

Transformation of the U.S.-Japan Alliance and South Korea's Security Strategy

by Kim Kook-shin,
■ Yeo In-kon and Kang Han-koo



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The analyses, comments and other opinions contained in this monograph are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Korea Institute for National Unification.

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I . Introduction

With the advent of the post-cold war period, the U.S.-Japan alliance was characterized by the policy of drift without a new common goal. The United States has increased its pressure on Japan to further open its market. And there has been a growing voice among the Japanese people arguing that the U.S.-Japan national security system which is a “legacy of the Cold War” is no longer necessary. They suggested that Japan should strengthen its national security through multilateral-based security cooperation. The issue of abolishing the alliance was also raised by the United States. Those who argued for the abolition of the alliance in the United States referred to the asymmetry of national security, arguing that America has guaranteed the security of Japan but Japan has not actively met the requirements of national security from America. Yet as the North Korean nuclear issue and tensions between China and Taiwan newly emerged as threats in the region, the U.S. and Japan have felt the necessity of revamping the alliance.

The U.S. Defense Department announced on February 1995 the

East Asia Strategy Report (EASR), which provides the U.S. security strategy for the East Asia-Pacific region.¹ It reaffirms Washington's policy of continuing to keep one-hundred thousand soldiers in the region and play a leading role as both a balancer and honest broker. This report is often called "The Nye Report," because Joseph S. Nye, then assistant secretary of defense, played a crucial role in making this report between the two countries. According to the report, the U.S.-Japan alliance is the core element of the U.S.'s strategies toward Northeast Asia and thus, the alliance is very important not only for the mutual relationship between the two countries but for the stability of the whole Asia-Pacific. The Nye Report is a starting point in redefining the U.S.-Japan alliance in that it applies to the broader Asia-Pacific region instead of being limited to Far East Asia as the primary focus of the alliance.

On April 17, 1996, U.S. President Bill Clinton visited Tokyo to hold a summit meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. They announced the U.S.-Japan Joint Declaration on Security-Alliance for the 21st Century. The declaration emphasized on collaboration for defense cooperation in East Asia and stability and peace in the Asia-Pacific region. However, the Clinton administration, which put priority on economic recovery, promoted its East Asian policies with greater weight on the improvement of the U.S.-China relationship than the defense alliance of United States and Japan.

Since the George W. Bush administration began in 2001, the U.S. highlighted the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance. The newly inaugurated Koizumi government at the time also supported anti-terrorism and the global strategy of the United States and strengthened the mutual alliance more than ever before.

¹ U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1995).

II. Transformation of the U.S.-Japan Alliance and Its Development

1. Negotiations for the Realignment of the U.S.-Japan Alliance

As soon as George W. Bush took office in January, 2001, the U.S. placed priority on national security strategy with the establishment of a Missile Defense (MD) system, and aims to solidify its hegemony while maintaining an absolute military advantage over the rest of the world. Since 9/11, the U.S. carried out security strategies seeking regime change through an assertive military strategy. Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi visited America right after 9/11 to hold summit talks, while affirming the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to prevent terrorism and assist U.S. soldiers.

The U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee(SCC) agreed on December 16, 2002 that they would enhance close cooperation of mutual security policies to meet the changes of the international security environment which includes new threats such as international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

(WMDs).

The U.S. has three major national interests in East Asia.² The first is to prevent China or Russia from emerging as a regional hegemonic power. The rise of a hegemonic state that tries to limit U.S. access to the region would be seen as a serious threat to America's security and economic pursuits. The second goal is to maintain order and stability in the region of East Asia. A serious incident such as military conflict in the region would cause a ripple effect that would impact the political and social stability of the United States. The third objective is to promote economic cooperation with the countries in East Asia likely to emerge as economic hubs. East Asia has become a very important area in international trade and investment for the United States, surpassing that of Western Europe in the 1990s.

Under the U.S.-Japan alliance, Japan is seeking as its national interests to ward off potential threats, the extension of its role in the international community and the stable guarantee of natural resources and markets. Japan is able to counter Chinese military buildup and North Korea's nuclear and missile developments by strengthening the U.S.-Japan alliance. In addition, Japan is expecting the U.S. to support its aspiration to move into the Security Council of the United Nations. The U.S.-Japan alliance can serve as a pretext for extending Japan's military buildup while resolving woes over a militarized Japan from neighboring countries. In this context of shared national interests, the U.S. and Japan set common goals. On February 19, 2005, the U.S. and Japan addressed the strategic common goals in which the threats arising from terrorism, the proliferation of WMDs and the security uncertainty in the Asia-Pacific region were made priorities.³ The existing range of the U.S.-

² Ted Galen Carpenter and Doug Bandow, *The Korean Conundrum: America's Troubled Relations with North and South Korea* (New York: Palgrave, 2004).

Japan alliance was limited to the Asia-Pacific region and the visible threats were confined to the political uncertainty on the Korean peninsula, the concentration of military capability such as nuclear weapons and the extension of their delivery without mentioning any specific country. But in the 2005 SCC, both agreed to deter terrorism and the proliferation of WMDs globally and collectively in defending the stabilization of natural resources

The U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee on October 29, 2005 issued “the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future” which reviewed the roles, missions, and capabilities of the U.S. Armed Forces and Japan’s Self-Defense Forces and the planned realignment of the U.S. force structure in Japan.⁴ The U.S.-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation was finally issued on May 1, 2006 with already approved recommendations for the phased realignment of the U.S. troops stationed in Japan and the Self-Defense Forces until 2014.⁵

Some key implementation details account for this: ① In case of emergency, they enforced the functions of “bilateral and joint coordination.” To this end, the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in Japan established “a bilateral, joint operations coordination center (BJOCC)” at Yokota Air Base, which aimed to enforce shared access, management and operability. ② The capabilities of the U.S. Army Japan’s command structure in Camp Zama in Kanagawa Prefecture will be modernized to a deployable, joint task force-

³ *Joint Statement U.S. Japan Security Consultative Committee*, Washington, D.C., February 19, 2005 <www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/scc/joint0502.htm>.

⁴ Security Consultative Committee Document, *U.S.-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future*, October 29, 2005 <www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/scc/doc0510.htm>.

⁵ *United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*, May 1, 2006 <www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/scc/doc0605.htm>.

capable operational headquarters element. At the same time, the establishment of the headquarters of a Ground SDF Central Readiness Force Command will be pursued at Camp Zama in order to defend against potential terrorism until 2012. ③ The United States and Japan collocate its respective Air headquarters to Yokota Air Base. In case of emergency, the U.S. 5th Air Force and Japan's Air Defense Command in Yokota set BJOCC. ④ Measures to facilitate movement of civilian aircraft through Yokota air space will be explored. ⑤ The U.S. and Japan deploy a new U.S. X-band radar system at Shariki Self-Defense Air Base in Aomori Prefecture to support capabilities to intercept missiles directed at Japan and capabilities for Japan's civil defense and consequence management. ⑥ As part of its global posture realignment effort, the U.S. is making relocations of Marine Corps crisis capabilities in Hawaii, Guam and Okinawa to strengthen its forces structure in the Pacific. ⑦ The U.S. is completing its redistribution of aircraft carriers of F/A-18 Hornets and EA-6B Prowlers and of the reconnaissance E-2C Hawkeyes from Atsugi Air Facility in Kanagawa Prefecture to a U.S. Marine Corps Air Station (MACS) in Yamaguchi Prefecture by 2014. ⑧ Both sides will relocate the training sites so as to decrease the damage caused by training and exercises in Kadena Air Facility.

