as brothers and sisters needing assistance, and see the North Korean leadership as leading their nation

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<sup>325</sup>As of 2009, 103,000 Indian foreign students and 99,000 Chinese foreign students are receiving American educations. Hahm, "Anti-Americanism, Korean Style," 221; and "*Jaimi Hankoon Yoohaksaeng Sasang Choidea Gkyumo* [The Number of Korean Foreign Students in the United States Reached the Hightest Point]," *Yonhap News*, November 17, 2009, <http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/international/2009/11/17/0601090100AKR20091117002000072.HTML?template=2086> (accessed November 17, 2009).

<sup>326</sup> Oh and Arrington, "Democratization and Changing Anti-American Sentiment in South Korea," 328.

<sup>327</sup> Hwang, "Minding the Gap: Improving U.S.-ROK Relations," 2.

<sup>328</sup> Glosserman and Snyder, "Confidence and Confusion: National Identity and Security Alliances in Northeast Asia," 22.

into greater isolation and despair. Since Seoul expanded diplomatic relations with Communist countries, the economic and cultural relationship between the ROK and PRC has become increasingly interdependent. Although Seoul and Beijing seek a more stable and cooperative strategic relationship, many obstacles raise South Korean concerns, including rivalry in global markets, conflict over ancient histories, territorial disputes, and the PRC's increased security and economic penetration into the DPRK. On the other hand, despite some turbulent moments in the mid-1990s and the early 2000s, South Korean attitudes toward the United States and the U.S.-ROK alliance have become more stable and positive in many respects.<sup>329</sup> The majority of South Koreans and Americans see such turbulent moments in the past as opportunities to increase their mutual understanding of national interests, security priorities, and each other's domestic constraints.<sup>330</sup> In fact, in contrast to the ROK of the Cold War era that shared few norms and had little basis for a common identity with the United States, today's South Koreans share a variety of common norms and collective identity with Americans.<sup>331</sup>

### C. U.S.-ROK ALLIANCE COHESION

The South Korean leadership and public's ideational changes since the end of the Cold War have affected U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion, presenting both challenges and opportunities. During the Cold War, the U.S.-ROK alliance was a classic "asymmetric, autonomy-security trade-off alliance" in which the United States provided the ROK with protection against DPRK aggression in return for influence over the ROK's military and foreign policies.<sup>332</sup> However, the rapid transition of the ROK's domestic politics, economy and society, key influences on South Korean collective identities, have driven South Koreans to desire greater respect from Americans and to seek a less asymmetric and more mature relationship with the United States to further promote the regional and global interests of the two countries. This section of the thesis examines how the military aspect of the U.S.-ROK alliance has changed since the end of the Cold War by measuring

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<sup>329</sup> Konishi and Manyin, "South Korea: Its Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Outlook," 14.

<sup>330</sup> Hahm, "Anti-Americanism, Korean Style," 229–230.

<sup>331</sup> Suh, *Power, Interest, and Identity in Military Alliance*, 7.

<sup>332</sup> Kim, "Korea as a Middle Power in the Northeast Asian Security Environment," 134.

it in three dimensions: (1) the level of consensus on security issues between the two allies; (2) the frequency, level, and nature of military exchanges and assistance, such as arms and technology transfer, military-to-military contacts, and combined exercises; and (3) economic contributions to the mutual security of the alliance.

### **1. Compromise on Security Issues**

In contrast to realist expectations that the U.S.-ROK alliance would weaken as South Koreans became less threatened and more secure, Washington and Seoul have resolved the problems between them and successfully consolidated their alliance. In terms of the level of consensus on security issues, there are four pieces of significant evidence that indicate U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion in the post-Cold War era is stronger than during the Cold War era. First, Washington and Seoul have emphasized consultation and bilateral coordination when they deal with major issues of mutual security, promoting mutual understanding and trust. In the Cold War era, Seoul and the South Korean public often believed that most critical changes in security issues, such as the structure and role of USFK, policies toward the DPRK, DPRK nuclear issues, transfer of operational control, and defense burden-sharing, were initiated unilaterally by Washington as its foreign policy altered. For instance, Presidents Nixon and Carter announced specific plans for the reduction of USFK in 1969 and 1977 without full consultation with Seoul. As a result, most South Koreans were frustrated by Washington's sudden announcement of the reduction of USFK on March 20, 1970, and ROK President Park Chung-hee was upset about not being informed of the plan during his Seoul meeting with U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers and the San Francisco summit with President Nixon in August 1969.<sup>333</sup> Today, security issues are actively discussed in an elaborate set of consultative mechanisms, such as the SCM and the Military Committee Meeting (MCM) by leaders, practitioner-level to high-level governmental officials, and both countries' civilian scholars.<sup>334</sup> Washington has sought

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<sup>333</sup> Chae Jin Lee, *A Troubled Peace: U.S. Policy and the Two Koreas* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2006), 68–69; Philip Shabecoff, "Seoul Protests U.S. Plan for Withdrawal," *New York Times*, June 17, 1970.