2. Toward U.S.-Japan Alliance Development

Once the realignment is completed, the 1st Corps Headquarters in Washington State will be rearranged into a new and futuristic UEx headquarters which is in-between the corps and the division in terms of size. And it will move to Zama base by 2008 in order to command the integrated operation of the U.S. army, navy and air forces just in case. The Zama-based U.S. Armed Forces will function as its hub while strategically projecting its military strength

into the Asia-pacific region. Moreover, it is assumed that Japan's militarily extended role in accordance with the alliance will eventually lead to the advancement of the weapons of the SDF. While promoting the exchange and cooperation of military technology, Japan is enforcing the SDF's military capabilities through imports of highly advanced equipment related to weapons.

Washington sees the alliance with Japan as a linchpin in its East Asian strategy. However, the United States does not necessarily make its East Asian policies while taking the alliance into consideration as the only cooperative partner. The United States fully recognizes the status of Japan among the East Asian countries and its limitation as a counter power against China. The United States is thus strengthening its alliance with Japan on the one hand and on the other, is actively forging its alliance network with other nations in the Asia-pacific region.

On February, 2007 a number of American Asia experts such as Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye proposed a report regarding the development of the U.S.-Japan alliance and the making of a new order in Asia.⁶ The de-facto "Second Armitage Report" emphasizes that the efforts to establish an optimal order in Asia so as to secure political freedom and sustained prosperity can be achieved by the participation of regional countries and the sustained power, involvement and leadership of the United States. Further, the report advises that the United States and Japan should continue to strengthen mutual military and security cooperation and establish a collective security alliance including Australia and India to counter the rise of China. The report also encourages Japan to flex its influence in future policy so as to induce China to become a responsible stakeholder in the world.

⁶ Richard L. Armitage, et. al., *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Getting Asia Right through 2020* (February 16, 2007).

There are questions as to whether the success of the U.S. and Japan toward a new establishment of order in East Asia will be influenced by Japan's degree of cooperation. Yet the current political situation in Japan is at the moment one of instable transition as the ruling Liberal Democratic Party in support of the alliance has politically weakened.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (April 2001~ September 2006) solidified the alliance based on his personal relationship with President George W. Bush. Taking office in September 26, 2006 following Koizumi, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stated that he would continue to solidify the alliance. Mr. Abe pursued a revision of the Constitution that allows the collective defense of the SDF as a part of strengthening the alliance. But Abe suddenly resigned after the ruling LDP was defeated by the opposition Liberty Party in the Upper House election held on July 29, 2007. The Liberty Party that emerged as the largest party in the Upper House has taken the position of opposing the implementation of the collective defense right and the extension of the "the Basic Plan of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law." Announcing his resignation on September 12, Abe emphasized that it is necessary to change the political situation such as the resignation in order to pass the special law.⁷

President of the LDP Fukuda Yasuo was formally elected Prime Minister on September 25. Fukuda also places priority on the alliance in terms of foreign policy but finds himself different from Mr. Abe who focused on the amendment of the Constitution for collective self-defense rights. Namely, Prime Minister Fukuda has

⁷ The Basic Plan of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law continues its support to international efforts to fight against terrorism by dispatching Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) vessels to the Indian Ocean for refueling operations. The Law was enacted in 2001 and extended since then three times. It expired on October 31, 2007.

showed his intention not to struggle to make the revision. In the meantime, “The anti-Terrorism Special Laws” lost their legality as of November 1 since the LDP and LP failed to agree before October 31 when they expired. It is expected that Japan will continue to advance some measures to strengthen security and military cooperation with the United States as polls show that most people support the alliance. However, the Japanese domestic political elements have seriously weakened the effects of the overseas dispatch of the SDF and the relocation of the U.S. bases stationed in Japan in the course of their implementation.

III. Security Situation in Northeast Asia and the Korean Peninsula

1. Conflict and cooperation in Northeast Asia

A. Strengthening of Arms Race in Northeast Asia

The strengthening of the U.S.-Japan alliance deepens the arms race of regional countries through an increase of military expenditures and development and purchasing competition for the most advanced weapons. The U.S. military budget has sharply expanded while fighting against terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq since the 9/11 incident. It increased from \$348.5 billion in the fiscal year of 2002 to \$495.3 billion in the fiscal year of 2005. The defense budget accounts for 4 percent of the GDP but the total amount of the defense expenditure the United States spends accounts for approximately 50 percent.⁸ And Japan is annually increasing its defense budget as much as its economic growth in sync with 1

⁸ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2007* (London: Routledge, 2007).

percent of the defense budget.

Based on its remarkable economic growth, China has increased its defense budget with an annual average of over 15 percent from 1990 to 2005. China's "2006 White Paper on Defense" showed 283.8 billion yuan (approximately \$35.1 billion), an increase of 14.7 percent compared to that of last year.⁹ Yet the U.S. Defense Department claims that China actually spends 2 to 3 times of the announced military budget, because China does not include the amount used in strategic weapons, purchases overseas and military technology development. China officially revealed the 2007 defense expenditure at \$45 billion, an increase of 17.8 percent in comparison to that of last year but the U.S. Defense Department assumes that it amounts to somewhere between \$85 billion to \$125 billion.¹⁰

Russia's military spending has consistently increased since Vladimir Putin took office in May, 2000. President Putin is advancing to modernize the Russian military so as to regain the erstwhile status of a superpower nation as the high price of oil is boosting up the Russian economy. Yet the 2005 military expenditure lingers at around one-eighth of that of the United States. In the meantime, Russia is inciting an arms race in East Asia while exporting the most advanced weapons and transferring military technologies to the region for strategic and economic purposes.

After taking office, President Bush hastily advanced the establishment of the Missile Defense (MD), which led to a fierce competition of a missile and nuclear arms race between the United States and Russia. Their arms race triggered by the MD system is causing an arms race in East Asia. But the size of the armed forces the two countries deployed are not that big in size. The United States

⁹ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defense in 2006* (Beijing: December 2006).

¹⁰ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2007*, p. 25.

and Russia deploy their respective limited military personnel in the region and thus, the arms race in East Asia is characterized by Japan and China seeking the most advanced capabilities of the army and the navy with the assistance of the United States and Russia, respectively.