<sup>334</sup> Levin, *Do the Ties Still Bind?* 18-20.

to avoid imposing additional strains on the alliance by consulting frequently with ROK officials, putting the discussion of troop redeployments into regular diplomatic channels.<sup>335</sup>

Second, since the 1990s, Washington and Seoul have enhanced mutual coordination and cooperation by diversifying and upgrading the institutional foundations of the alliance. Traditionally, the U.S.-ROK alliance was dominated by military affairs. Thus military communication channels, such as the annual SCM, dominated Washington and Seoul discussions of military affairs for ROK defense.<sup>336</sup> Many additional, efficient communication channels have been facilitated since the late 1990s to properly manage issues ranging from short-term crises to longer-term strategic plans. These include a hotline between two National Security Councils (NSCs) of the United States and ROK, the “Big-Four” meeting between the ROK defense and foreign ministers and the U.S. ambassador and USFK commander, the Strategic Consultation for Allied Partnership (SCAP) between the U.S. secretary of state and ROK foreign minister, the Future of the ROK-U.S. Alliance Policy Initiative (FOTA) between officials from various ministries and departments (including Defense, State, Foreign Affairs and Trade), and the U.S.-ROK Security Policy Initiative (SPI). These institutional foundations play a constructive role in determining the future direction of the U.S.-ROK alliance. Simultaneously, the scope of already existing military channels, such as the SCM and MCM, has significantly expanded, focusing not only on reconfirming the U.S. commitment to ROK defense but also on mutual efforts for long-term alliance development.<sup>337</sup>

As a result, Washington and Seoul have reached a number of agreements to consolidate the alliance, including the 1990 U.S.-ROK Special Measures Agreement (SMA), the 1991 Agreement on Wartime Host Nation Support (WHNS), a 1993 agreement on the armistice operational control’s transfer to the Chairman of ROK Joint

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<sup>335</sup> Armacost, “Introduction,” 17.

<sup>336</sup> Jeongwon Yoon, “Alliance Activities: Meetings, Exercises and CFC’s Roles,” in Boose, Hwang, Morgan, and Scobell, eds., *Recalibrating the U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institutes, 2003), 89.

<sup>337</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1995–1996* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 1996), 113; *Defense White Paper 2004*, 105–106.

Chiefs of Staff, revisions in 1991 and 2000 to the original 1967 Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), and agreement in 2005 to the transition of wartime operational control to the ROK.<sup>338</sup> In particular, the SMA and the WHNS show the ROK's commitment to the alliance, and the agreement on extending the range and payload of South Korean missiles and revising the SOFA helped "nurture a greater public sense of U.S. respect for South Korean interests."<sup>339</sup>

Third, both countries have sought to understand the domestic political constraints and security concerns of the other and to minimize the divergence of security interests and priorities. For example, from Washington's perspective, as reflected in the 2001 QDR, new types of threat produce new strategic challenges and require more strategic flexibility and efficiency in U.S. forces overseas, as well as expanded security cooperation with its allies and partners.<sup>340</sup> With the United States leading the global war on terrorism since 2001, the Pentagon emphasizes changes in its military preparedness and force-planning paradigm as the most important tasks. For this reason, the United States has pursued military transformation, improving long-range force projection and strike capabilities, enhancing joint operations, and restructuring U.S. military bases overseas.<sup>341</sup> Washington has called for a series of dialogues with Seoul about the redeployment of USFK and the realignment of USFK bases since the late 1990s. By 2006, Roh Moo-Hyun's administration saw no problem with a U.S. global military posture that highlights strategic flexibility, agility and efficiency on a global scale, and agreed to "globalize the scope of the alliance."<sup>342</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *ROK Defense White Paper 2008*; Yoon, "Alliance Activities: Meetings, Exercises and CFC's Roles," 90–93.

<sup>339</sup> Larson, et al., *Ambivalent Allies? A Study of South Korean Attitudes Toward the U.S.*, 29.

<sup>340</sup> Jonathan B. Hunter, "Creating Strategic Agility in Northeast Asia," in Williamson Murray, ed., *National Security Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institution, 2003), 129.

<sup>341</sup> Seong-Ryoul Cho, "The Realignment of USFK and the US-ROK Alliance in Transition," in T. Kwak and S. Joo, eds., *The United States and the Korean Peninsula in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 103–104.

<sup>342</sup> Suh, "Korean Bases of Concern."

On the other hand, South Koreans want greater autonomy in their defense: the so-called the “Koreanization of ROK defense.”<sup>343</sup> A series of consultations between the two governments and reassessments of the ROK armed forces’ capabilities led Washington and Seoul to agree to replace the American chief representative of the UN Command Military Armistice Commission and Commander of the Ground Component Command (GCC) of the U.S.-ROK CFC with South Korean Army generals in 1991 and 1992, respectively.<sup>344</sup> In addition, the ROK armed forces took over peacetime operational control in 1994 and plan to resume wartime operational control in 2012.