The United States and Japan and Russia and China, respectively, work closely in terms of bilateral security cooperation and they are strategically collaborating with other countries. The United States and Japan are strengthening the military alliance and developing the trilateral military cooperative body including Australia. On top of this, they are building up Asia-Pacific democratic solidarity which includes India. Against this, China and Russia closely cooperate in their bilateral security relationship and are strengthening strategic solidarity with countries in Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). As a result of this, the influence domain in East Asia remains in the loosened confrontation between the United States and Japan and China and Russia, while providing a strategic alliance for Australia and a few Central Asian states, respectively and competing for the expansion of influence in India and the Southeast Asian region.

When the U.S. Security Consultative Committee decided in February 2005 to expand their alliance globally and establish the common goal of resolving the China-Taiwan matter “in a peaceful manner,” China and Russia launched their first-ever joint military exercises, dubbed “Peace Mission 2005,” in the areas of the Far East, China’s Shandong peninsula and the coasts nearby. The military maneuvers involved as many as 10,000 soldiers – mostly Chinese (8,000) – as well as Russian Tu-22M long-range bombers and TU-95 strategic bombers. The joint drills showed the possibility of China and Russia becoming a new military cooperative body to counter the U.S.-Japan military alliance in Northeast Asia.

The six member states of the SCO – China, Russia, Kazakhstan,

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan – held a July 2005 summit meeting in Kazakhstan and adopted a joint statement after discussing matters of security and economic cooperation. In particular, the statement demanded setting a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops stationed in Central Asia and to oppose the involvement of outside influences in the course of regime change in the region.¹¹ China and Russia took advantage of the SCO as a vehicle to counter the expansion of influence from the United States. The SCO exercised the largest military drills since its foundation, called “Peace Mission 2007,” from August 9-17, in Russia’s Ural Mountains region. Joining in the training were 6,500 military personnel and over 100 fighters and helicopters.¹² Western countries have pointed out the SCO’s possible development into a military alliance but China and Russia flatly deny this.

B. Four Major Powers’ Pragmatic Diplomacy

The confrontation between the U.S.-Japan and China-Russia is not a rigid one pursuing ideological competition. The practical patterns of diplomatic behavior among the four states show their vacillating alignment according to their national interests. They promote mutual cooperation related to common benefits through their respective bilateral talks on the one hand and on the other, employ policies of checking the influence among others in the fields where national interests collide.

The U.S. policy toward China has a dual element of constraints and contacts. While the U.S. employs measures to check the

¹¹ “Full Text of the Declaration of the Heads of States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (July 5, 2005, Astana),” July 7, 2005 <<http://toolkit.dialog.com>>.

¹² “SCO Peace Mission 2007 Exercise Concluding Stage To Be Held,” August 16, 2007 <<http://toolkit.dialog.com>>.

expansion of the China's influence in East Asia, it also tends to strengthen diplomatic cooperation in the world. The United States recognizes that without the cooperation of China, it would be difficult to manage global issues such as the proliferation of WMDs, war against terrorism and regional problems such as North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Indeed, aside from the military and security strategies based on "China's threats," the U.S.'s economy and foreign relationship is growing closer to China.

Although the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee announced in February, 2005 the common strategic goal of considering China as a threat to national security, there was a growing atmosphere from the realists, in particular within the State Department, that the United States should strengthen engagement with China as the second Bush administration kicked off. The State Department was reshaped by the internationalists that included the new Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick and Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns. These pragmatism-tinted officials at the state department have sought a new framework regarding policies toward China from the perspective of the middle way somewhere in between "open door policy" and "China's threats."¹³ The U.S. agreed to hold senior-level dialogue on a regular basis while accepting the U.S.-China Senior Dialogue as proposed by China.

The first Senior Dialogue was held in Beijing from August 1-2, 2005. The vice-ministerial level meeting included U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick and PRC Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo. The leaders discussed pending issues and international security such as military issues, energy, terrorism, economic trade, Taiwan, democratization, and human rights. U.S. Deputy Secretary

¹³ Kerry B. Dumbaugh, "China-U.S. Relations: Current Issues and Implications for U.S. Policy," *CRS Report for Congress*, Updated September 22, 2006, p. 5.

of State Robert Zoellick encouraged China to become a responsible stakeholder in the global system and underscored the need to deepen the U.S.-PRC relationship within the United States.¹⁴

The U.S. Defense Department also sought ways to begin anew the military diplomacy with China. Admiral William J. Fallon, commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, visited China from May 9-15, 2006 to discuss ways to improve mutual military cooperation with Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan. The relationship of cooperation has become much closer since North Korea test-launched missiles on July 5. As the United Nations adopted resolution 1695 regarding North Korea and bilateral cooperation over sanctions against North Korea gained momentum, the atmosphere of mutual military cooperation was strengthened. General Guo Boxiong, vice chairman of China's Central Military Commission, visited the United States to meet with U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. The two sides agreed to conduct joint naval maritime exercises and expand cooperation in military exchange. On October 9, the United States conducted the first-ever joint naval exercise with China of the first phase of search and rescue around the coast of California. And on November 19, the two sides staged the second phased joint naval drills of search and rescue since North Korea undertook its nuclear test on October 9.¹⁵ Warships from both sides conducted a search-and-rescue exercise for five hours with the assistance of P-3 anti-submarine warfare patrol aircraft and transport planes on the sea of South China, the eastern part of China's Guangdong Province. This was aimed at mitigating misjudgment and increasing cooperation in the case of humanitarian aid being needed or an emergency such as another North Korean nuclear test.

¹⁴ USINFO.STATE.GOV, U.S. *Wants Deeper Cooperation With China, State's Zoellick Says*, August 3, 2005.

¹⁵ Shirley A. Kan, "U.S.-China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress," *CRS Report for Congress* (Updated August 20, 2007), pp. 62~63.

As U.S.-Sino ties tended toward national interest-based pragmatism, economic issues newly emerged. The first Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) between the United States and China was held in Beijing, from December 14-15, 2006, where both sides affirmed pursuing some agreed-upon policies, such as China's flexibility with the Yuan's exchange rate and increasing the U.S. savings rate, to promote balanced and strong growth and prosperity for both nations. In addition, they agreed to establish five working-level committees to resolve trade barriers, China's opening in financial service sectors, sustainable development through energy security, technology development for the environment, and investment barriers.¹⁶

There are still conflicts among the regional states—Korea, China, Japan, and Russia—with regard to past history and territories in the wake of Japanese imperialism. These sensitive territorial issues related to sovereignty—Tokto islet between Korea and Japan, Diaoyutai/Shenkaku and Okinotori islands between China and Japan, and the Kurile islands between Japan and Russia—remain yet unresolved. While the U.S.-Japan alliance has strengthened over time, these hidden conflicts between China and Japan over regional hegemony have continued to cause diplomatic problems in Asia.