There are many good examples of the improvement of mutual understanding between the two governments. For example, with lessons learned from the two school girls’ accident in 2002, when an elderly Korean woman pushing a food cart was hit and killed by a U.S. military vehicle again in 2005, U.S. officials and agencies dealt with the issue in a prompt and proper manner and avoided their earlier mistakes.<sup>345</sup> Similarly, Washington and USFK seriously considered the historical and economic factors that had increased negative South Korean perceptions of the U.S. military bases before making a final decision of the relocation of U.S. military bases from the center of the ROK capital to Pyeongtaek (for example, the location of USFK in Seoul had been the Japanese Imperial Army headquarters between 1910 and 1945).<sup>346</sup>

## **2. Military Exchanges and Assistance**

The frequency, level, and nature of military exchanges and assistance between the U.S. and ROK militaries, including U.S. forces stationed on ROK territory, transfer of military strategies, tactics, and technologies, and combined and joint exercises, are important indicators of alliance cohesiveness. However, given the already intensive military-to-military interactions and exchanges between the two militaries, simply assessing these factors in a quantitative manner does not fully describe changes in the

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<sup>343</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1993–1994*, 119.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*, 119–220.

<sup>345</sup> Campbell et al., *Going Global: The Future of the U.S.-South Korea Alliance*, 15.

<sup>346</sup> Suh, “Korean Bases of Concern.”

cohesiveness of the relationship. It is necessary to examine the U.S.-ROK military-to-military ties in a qualitative manner. As General Leon LaPorte, former Commander of U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command (CFC), has noted, both Americans and South Koreans need to look at the U.S. military posture in the ROK “in terms of capabilities rather than numbers.”<sup>347</sup> Despite the decrease in U.S. troop numbers on the Korean peninsula since the end of the Cold War, the quality, level, and nature of military exercises and exchanges between the two militaries have increased, resulting in improved combined forces operational ability and warfighting sustainability.

First, the U.S.-ROK combined forces have improved their operational ability and warfighting capabilities by intensive modernization. Beginning in the mid-1980s, USFK modernized its artillery, anti-tank, air strike, and surveillance capabilities by deploying new high-tech platforms, including the M-1 Abrams Tank, multiple rocket launchers (MRLs), M-3 Bradley armored vehicles, and F-16, A-10, and OA-37 aircraft.<sup>348</sup> At the 2003 FOTA, the U.S. Department of Defense agreed to invest U.S. \$11 billion over four years to increase combat capabilities of the U.S.-ROK combined forces.<sup>349</sup> Based on this agreement, the U.S.-ROK CFC announced in 2004 that its force modernization programs had more than 340 enhancements, a more than U.S. \$11 billion investment in the ROK. The enhancements, intended to increase deterrence against external threats, include deployment of the PAC-3 Patriot missile system, AH-64D Apache helicopters, FA-18E/F Super Hornets, high-speed transportation assets, improved precision munitions and rotational deployment of the U.S. Army’s newest “Stryker” combat unit.<sup>350</sup> The Key Resolve/Foal Eagle exercise in March 2008 demonstrated the improvement of U.S power projection capabilities, including deployment of Stryker units of armored combat vehicles from Alaska to the ROK in less than nine hours and extensive use of ports and air bases

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<sup>347</sup> Jim Garamone, “In Korea, Think Capabilities, Not Numbers, General Says,” *DefenseLink News*, September 24, 2004, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=25210> (accessed September 24, 2009).

<sup>348</sup> The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 1994–1995* (London, UK: IISS, 1995), 181; Young-sun Ha, *Hanbandowi Haekmookiwa Segyejilseo* [Nuclear Weapons on the Korean Peninsula and International Order] (Seoul, ROK: Nanam, 1991), 233; The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1999*, 76.

<sup>349</sup> Cha, “Shaping Changes and Cultivating Ideas in the U.S.-ROK Alliance,” 139–140.

<sup>350</sup> Garamone, “In Korea, Think Capabilities, Not Numbers, General Says.”

in the ROK's southeast hub, including Pyeongtaek, Busan, Jinhae, Pohang, and Daegu.<sup>351</sup>

Second, the U.S.-ROK combined forces have modernized their software as well as their hardware. In the last two decades, U.S.-ROK combined forces formed an enormous number of bilateral agreements and doctrines, such as war plans, military strategies and tactics, standard operating procedures, rules of engagement and many other field manuals. For instance, U.S.-ROK CFC has produced new variants of the basic Korean theater war plan (the OPLAN 5027, initially developed in 1973) every other year since 1994.<sup>352</sup> The war plan includes a variety of possible war scenarios, operational plans, and procedures. Very recently, Washington and Seoul decided to establish working groups for the development of OPLAN 5029 in case the DPRK regime collapses.<sup>353</sup> At the same time, the U.S.-ROK combined forces have concentrated on not only operations that constitute a "rigid test of war plan" but also on activities that would produce the "greatest benefit for force facing a contingency."<sup>354</sup>

In addition to war plans and doctrines related directly to combat, many agreements on mutual logistics support, like the 1991 Agreement of War Host Nation Support (WHNS) and Time-Phased Forces Deployment Date (TPFDD), have been added in the war plan since 1994. According to the WHNS, to counter any imminent North Korean aggression on the Korean peninsula with a short center of gravity and a short warning time, U.S. reinforcement troops are immediately deployed in the Korean theater in case of contingency and the ROK is to support their logistics until U.S. logistics units arrive in the theater.<sup>355</sup> Meanwhile, in case of war, the TPFDD designates various flexible deterrence options (FDOs) and force module packages (FMPs), including

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<sup>351</sup> Suh, "Korean Bases of Concern."

<sup>352</sup> "OPLAN 5027 Major Threat War – West," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/oplan-5027.htm> (accessed November 2, 2009).

<sup>353</sup> "OPLAN 5029 – Collapse of North Korea," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/oplan-5029.htm> (accessed November 2, 2009).

<sup>354</sup> John F. Farrell, "Team Spirit: A Case Study on the Value of Military Exercises as a Show of Force in the Aftermath of Combat Operations," *Air & Space Power Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Fall 2009), 101.

<sup>355</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1995–1996*, 110.

approximately 640,000 U.S. augmentation troops outside the ROK for the U.S.-ROK combined forces.<sup>356</sup> The significance of this agreement is that it diminishes doubts over the timing and scope of U.S. wartime military support in the context of potential problems associated with U.S. Constitutional procedure and real U.S. power projection capabilities.<sup>357</sup>

Third, based on the hardware and software upgrades of the U.S.-ROK combined forces, the nature and quality of U.S.-ROK combined exercises have improved significantly, indicating the two allies' growing commitment to material (military) and ideational (political) support for common security objectives. The major U.S.-ROK combined exercises, Ulchi Focus Lens (UFL) and Foal Eagle (FE), have quantitatively advanced technologies, such as war-gaming tools, C4ISR, common operational pictures, and Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange-Korea (CENTRIX-K).<sup>358</sup> Although the annual combined field training exercise initiated in 1976 Team Spirit (TS) has been suspended since 1994 for the political purpose of improving inter-Korean relations, in the same year, the U.S.-ROK CFC enlarged the other exercises on the Korean peninsula and began a new, comprehensive large-scale command post exercise (CPX), the "Reception, Staging, Onward movement and Integration" exercise (RSOI), to enhance the capability of wartime augmentation. The RSOI has increased TPFDD's capabilities from 480,000 augmentation troops in 1994 to 630,000 troops in the late 1990s. Its recent capability includes 690,000 troops, 160 vessels, and 1,600 aircraft, representing almost 40 percent of total U.S. Navy assets, 50 percent of total U.S. Air

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<sup>356</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1999*, 77.

<sup>357</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1995–1996*, 111.

<sup>358</sup> The UFL is an annual comprehensive command post exercise (CPX), combining military level (Focus Lens) and government-civilian defense (Ulchi) exercises. It was initiated in 1978 to improve the war fighting capabilities of U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command and Washington and Seoul's pre- to post-wartime crisis management procedure, based on scenarios and procedures in OPLAN 5027 and the Chungmu Plan. The FE is an annual field training exercise initiated 1961 to improve combined and joint operational capabilities, including force-on-force maneuver training, special operations, and rear area defense operations. The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 2000*, 89–91.

Force assets, and 70 percent of total U.S. Marine assets.<sup>359</sup> Since 2001, the RSOI has been combined with the FE in order to provide better training opportunities to all U.S.-ROK CFC echelons.<sup>360</sup>

Since the 1990s, the range of U.S.-ROK combined exercises has expanded coordination beyond the Korean peninsula theater, showing that both countries share common regional and global security objectives. For instance, the ROK Navy has participated in periodic bilateral and multinational combat and non-combat maritime exercises with the U.S. Navy, including the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) since 1990, Tandem Thrust SLOC protection training since 1999, Pacific Reach submarine rescue exercise since 2000, Guam anti-submarine warfare exercise since 2007, and the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) in 2009.<sup>361</sup> In recent years, the Lee Myung-bak's administration has also expressed greater interest in participating in the U.S.-led missile defense (MD) programs against the DPRK's missile threat.<sup>362</sup>

### **3. Economic Contribution to Mutual Security**

Examining the economic contribution to the development of an alliance is also a good way to evaluate alliance cohesion. The United States maintains a large number of U.S. troops in the ROK with a total stationing cost of over U.S. \$2 billion. The U.S. security umbrella since the Korean War has certainly given Seoul the ability to invest its large economic savings in other areas.<sup>363</sup> However, in contrast to the ROK's small economic support for the USFK during the Cold War, the ROK has gradually increased its economic contribution to enhancing the U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion since the late 1980s, as the ROK's economy and governmental financial capacity have grown. This trend is mirrored in South Korean public opinion. The majority of South Koreans regard the U.S.-ROK alliance as important to their security, and thus strongly support the

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<sup>359</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 2000*, 82.

<sup>360</sup> "Reception, Staging, Onward movement, and Integration [RSOI]," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/rsoi.htm> (accessed November 2, 2009).

<sup>361</sup> Yoon, "Alliance Activities: Meetings, Exercises and CFC's Roles," 100–101.

<sup>362</sup> Klingner, "Trade Dispute Undercuts Obama's Korea Trip," 2.

<sup>363</sup> Hunter, "Creating Strategic Agility in Northeast Asia," 142–143.

presence of USFK. Although the actual number of USFK has gradually declined, U.S. military spending on the Korean peninsula and Northeast Asian region has increased.