Japan's relations with South Korea and China, which had experienced severe conflict because of then Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to the Japanese Yasukuni Shrine, distortion of Japan's history textbooks and territorial matters, gained positive momentum as the new Prime Minister Abe took office on September 26, 2006. After his inauguration, Mr. Abe visited China to hold a summit meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao on October 8. The leaders discussed

¹⁶ “HK WWP: First Strategic Economic Dialogue To Add New Chapter in Sino-US Ties Article by Ching Che-yuan: ‘The First Strategic Economic Dialogue To Add a New Chapter in Sino-US Relations’,” December 15, 2006 <<http://toolkit.dialog.com>>.

common interests including the normalization of relations and expressed deep concern about North Korea's nuclear weapons programs.¹⁷ The bilateral relationship has since then greatly improved. Chinese premier Wen Jiabao visited Japan to meet with Mr. Abe and agreed to establish a "high-level economic dialogue." Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan also visited Tokyo to hold the Defense Ministers' talks on August 30 where they agreed to the exchange visits of naval ships from the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). It is expected that China-Japan relations will see further improvements in the military field.

In the meantime, the U.S.-Russia relationship, too, is one of both cooperation and conflict. Russia cooperates with the United States in terms of multi-national issues with regard to the prevention of WMD proliferation, terrorism, trafficking and utilizing the proliferation security initiative (PSI). But Russia employs policies of checking the United States in areas where each country's national interests sharply collide, such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea. When President Bush wanted Russian president Putin to follow guarantees of the freedom of press and religion and democratization in Iraq, President Putin refuted it, saying that, "We certainly would not want to have the same kind of democracy as they have in Iraq."¹⁸ But at the G-8 summit meeting, both sides agreed on matters of nuclear energy, nuclear weapons and the war on terror. Russia also agreed with the United States about the "initiative to combat nuclear terrorism" so as to prevent North Korea or Iran from transferring nuclear materials to terrorists. At the Global Initiative to Combat

¹⁷ "Japan: Editorials 9 Oct 06 Welcome Japan-China Summit Talks," October 9, 2006 <<http://toolkit.dialog.com>>.

¹⁸ The White House, "President Bush and Russian President Putin Participate in Press Availability," July 15, 2006 <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/07/20060715-1.html>>.

Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) held in Morocco, October 30-31, the five major nuclear power states – the United States, Russia, China, England, and France – adopted a joint statement which says, “[The five states should] voluntarily develop a physical defense system to check and control nuclear and radioactive materials so as to prevent terrorists from obtaining nuclear weapons and improving them.”¹⁹

Recently, there has been a growing diplomatic conflict between the United States and Russia over the establishment of missile defense (MD). Russian President Vladimir Putin made explicit reference to a moratorium on the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) in his annual state of the union address on April 26, 2007, while asserting that NATO is trying to build a network of military bases along the Russian border and is planning to deploy elements of a missile defense system in the Czech Republic and Poland.” Mr. Putin warned on June 3 before the G-8 summit that Russia would take countermeasures if the United States deploys the MD systems in Eastern Europe as this would be seen as a means of containing Russia. In response, President Bush took the attitude that there was not any fundamental confrontation between Russia and the United States, saying that the Cold War era had ended. Yet there are still diplomatic conflicts over Iran’s nuclear issues, Kosovo’s independence and Russia’s democratization as well as MD.

¹⁹ *Yonhap News*, November 1, 2006. <<http://app.yonhapnews.co.kr>>.

2. Impact on the Korean Peninsula

A. Coordination and Confrontation over North Korean Nuclear Issue

Influenced by the strengthened U.S.-Japan alliance, the other four states in Northeast Asia continue an arms race for national interests in terms of national security and repeatedly alternate between cooperation and restraint. Fierce competition for the expansion of influence among the United States, China, Japan and Russia has a significant impact on the Korean peninsula. Yet these countries generally have the shared recognition that peace and stability on the Korean peninsula will be helpful to their national interests. But there are different views with regard to the North Korean nuclear issue and its resolution.

The United States considers the proliferation of WMD as the most serious threat to global security. Thus, it is attempting to ban the proliferation of nuclear weapons programs through the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). China and Russia which are both recognized as nuclear weapon states share the same interests as the United States in deterring North Korea's development of nuclear weapons. Japan, although it is a non-nuclear weapons state, takes the same position as the United States regarding its North Korea policy.

There was a second nuclear crisis after assistant U.S. secretary of state for East-Asian and Pacific Affairs James A. Kelly visited Pyongyang on October 3-5, 2002²⁰. The United States has expressed since then its intention to resolve the crisis through multilateral negotiations along with China, Russia, Japan and Korea as well as bilateral negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang. As

²⁰ Richard Boucher, Spokesman, "North Korean Nuclear Program, Press statement," October 16, 2002 <www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/14432.htm>.

North Korea indicated its acceptance of the multilateral negotiation format, the six-party talks including the two Koreas, United States, China, Japan and Russia were held in Beijing, August 27-29, 2003. The member states formed a common objective of resolving the issue peacefully but failed to narrow their differences which lead to the continued postponement of the talks.

China and Russia have clearly expressed their objection to the United States using economic sanctions against North Korea and military strikes on the suspected Yongbyon nuclear site. They have also underscored ways to resolve the nuclear issue through dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang in the six party talks, while criticizing the U.S.'s tough attitude toward the North. China and Russia appeared to use the nuclear issue as a wild card for negotiations with the United States but held on to the position of not allowing the North to have a nuclear weapons program.

When North Korea test launched seven missiles on July 5, 2006, China and Russia supported the United Nations Security Council resolution of imposing sanctions on the North, led by the United States and Japan. North Korea's nuclear test on October 9 encouraged the United States, Japan, China and Russia to work more closely on the North Korean nuclear issue. The UN Security Council considered it a threat to the international community and unanimously adopted resolution 1718 which imposed a series of economic and commercial sanctions on the North, although military measures were ruled out.

The Bush administration pursued a flexible policy toward North Korea since the Republic Party was defeated in the by-election of November 7, 2006, which offered an opportunity to resume the six-party talks and improve the relationship between the two. And at the Third Session of the Fifth Round of the Six-Party Talks held in Beijing, February 8-13, 2007, the "initial phase for the implementation of the Joint Statement of September 19 2005" (February 13 agreement)

was adopted. The February 13 agreement tells North Korea to shut down and seal for the purpose of eventual abandonment the Yongbyon nuclear facility within sixty-days and then, to declare all nuclear programs completely and take every measure for disablement of all existing nuclear facilities. On July 14, North Korea shut down its five Yongbyon nuclear facilities including a 5MW plutonium-reactor and allowed the IAEA inspectors to seal them. Nuclear experts from the United States, China and Russia visited North Korea, from September 11-15, and checked technical matters for the disablement of the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon. It is assumed that once the foreign ministers' meeting is held in the future, the United States, China, Japan and Russia will work closely together to promptly advance the nuclear negotiations to a new phase. The February 13 agreement stipulates that "The directly related Parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean peninsula at an appropriate separate forum." It is highly likely that the negotiations for a peace regime on the peninsula will be four-party talks that include the two Koreas, the United States and China. However, negotiations excluding Japan and Russia will face some difficulties in reaching an agreement unlike the six-party talks related to the nuclear issue.