First, the ROK has increased its cost sharing contribution to the expenses associated with USFK. Based on the 1991 SMA, the ROK agreed to increase its cash and non-cash contributions in the four categories of logistics, labor, ROK funded construction (ROKFC), and Combined Defense Improvement Projects (CDIP).<sup>364</sup> As shown in Figure 12, between 1989 and 2005, the ROK's burden-sharing cost has soared at an average growth rate of slightly more than 20 percent, with the exception of 1998.<sup>365</sup> The ROK's direct financial contribution for 2008 was approximately U.S. \$785 million, about 40 percent of the total cost of stationing USFK.<sup>366</sup> The increase in the ROK's economic contribution to USFK's stationing cost was welcomed by Washington and the U.S. Congress as a demonstration of Seoul's commitment to mutual security.<sup>367</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1995–1996*, 110.

<sup>365</sup> Jong-Sup Lee and Uk Heo, *The U.S.-South Korean Alliance, 1961-1988: Free-Riding or Bargaining?* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 131, 164–165.

<sup>366</sup> Larry A. Niksch, "Korea-U.S. Relations: Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress*, RL33567 (July 25, 2008), 17–18.

<sup>367</sup> Tong Whan Park, "Assessing the Costs of the U.S.-Korean Alliance: An American View," in Boose, Hwang, Morgan, and Scobell, eds., *Recalibrating the U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institutes, 2003), 58.

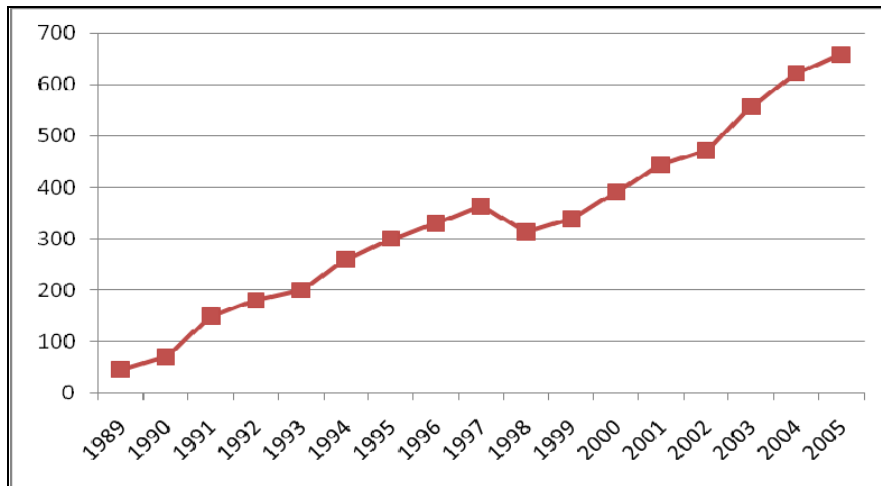


Figure 12. The ROK’s Contribution to Defense Cost Sharing, 1989–2005.<sup>368</sup>

Second, since the 1990s, the ROK has provided political, military, and financial support for the Gulf war, U.S.-led peacekeeping operations, the U.S. global war on terrorism, and most recently the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Statistically, between 1990 and 2008 the ROK sent approximately 75,000 South Korean troops to conduct 15 different UN PKO missions. Between 1948 and 1990, only 7,607 South Korean troops, including police and civilian contractors, were deployed for five UN PKO missions.<sup>369</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense states that it will enhance and diversify military diplomacy to enable the ROK to take on a larger international role and become a “mature world-class nation” and that it will increase support to PKO from the current level of 390 troops to 1,000 or possibly 2,000 by 2012.<sup>370</sup> South Korean President Lee Myung-bak says he will enact a law to facilitate the dispatching of South Korean troops for UN peacekeeping operations, counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation, disaster relief operations, and humanitarian operations.<sup>371</sup>

<sup>368</sup> The author created the graph based on data from the Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 1997–1998, 2004, 2006, 2008*; The ROK Ministry of National Defense, *Defense Policy 1998–2002* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2002).

<sup>369</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 2006*, 255; *Defense White Paper 2008*, 340.

<sup>370</sup> Bruce Klingner, “Transforming the U.S.-South Korean Alliance,” *Backgrounder* No. 2155 (June 2008), 6.

<sup>371</sup> Klingner, “Evolving Military Responsibilities in the U.S.-ROK Alliance,” 33.

In a similar manner, right after the September 11 terrorist attacks, President Kim Dae-jung sent a clear message to President Bush that the ROK would provide “all necessary cooperation and assistance as a close U.S. ally in the spirit of the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty.” He sent South Korean troops and U.S. \$45 million to assist U.S. military actions in Operation Enduring Freedom.<sup>372</sup> Roh Moo-hyun’s administration also strongly supported the U.S. global war on terrorism, providing additional forces and U.S. \$260 million in Iraq reconstruction funds between 2003 and 2007.<sup>373</sup> In October 2009, two years after 23 South Korean missionaries were taken hostage in Afghanistan, Seoul made a “bold and courageous” decision to redeploy approximately 100 civilian and 300 military and police personnel to Afghanistan.<sup>374</sup>