B. Rearrangement of the USFK and the ROK-U.S. Alliance

The strengthened U.S.-Japan alliance impacts both the realignment of the U.S. troops stationed in South Korea and the reestablishment of the ROK-U.S. alliance. The U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC), held in December, 2002, agreed to begin the dialogue over the U.S.-Japan alliance to counter changes in the global security environment since 9/11. The United States proceeded to negotiate with the South Korean government about the rearrangement of the U.S. forces stationed in Korea while at the same time

negotiating with Japan over the U.S. troops in Japan.

At the 34th ROK-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) held in December, 2002, the defense ministers of South Korea and the United States agreed to hold joint discussion on the “Future of the ROK-US Alliance Policy Initiative”(FOTA), in which the two countries will conduct policy-level discussions to develop options for providing a long and stable stationing environment for US Forces in Korea(USFK) and strengthening the alliance. At the 1st Future of ROK-U.S. Alliance Policy Initiative held in Seoul, April 8-9, the two sides agreed to discuss the relocation of U.S. troops in Yongsan Garrison, the rearrangement of the overall U.S. Armed Forces, and the improvement of the ROK-U.S. combined command relationship in the mid and long term. Those issues discussed through five meetings of FOTA were confirmed at the 35th ROK-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) held in Seoul on November 17, 2003.²¹

Regarding the relocation of Yongsan Garrison, the two sides agreed in principle to relocate Yongsan Garrison from Seoul to Osan and Pyongtaek bases by 2006 but were unable to reach an agreement over whether to relocate the UN Command and ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command in Yongsan or keep them in Seoul.

Regarding the realignment of the U.S. forces in Korea, they agreed to realign the U.S. forces based in Korea into two hubs south of the Han River which will occur in two phases. In the first phase, the small and medium sized units north of the Han River are merged into the areas of Tongduchon and Uijongbu while alternative facilities are prepared. They agreed that the highest authorities of both governments will decide the specific time of

²¹ USFK, “Joint Communiqué: Thirty-Fifth Annual U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting,” November 17, 2003 <www.usfk.or.kr/en/future_initiative_05.php>.

the relocation of the U.S. forces stationed north of the Han River to the south of the river to be followed by the second phase in consideration of the situation on the Korean peninsula.

Regarding the enhanced combined operational capabilities for the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command, the United States plans to invest \$11 billion from 2003 through 2006, in 150 areas related to the location of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), strengthening of command and communication systems, relocation of the Striker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) and introduction of the latest PAC-3 missile.

As they wrapped up the matter of the USFK presence in Korea through twelve FOTA meetings by September, 2004, they began to study the third phase of the realignment of the alliance by establishing a new consultative body called the “Security Policy Initiative” (SPI) which replaced FOTA at the 36th SCM in October, 2004. The two sides made a comprehensive evaluation regarding the security situation at the SPI and based on it, set a common vision for the future alliance and decided to arrange the ROK-U.S. command relationship in a way that is adaptable to the alliance. As the first and second phase moved forward in the first SPI on February, 2005, both sides began to discuss the wartime operation control(OPCON) of South Korean troops at the fourth SPI, from September 28-30, 2005. The United States expressed its intention to grant authority by 2010, whereas South Korea had in mind 2012. After fine tuning the timing of the transfer of authority, the two sides announced their agreement at the 38th SCM, held in Washington, October 20, 2006 that they would complete the transition of OPCON to the ROK after October 15, 2009, but not later than March 15, 2012. Since then, defense ministers of the two countries held a meeting in Washington, February 23, 2007 to agree on the dismantlement of the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command and the transition of OPCON to the ROK by April 17, 2012.²²

The United States is making its troops mobile, rapid and light so they are suitable for future wars and is transforming its military posture to project military capabilities into operation areas remote from military bases. The U.S. troops overseas are required not only to adapt themselves to the environment of the present but also to have the capabilities to perform military operations across the world at any time.²³ That said, they should have strategic flexibility to rapidly counter any global conflicts. Thus, the scope of the USFK activities and responsibilities can expand to the world. However, the strategic flexibility of USFK may incite China which worries about the possibility of U.S. involvement in the case of the Taiwan straits. South Korea and the United States thus made an additional agreement regarding the strategic flexibility of the USFK.²⁴ In this agreement, South Korea accepted the flexibility, and the United States respected South Korea's position that it would not become involved in conflicts in Northeast Asia that go against the will of the South Korean people. Namely, the United States did not set the checking of China as a common strategic goal in the course of reestablishing the alliance.

In the meantime, the rearrangement of overseas U.S. troops based on strategic flexibility inevitably impacts the military posture of the allied nation.²⁵ An allied country's military capabilities also should be strengthened in order to assist the United States Army that has been replaced as the Rapid Equipping Force with the most

²² The Joint Communique of the 38th ROK-US SCM, October 20, 2006.

²³ Paul Wolfowitz, Hearing on U.S. military presence in Iraq: implications for global defense posture, Before the House Armed Service Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, June 18, 2003.

²⁴ <www.mofat.go.kr/mofat/mk_a008/1197362_5496.html>.

²⁵ Douglas J. Feith, Under Secretary of Defense for policy, Transforming the U.S. Global Defense Posture, December 3, 2003 <www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2003/sp20031203-0722.htm>.

advanced weaponry. In particular, South Korea should proceed with a military build-up in order to prepare for the OPCON transition. When OPCON is completed, the ROK troops will head up defense for the peninsula and the USFK will assume an auxiliary role. The South Korean government is proceeding with its defense reform called “Defense Reform Plan 2020,” so as to make the Korean military more advanced and trim.²⁶ Particularly, the South Korean armed forces should maintain capabilities to meet the military balances of China and Japan under the militarily sharp situation of competition in Northeast Asia. The launch of a new class of destroyers named after King Sejong, the first Aegis-class vessel made by South Korea, and the decision to buy the fifth-generation fighter Stealth were both related to this. It is essential that South Korea strengthen its military capabilities so as to lead negotiations in the course of consolidating the peace regime on the peninsula and prepare for peaceful unification.

²⁶ *National Defense Reform 2020 and National Defense Expenditures* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of Defense, October, 2006), pp. 24~29.

IV. South Korea's Security Strategy

1. Basic Concepts

The power chessboard in Northeast Asia consists of a loose confrontation surrounding the pillars of the U.S.-Japan and China-Russia alliances. The United States is advancing a realistic Northeast Asia policy based on regional stability. Cognizant of the North Korean nuclear weapons program and the rise of China as potential threats, the United States is strengthening the U.S.-Japan alliance. Through the alliance with the United States, Japan hopes to expand its political and diplomatic influence in the global community. Moreover, China and Russia alike advocate a multi-polar world as a common goal and seek to fortify their strategic alliance as the U.S.-Japan alliance strengthens. China and Russia are performing joint military exercises to check the U.S.'s unilateralism and deter Japanese militarization. Yet the four nations are not in any way hostile toward each other. They are diplomatically cooperating and checking through frequent summit talks.