At the same time, the United States has reduced strains on the ROK’s defense budget by pledging to provide massive exercise costs, war reserve stocks, and the advanced signal intelligence (SIGINT) and C4ISR assets, that the ROK’s current defense budget cannot afford. For instance, the cost of the Team Spirit (TS) exercise to the U.S. Air Force alone amounted U.S. \$30 million in 1984, and its total cost to the U.S. Department of Defense had reached U.S. \$150 million by 1991.<sup>375</sup> Despite the suspension of TS in 1994, the combined cost of all exercises has continued to increase since the 1990s. In addition, the U.S. War Reserve Stocks for Allies in the ROK (WRSA-K) constitutes approximately 60 percent of the ammunition required in wartime. At the 40<sup>th</sup> SCM in 2008, Washington and Seoul signed the “WRSA-K transfer Memorandum of Agreement” to enhance ROK’s warfighting sustainability.<sup>376</sup> According to this MOA, the ROK will purchase nearly half of WRSA-K for about one-tenth of the original price, paid with labor and services for USFK rather than transfer of hard currency.<sup>377</sup> Similarly, USFK maintains extensive surveillance and reconnaissance by military satellites and

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<sup>372</sup> Levin, *Do the Ties Still Bind?* 50.

<sup>373</sup> Klingner, “Evolving Military Responsibilities in the U.S.-ROK Alliance,” 26.

<sup>374</sup> Klingner, “Trade Dispute Undercuts Obama’s Korea Trip,” 2.

<sup>375</sup> Farrell, “Team Spirit: A Case Study on the Value of Military Exercises as a Show of Force in the Aftermath of Combat Operations,” 101.

<sup>376</sup> Levin, *Do the Ties Still Bind?* 13.

<sup>377</sup> The Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense, *Defense White Paper 2008*, 340.

reconnaissance aircrafts over the DPRK, and provides “24-hour, all-weather, real-time, multi-sensor” intelligence information to the ROK military.<sup>378</sup>

Recently, the U.S. Congress passed the “U.S.-Republic of Korea Defense Cooperation Improvement Act of 2008” granting the ROK the same treatment in its FMS status as the “NATO Plus Three group (Australia, Japan, and New Zealand)” that have lighter scrutiny and higher threshold levels for U.S. defense sales. This creates a new “NATO Plus Four group.”<sup>379</sup> This bill remedies a long-overdue disparity in Washington’s characterization of its military allies by recognizing the ROK’s strategic importance to U.S. security objectives in Asia.<sup>380</sup> More recently, the U.S. Department of Defense announced investments of U.S. \$11 million over the next 10 years for joint development of the ROK military.<sup>381</sup>

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

Realists argue that the balance of power and threat between the ROK and DPRK in the post-Cold War era has shifted favor of the South, which has achieved rapid military modernization based on its remarkable economic prosperity, advanced scientific technologies, and strong ties with the U.S., the world’s most formidable military and economic power. The ROK Ministry of National Defense has undertaken a series of intensive military reforms since the mid-1970s to improve the ROK’s arms procurement, indigenous development of sophisticated weapons and capacity for self-reliant defense, increasing the military power gap between the North and South. Meanwhile, since the collapse of the Soviet Union the DPRK has suffered a deteriorating economy, diplomatic isolation and devastating famines. As a result, the DPRK cannot catch up to ROK military’s modernization, and the KPA has become inferior to the ROK armed forces in terms of military spending, technology, and warfighting sustainability. At the same time, the decline of DPRK’s overall power has reduced South Koreans’ threat perception. For

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<sup>378</sup> Levin, *Do the Ties Still Bind?* 17.

<sup>379</sup> Jeff Abramson, “U.S. Arms Notifications Spike in 2008,” *Arms Control Today*, Vol. 39 (March 2009), [http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2009\\_03/arms\\_2008](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2009_03/arms_2008) (accessed October 10, 2009).

<sup>380</sup> Klingner, “Supporting Our South Korean Ally and Enhancing Defense Cooperation,” 1.

<sup>381</sup> Hwang, “Minding the Gap: Improving U.S.-ROK Relations,” 4.

these reasons, realists predict that the U.S.-ROK alliance will lose its common rationale, substance, and purpose, and thus become weaker than during the Cold War era.

However, this thesis finds that South Korean self-perception and view of others has changed, as has Seoul's perspective on security issues on and off the Korean peninsula. South Koreans have witnessed a series of sea changes in their economy, politics, security and society in the 1980s and 1990s. Rising South Korean self-confidence and activism in domestic and international affairs, increasing commitment to democratic and free market values resulting from broad political, generational, and social changes, and widespread pragmatism and nationalism have transformed Seoul's approach to the DPRK, PRC and United States. Consequently, the missions, roles, and strategies of the U.S.-ROK combined forces and of ROK armed forces inside and outside of the Korean theater have also changed, based not only on realist material variables but also on ideational variables. Despite the decline of the perceived threat from the DPRK and PRC and increased South Korean feelings of brotherhood toward North Koreans since the 2001 inter-Korean summit, the DPRK and PRC still remain problematic for the ROK's interests and security because of their inconsistent and ambiguous behavior. In contrast, South Korean attitudes toward the United States and U.S.-ROK alliance are closer and warmer despite turbulence in the mid-1990s and the early 2000s.

As a consequence, both Washington and Seoul have sought to improve the alliance's cohesion by emphasizing bilateral consultation and coordination through a variety of new, effective institutional mechanisms. In military terms, the U.S.-ROK combined forces have worked more closely and intensively to upgrade both peacetime and wartime operational capabilities throughout a series of modernizations for not only hardware but also software of the combined forces, including high-tech assets, doctrines, and combined exercises.

Taking these factors into account, Table 10 summarizes the values of the key variables of material (realist) and ideational (constructivist) approaches. The table demonstrates that the cohesiveness of the U.S.-ROK alliance during the post-Cold War era cannot be explained by external threats and interests and highlights instead the influence of ideational factors.

<b>Period</b>	<b>Military balance on the Korean peninsula</b>	<b>Degree of perceived external threat (from DPRK/PRC)</b>	<b>Degree of Korean self-perception as a “major player”</b>	<b>Degree of South Korean perceptions of American values</b>	<b>Degree of South Korean perceptions of U.S.-ROK alliance</b>	<b>Actual U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion</b>
<b>Cold War (before 1980s)</b>	Balanced	High	Low	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
<b>Post-Cold War (since 1980s)</b>	In favor of the ROK	Moderate to low	High	Strong	Strong	Strong
<b>Theoretical prediction of future U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion</b>	(Realism) Weaker	(Realism) Weaker	(Constructivism) Stronger			(Outcome) Stronger

Table 10. Values of key material and ideational variables and expectations of the U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion in comparative perspective.

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## V. CONCLUSION

This thesis addresses the determinants of cohesion or discord in the Northeast Asia alliances in which the United States has major security interests. While the average duration of alliances is less than ten years, the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances have both lasted for more than a half century. Numerous studies have explored the rationale, substance and purpose of these alliances. However, previous studies have been dominated by realists and related balance of power or threat approaches. In explaining contemporary changes within the alliances, relatively little attention has been given to alternative approaches such as social constructivism.

By applying social constructivist theory to the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances in a comparative study, this thesis finds that ideational factors and processes play a significant role in determining the closeness of the alliances. The thesis defined the collective identity of a state as a set of broadly accepted representations of the state shaped by the public's self-perception and their perceptions of others. The thesis examined changes in the collective identities of China and South Korea, focusing on their political, economic and social transformation over the years, increasing self-confidence and nationalism, and attitudes held by a broad range of ordinary citizens and government officials toward the international community and traditional allies and enemies.

In the PRC-DPRK alliance, Beijing has taken the domestic and international challenges and threats of the 1980s and 1990s as an opportunity for modernization, globalization, and development of its state identity with the support of other nations. By contrast, Pyongyang has turned to isolationism and brinkmanship, resisting changes in its identity. The opposing direction of these two states' identities has a significant impact on their relations and security strategies, with increasingly large differences emerging in their perceptions of common interests and security. The divergence in their perception of their interests has led to growing mistrust and discord in their bilateral political, diplomatic and military relations. Beijing is reluctant to maintain the old style of friendship as long as Pyongyang continues to damage the PRC's interests. The frequency, level, and nature of the PRC-DPRK military-to-military contacts and mutual exchanges

and assistances have significantly reduced and weakened. The PRC wants to change the relationship, provided that revision of the treaty does not create instability in the DPRK. Unless Beijing or Pyongyang decides to go in a completely new direction, the Sino-DPRK alliance will be unable to transform the one-way relationship between a reluctant patron (Beijing) and an aid-seeking client (Pyongyang) to the healthy, reciprocal relationship found in alliances like those between the United States and Japan, the United States and the ROK, and in NATO.

In the U.S.-ROK alliance, Seoul has turned the challenges of the 1980s and 1990s into an opportunity to democratize, globalize, and develop its state identity with the support of the United States. At the same time, South Koreans are increasingly willing and able to proactively engage in regional and global security affairs to support democracy, free market economics, and human rights. As a result, despite problems in the U.S.-ROK alliance in the post-Cold War era, such as massive anti-American protests and politically and socially sensitive issues regarding USFK, both South Koreans and Americans have managed their problems in ways that allow the alliance to grow stronger and more prosperous, and have consolidated their understanding in a variety of arenas, including politics, economics, military affairs, and culture. These ideational changes and the increasing convergence between American and South Korean thought have encouraged Washington and Seoul to develop a more equal and mature relationship that promotes reciprocal and responsible commitments to the common values and interests underlying the alliance. The result is improvement in the quality of U.S.-ROK cooperation on mutual security, military exchanges and assistance, and economic contributions to the alliance.

Notwithstanding some research limitations posed by the absence of additional comparative case studies, this thesis has two important theoretical implications. First, current changes in the cohesiveness or discord of the Northeast Asia alliances have been affected more by ideational variables than by material variables. Although both the PRC-DPRK and U.S.-ROK alliances were created and maintained by a realist rationale, the ideational changes in Chinese and South Korean collective identities have direct and indirect impacts on the decision-making processes of their respective foreign policies,

changing alliance cohesion. Chinese and South Koreans' rapidly growing self-confidence, pragmatism, and activism in domestic and international affairs, their commitment to regional and international security institutions, and their favorable perspectives of international political and economic values are increasingly important ideational factors in their perceptions of power, threat, interests, and values—all of which ultimately affect PRC and ROK foreign policies.