South Korea, geographically located in-between the maritime powers of the U.S.-Japan and the continental powers of China-Russia, needs to see the situation objectively and make a judicious and realistic judgment. First of all, South Korea should proceed with a security strategy to actively counter the situation of military and security changes in the region. Although it is difficult to predict how the situation in the region will develop, it is believed that the order based on U.S. leadership will be maintained for some time in the future. Even in 2020 the power structure in the region will be maintained by the dominant U.S. leadership or its unimultipolarity in military terms, even though it shows multi-polarized characteristics both politically and economically. Given the intertwined relationship among the nations in Northeast Asia and the continued order of U.S. hegemony, South Korea's diplomatic and security policies need to be cardinally based on the ROK-U.S. alliance while expanding security cooperation with Japan, China and Russia gradually. In other words, while sustaining and strengthening the alliance with the United States which is the only super power and a traditional ally, South Korea should develop its pragmatism-oriented diplomacy toward neighboring countries.

The four nations in Northeast Asia understand that peace and stability on the peninsula will be helpful to their national interests while competing with one another for the expansion of influence in the course of the transformation of the world order. They are also worried that if the North Korean nuclear issue prompts a crisis on the peninsula, it will negatively impact their political and social stability and economic development. They do not want to get involved in conflicts on the peninsula and prefer denuclearization and the peaceful co-existence of the two Koreas. Therefore, South Korea needs to seek ways to resolve the nuclear issue through the six-party talks and make every diplomatic effort to sustain international cooperation in the course of the establishment of the peace regime

on the peninsula. In addition, South Korea should play a leading role in fostering a cooperative relationship with China, Japan and Russia through the six-party talks.

2. Keynotes of Security Plan

A. A Realistic Recognition Toward the U.S.-Japan Alliance

When the United States started to pursue an assertive security policy by consolidating the missile defense system after September 11, there was much criticism that America was becoming an empire. Even when the United States strengthened its alliance with Japan by rearranging the U.S. forces in Japan before and after it launched the military attacks on Iraq, the neighboring countries in Northeast Asia were skeptical about the nature of the U.S.-Japan alliance. In particular, when Prime Minister Koizumi dispatched troops to the Middle East to support U.S. forces in Iraq, there was a wariness that Japan would develop into a great militarized power. As the United States and Japan are advancing defense policies, it is justifiable to criticize the U.S.-Japan alliance for inciting an arms race in the region. But South Korean security policies cannot rest merely on idealism that calls for arms reduction and world peace. The South Korean government needs to understand the intention of the two countries toward the strengthening of the alliance and estimate the capabilities objectively and thereby formulate realistic security policies suitable for national interests.

The United States is worried that there will be a great change of the balance of power in Northeast Asia because of China's military strength which is based on the sustained growth of its economy. The National Intelligence Council of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency revealed in its report released on December 10, 2004 that "By 2020 the gravity of the global geography will

move to Asia, in particular to China, which will become the second largest country exceeding the Japanese economy with the exception of the U.S.”²⁷ East Asia experts predict that by 2020 China’s gross domestic product (GDP) will be level with, or exceed, that of Japan. But taking into consideration the side effects in the wake of economic growth, it is expected that China’s economic growth will not necessarily be a smooth process. The process of Westernization shows as an example that economic growth comes with a higher level of political participation of the people, which will inevitably bring about the democratization of the political system. Thus, it is uncertain how China will harmonize its economic growth with political development. At any rate, it is assumed that around the year 2020 the difference of national power based on economic power will lead to a new reality and limitations of the security relationship in Northeast Asia.

The balance of power in Northeast Asia will be greatly influenced by the differences of national power based on economic gaps among the countries in the region. If China’s economic growth is sustained, Japan is highly likely to compete with China for regional hegemony under the relatively weakened influence of the United States. But the relationship between the U.S.-Japan and China does not automatically rest on the economic gap. Rather, it depends on the interaction of diplomatic relations along with how they weave their strategic structure based on national interests. In particular, the United States and Japan are developing value

²⁷ National Intelligence Council, *Mapping the Global Future: Report of the National Intelligence Council’s 2020 Project* (December 2004). NIC revealed in its report that the gravity of the global landscape will move to Asia, in particular, to China, and by 2020 China’s gross national product (GNP) will exceed that of individual of Japan except for the United States. The prospect is based on the premise that China will grow annually at the rate of 8~9% from 2000 to 2010, and then over 8% from 2010 to 2020.

diplomacy which emphasizes human rights, democracy, and market economy and so the degree of Chinese democratization will be a crucial element in deciding on the trilateral cooperative system. In the event that China moves toward democratization along with economic growth, the trilateral relationship among the United States, Japan and China will successfully establish a cooperative system and keep Northeast Asia stable. But if China maintains socialism and achieves industrialization and the modernization of its defenses, there is a high possibility that the competition for hegemony between the United States and China will deepen.

The United States and Japan are further strengthening their alliance while remaining skeptical about how China will exert its strengthened military capabilities. Nevertheless, the U.S.-Japan alliance is unlikely to develop into an exclusive military bloc of a hostile confrontational style. In fact, the two countries wish to establish a new order in Asia where freedom and prosperity are guaranteed while taking advantage of the alliance as a common asset instead of a military alliance per se. That is to say, they expand the alliance and create democratic solidarity among the democratic nations in the Asia-Pacific region and based on this, contest China's growing military capabilities and lead China to becoming a "responsible stakeholder" in the global community. On top of this, they encourage the Northeast Asian countries not to yield to the pressure from a hegemonic China and continue to assume an independent attitude through economic assistance, ultimately expecting the power distribution in the region to be multi-polar. The United States and Japan are said to proactively assist those countries around China for the sake of their development in order that they stand on an equal footing with China instead of being subject to it.²⁸

²⁸ Daniel Twining, "America's Grand Design in Asia," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Summer 2007).

East Asia experts in America underscore that the ultimate point of the U.S.-Japan alliance is evolving into an open and persuasive alliance based on common benefits and values. And they are establishing solidarity among the Asia-Pacific states so as to proactively counterbalance the rise of China. From this perspective, the U.S.-Japan alliance has the inverse result of inciting an arms race in East Asia but is believed to have an overall positive impact by maintaining stability in East Asia through deterring China's hegemony-oriented diplomacy. Meanwhile, the United States and Japan continue to explore the possibility of establishing a trilateral relationship through strategic dialogue with China.

B. Development of Pragmatic Diplomacy

The assertive national strategies that the United States employed since 9/11 were focused primarily on the Middle East. The situation in East Asia still shows a kind of fluidity and dualism that marked the post-Cold War period. The United States and Japan recognize China's rise of hegemony as a potential threat but it is not clear whether or not there is a threat from China in accepting the market economy under the influence of global capitalism. It is difficult to argue that China's continued economic growth threatens global security. The norms of the market economy such as respecting free competition do not permit such logic. Although China's growing military capabilities are seen as a potential threat, the current level and preparedness of Chinese defenses does not directly threaten the United States or Japan. The assertion that it could be a future threat is not enough to legitimize confrontation with China, since the threat at a particular period of the future can only be measured by the Chinese military strategies being pursued at that time.