Second, shared identity, norms, values, cultures, and feelings of affinity between allies can be constructed and developed through a wide range of political, economic, social, cultural, and military interactions. Despite the advantages of cultural affinity and geographical proximity, the PRC-DPRK alliance lacks mutual efforts to build common values, and thus the gap in government and public attitudes toward the future of the alliance in the two countries has widened. In contrast, the U.S.-ROK alliance has become stronger and healthier with the evolution of shared values of democracy, free market economy, rule of law, and respect for human dignity and freedom, all of which lead to greater convergence of public opinion on the future of the alliance.

This study offers five policy recommendations for enhancing alliance cohesion in the future. First, ideational variables should be heavily weighted in foreign policy decision-making processes. Traditionally dominated by realist theories, the field of international relations has largely ignored ideational variables. However, in recent years a growing body of evidence, including the cases of the allies examined in this study, supports the importance of ideational factors like self-perception and the perceptions of others in international politics. It is important to recognize that it typically takes a fairly long time for state identity to be formulated and become visible to outsiders, and thus once a state identity is consolidated, it is very difficult to change. In light of this, policy makers should consider the importance of ideational factors and define their long-term vision and objectives for the alliance to create a favorable environment and at the same time prevent negative repercussions of policy decisions. The “Joint Vision for the U.S.-ROK Alliance”<sup>382</sup> proposed by President Obama and Lee Myung-bak in June 2009 is a

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<sup>382</sup> Office of the Press Secretary of the White House, “Joint Vision for the Alliance of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea,” June 16, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>.

good example. It accommodates changes in ideational variables in both countries and presents a roadmap for a mature alliance with robust public support in the future.

Second, alliances thrive and prosper when they share firm common values. If they lack common values, or existing values do not suit the new international environment, both sides of an alliance should put constant effort into constructing new values and encouraging their people to recognize the importance of common alliance values. There is no such thing in life as a totally problem-free relationship. However, as the PRC-DPRK alliance shows, without firm shared values, it is difficult to overcome problems and deepen ties. In contrast, despite gloomy predictions in 1994 and 2002 that the U.S.-ROK alliance was in trouble, Washington and Seoul resolved their issues based on their strong shared belief in democracy, free market economies, peace and stability in the region, nonproliferation, anti-terrorism, human rights, and rule of law. When the United States and the ROK focused on the alliance's narrow rationale of defending the ROK against North Korean aggression on the Korean peninsula, they often faced conflicts between U.S. global security priorities and the ROK's national security priorities. Examples include the issues of reducing USFK, the "tripwire" function for USFK, and respective DPRK policies. Once Americans and South Koreans began to expand their shared values into areas beyond the military, security and the Korean peninsula—the future purpose, objectives, missions, roles, and required capabilities of the alliance—their alliance cohesion strengthened significantly.

Third, allies should focus not only on material alliance management but also on consolidating the alliance's ideational foundation by improving the quantity and quality of dialogue and communication at all levels of government and society and by enhancing intercultural awareness. A good relationship starts with meeting and associating with people. When a relationship starts to go bad, more dialogue and communication are required. The PRC and DPRK suspended regular senior-level meetings a number of times as a way of condemning each other's misbehavior. In contrast, Washington and Seoul emphasize dialogue and consultation, especially when they face difficulties. In addition, both the U.S. and the ROK have established numerous channels of communication, from the highest levels down to the level of the working groups; their discussion agendas

include heavy, sensitive issues as well as lighter topics. Furthermore, increasing the quantity and quality of physical contact, dialogue, and communication between the government and the public helps increase cultural awareness, reduce prejudice, and promote mutual respect between allies. For instance, the governments and civilian organizations of the United States and the ROK have begun discussing SOFA revisions, a dialogue that requires a profound understanding of the gaps between the allies' legal and jurisdictional systems going back to the 1990s.

Fourth, public support has a critical role in developing alliance cohesion. In the information era, public awareness of domestic and international affairs and public participation in politics are growing. Even in authoritarian countries like the PRC, public opinion has become a critical factor in policy making. Members of an alliance need to coordinate with each others' public diplomacy efforts to highlight the significance of the alliance and their mutual commitment to common interests. At the same time, they need to listen to public reactions to the media, in particular the Internet, the primary source of information for younger generations, and take a proactive role by correcting inaccurate information about and introducing positive perspectives on their allies and the alliance.

Finally, in addition to sharing common values to minimize the gaps in ideas between allies, demonstrating reciprocal and balanced responsibilities and commitments to mutual security helps to create the kind of strong alliance cohesion seen in the U.S.-ROK alliance since the 1990s. Unlike the PRC and the DPRK, the U.S. and the ROK have successfully transformed a one-way, asymmetric relationship into a more equal partnership, with the ROK taking more responsibility for regional and global security and the United States giving more consideration to South Korean security concerns and domestic political constraints, and supporting South Korea's potential to play a greater role on the global stage. Although the United States and South Korea should not take their alliance for granted, the alliance currently rests on a strong foundation and with a modest effort at maintaining communication can be kept strong for many years to come.

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