China and Russia are strengthening their strategic cooperation in order to ensure multi-polarity in the world order. However, their

global objectives have not garnered support from capitalist countries such as the developed countries in Western Europe. Most of the countries in East Asia except for some central Asian countries under the direct influence of China and Russia are reluctant to stand by Beijing and Moscow in the confrontational context of the U.S.-Japan and China-Russia alliances. Other countries in the region seem to prefer the stable economic growth under the hegemonic order of the moderate United States to the uncertain and authoritarian regimes of China and Russia. In fact, China and Russia alike find it difficult that they are unable to directly challenge the hegemony of the United States in terms of national power so that they do not seek the conventional balance of power against the United States. In other words, they do not want the balance of power if it means military confrontation. China and Russia contest U.S. unilateralism and attempt to expand their influence indirectly but seek practical benefits by cooperating with the United States on some global issues. In particular, China is actively strengthening diplomatic cooperation with the United States and Japan so as to remove the image of China as a threat.

The United States, Japan, China and Russia alike are seeking policies for a balance of power in Northeast Asia by stressing the importance of national security but in reality acknowledge the limits of the logic related to national security. China and Russia took the position of proactively supporting the war against terrorism led by the United States since 9/11. After Prime Minister Koizumi left office, both Japan and China have sought ways to develop the relationship into a more beneficiary one while resolving unproductive diplomatic conflicts over past history and territorial disputes. In particular, the Bush administration, which has been weakened politically because of the failure of the Iraq war, is seeking the support of China and Russia in order to resolve various global issues including the nuclear problems of North Korea and Iran.

Likewise, the practical diplomacy that is primarily focused on national interests is being shaped in various ways among the four states.

The national interest-based diplomacy is not likely to lead to confrontational relations among the four states in Northeast Asia over the short term. Yet if China and Russia achieve more rapid economic development than that of the United States and Japan and maintain their continued economic growth, the order in Northeast Asia will become more multi-polarized by 2020. But it is expected that the United States will maintain its overwhelming military advantage and play the role of a balancer of power in the region due to its defense budget and advanced military capability and technology. Given ① the fluid realities in Northeast Asia ② political order becoming more multi-polarized ③ the U.S.-centered unipolarity in terms of military capabilities, it is advisable for South Korea's foreign policy to primarily focus on strengthening the military alliance with the United States and then begin to promote gradual security cooperation with Japan, China and Russia.

The four nations in Northeast Asia appear to be strengthening pragmatism-tinged diplomacy, although they all respond to security threats differently. Thus, South Korea's foreign policy needs to be developed into practical diplomacy, apart from the security policies of strengthening the traditional ROK-U.S. alliance. First, South Korea should extensively expand its relationship with China. Cooperation between China and Korea should be promoted for the stable development of inter-Korean relations as well as for economic benefits. But it seems that the basic relationship of mutual trust between South Korea and China has not yet been consolidated despite the rapid increase of trade. Therefore, it is necessary to develop security cooperation over the long term with a unified Korea in mind. South Korea also needs to seek ways to forge a security relationship with Russia while promoting mutual interests.

It is a crucial task for the South to promote the constructive roles of China and Russia in East Asian diplomacy for the benefits of peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

C. Strengthening of the ROK-U.S. Alliance and the Enhancement of Military Posture

South Korea and the United States have experienced diplomatic conflict over policy toward North Korea since 9/11. After 9/11, the United States pursued aggressive global strategies of anti-terrorism and begun pressing North Korea, while including it, along with Iraq and Iran, in the “axis of evil.” It looked as if U.S. policies collided with South Korea’s engagement policy toward North Korea. But the two countries North Korea policies have been on a similar path since the February 13 agreement was made. In the meantime, the two nations showed some difference of recognition toward national security threats and strategic objectives in the course of realigning the ROK-U.S. alliance. South Korea was much more interested in deterring North Korean threats, but the United States wanted to maintain strategic flexibility to counter regional conflicts by transforming the USFK into Rapid Deployment Forces (RDF). South Korea was somewhat burdened by the strategic flexibility of the USFK, in that it could incite China from which South Korea needed cooperation for resolving the North Korean nuclear problem and establishing a peace regime on the peninsula. With regard to flexibility, both South Korea and the United States reached a conclusion to respect the position of the South that the USFK will not get involved in regional disputes while disregarding the will of the South Korean people. In addition, each country had a different opinion over the timing of the OPCON transfer. The United States initially wanted to hand over authority within 2010 but agreed to accept South Korea’s proposal that OPCON would

be transferred to South Korea as of April 17, 2012, concurrently disbanding the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces.

Currently, South Korea and the United States are closely cooperating in the course of resolving the North Korean nuclear problem and implementing the agreement of the military alliance. The alliance has been traditionally the base of South Korea's diplomacy and is an asset to South Korea. In particular, the alliance should be closely maintained in order to resolve the nuclear problem and establish a peace regime on the peninsula. Both sides need to make an effort to narrow the differences of opinion over the North Korean situation and overall policy toward North Korea. Moreover, South Korea needs to make diplomatic efforts to reactivate trilateral cooperation over North Korean affairs among South Korea, the United States and Japan, in light of the strengthened U.S.-Japan alliance.

South Korea and Japan form a military alliance with the United States, respectively. But the relationship between Korea and Japan does not make for a stable security relationship because of the unfortunate past experience of history. Rather, it seems to form a hostile relationship in a sense. The U.S.-Japan military alliance has strengthened since the Bush administration began, but the Korea-Japan relationship was marked by escalating tensions. However, as the two alliances are managed separately, they will not likely develop into a zero-sum game.

Under the situation that the United States regards the U.S.-Japan alliance as the pivotal axis of its Northeast Asia strategy, the diplomatic rift between South Korea and Japan may hinder security cooperation between the United States and Korea in the long term. In order to solidify the ROK-U.S. alliance it is thus necessary to establish the Korea-Japan relationship anew. It goes without saying that relations between these two neighbors should be improved in order to secure a conciliatory cooperative relationship between the

peoples of the two states. The two countries share the common values of human rights, democracy and market economy. In addition, they form a common recognition regarding the peaceful settlement of the North Korean nuclear problem and maintaining peace in East Asia. Therefore, the Korea-Japan relationship should be newly formulated not only in terms of bilateral relations but in terms of the peace in Northeast Asia and the future of the ROK-U.S. alliance as well. The Korea-Japan relationship needs to address issues of past history and the Tokto islet rationally, while advancing to expand pragmatic diplomacy based on the common ground of national interests shared between them.

In the event that the arms race deepens in Northeast Asia, the ROK-U.S. alliance is helpful in solidifying the position of South Korea in relationships with Japan and China. Furthermore, independent defense capabilities are the basis of diplomacy for the establishment of peace on the peninsula. Accordingly, South Korea's security and unification policies should be advanced in parallel with the strengthened ROK-U.S. alliance and growing military capabilities. Having the most advanced military capabilities due to its military transformation, the United States demands its allies maintain and strengthen their military strength as well. In order to secure the effectiveness of the ROK-U.S. combined military system, South Korea should continue growing its military capabilities in accordance with the "Military Reform 2020." Especially, the South is required to advance the ROK Army's surveillance and early-warning system through ROK-U.S. information and technology cooperation and to establish its independent defense posture gradually. In addition, the preparedness for promoting ROK military capabilities should be well preserved, because there is the possibility that the effectiveness of the ROK-U.S. combined defense posture can weaken during the transitional period of transferring OPCON to the South. In order to make it happen in the course of preparing for peaceful unification,

South Korea's foreign and security policies, or overall national power including military capabilities should be upgraded to the level of semi-powerful nations. In the case that national power becomes fragile, it is likely that international centrifugal force of taking advantage of the divided situation for their national interests will be greater than that of the centripetal force of pulling the four Northeast Asian countries together in favor of peaceful unification on the Korean peninsula.

D. Building a Peace Regime Through Four-party Talks

The four nations in Northeast Asia will share common national benefits from a demilitarized Korean peninsula. The United States regards the proliferation of nuclear weapons as the greatest threat to the maintenance of the U.S.-led world order in the post-Cold War era and seeks to solve the North Korean nuclear issue peacefully. Non-nuclear Japan is a strong proponent of non-proliferation policy and has closely worked with South Korea to resolve the North Korean nuclear troubles. China and Russia, who are among the five major nuclear states (the others being the United States, England and France), share the national interest of maintaining the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In particular, both countries are worried over the possibility that North Korea's nuclear weapons development will ignite the nuclearization of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. Therefore, they have cooperated with South Korea, the United States and Japan on the one hand and on the other, have encouraged North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programs through independent diplomatic channels.

The four nations have demanded North Korea abandon nuclear weapons through the six-party talks since the second nuclear crisis occurred in October, 2002. The United States, Japan, China and Russia cooperated to adopt UN resolution 1718 to impose sanctions

against North Korea at the UN Security Council right after the North carried out its first nuclear test on October 9, 2006. After the February 13 agreement was made, China and Russia worked together to try and bring about the complete abandonment of the North Korean nuclear weapons program while closely working for the disablement of the North's nuclear facilities.

The four countries' policies toward the Korean peninsula contribute to the peaceful settlement of the North's nuclear problems and the easing of inter-Korean tension. The mutual interests between South Korea and the four nations are relatively in accord, because they tend to seek the status quo of resolving the nuclear issues and establishing a peace regime. But the establishment of peace on the peninsula will impact Northeast Asia in that a peace settlement is thought to lead to unification over the long run. So, it is assumed that the positions of neighboring countries regarding the establishment of a peace regime will be focused primarily on national interests.

Both the September 19 joint statement and the February 13 agreement specify that "the directly related parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula at an appropriate separate forum." Japan and Russia should attend the negotiations centered on the peace regime in an extended form of the six-party talks. But Japan and Russia are not direct parties to the Korean armistice agreement. Therefore, the two will find it difficult to assume direct roles in negotiations for the peace regime on the peninsula. Nevertheless, they want to join in the negotiations. In the meantime, the "Declaration for Advancing Inter-Korean Relations and Peace and Prosperity" that was announced after the summit talks, October 2-4 2007, states that "[The South and the North share the wish to cooperate] to pursue issues related to declaring the end of the Korean War by holding on the Korean peninsula, a Three or Four party summit of directly-related sides." In the case of "four" parties, China should be able to attend the negotiations but cannot

in the event that only “three parties” are included which would consist of the two Koreas and the United States. The Chinese foreign department hinted that China would not accept peace negotiations where it is excluded, underscoring that China would play a constructive and active role in the course of replacing the armistice agreement with a peace agreement.²⁹ In other words, China takes the position that it is natural for it to be included as a direct party of the Korean peace negotiations, since it was one of the states that signed the armistice agreement.

Judging from the Chinese response over the declaration of the second inter-Korean summit talks, it is easy to see why the matter of direct parties to the peace agreement of the Korean peninsula is arguable. The North Korean army representative at Panmunjom has proposed to hold the DPRK-U.S. military talks with the UN in attendance even after the February 13 Agreement was made so as to discuss the peace and security guarantee on the peninsula. It is believed that the North repeatedly claims it wants a DPRK-U.S. peace agreement. This North Korean attitude seems to make people believe that the North still sees inter-Korean relations from the perspective of the Cold War. The North wants to show that it is superior to the South in terms of legitimacy by making a DPRK-U.S. peace agreement with the South excluded. The competition for regime legitimacy in the course of establishing the peace regime may function negatively by inciting external influence toward the peninsula contrary to the North’s intention.

It is most desirable that the peace regime on the peninsula be made between the two Koreas as the direct parties and then guaranteed by the four neighboring countries. But it is realistic that the peace regime negotiations should include the two Koreas and the U.S. and China, in that the four countries have already

²⁹ *JoongAng Daily Newspaper*, October 6, 2007.

experienced similar talks aimed at establishing a peace regime.³⁰ The current structure of the six-party talks is supposed to begin the peace regime negotiations in parallel with the nuclear negotiations. Although the North demands U.S.-DPRK diplomatic normalization and a peace agreement, the peace negotiations cannot move forward until there is an end to the North Korean nuclear program and complete removal of its nuclear weapons.

In the meantime, taking into consideration Japan's and Russia's deep concern with the peace agreement, the positions of the two countries should be given some weight although the peace process itself would be carried out by the main four countries. Japan considers North Korea's missile development as a direct threat to its security and thus is likely to demand some resolutions toward the North's middle and long range ballistic missiles as conditions for the peace agreement. Japan-DPRK relations should be normalized so as to stabilize and develop the peace regime. When diplomatic normalization is achieved, Japan is likely to expand its economic cooperation with North Korea, which will greatly impact the build-up of an economic community between the two Koreas. Russia's position, too, should be properly reflected in the course of establishing the peace regime on the peninsula. The reconstruction of railroads and electricity in North Korea will be difficult to achieve without assistance from Russia, and the two Koreas and Russia are likely to run a joint railroad business crossing Eurasia and join the massive business projects related to oil and gas in Siberia once the peace regime is established. As the cooperation from both Japan

³⁰ There have been six times of the Four-Party Talks from 1997 through 1999. Both sides agreed to establish two sub-committees regarding 'an establishment of the peace regime' and 'reduction of tension' at the third main conference, October, 1998. However, the four-party talks over three years were aborted without making any agreement on the peace regime due to the differences of opinions between the two Koreas. *Inter-Korean Dialogue*, Vol. 66 (Seoul: ROK Ministry of Unification, 1999), pp. 105~116.

and Russia becomes necessary in order to maintain and manage the peace regime successfully, the peace agreement initially endorsed by the four party talks should be guaranteed again by the six-party talks which include Japan and Russia. If the peace regime agreement is made without neighboring countries' interests properly reflected, it will be difficult to gain their support for the agreement.

E. Development of the Multilateral Security Cooperation

The reality of an arms race growing in Northeast Asia does not offer a positive environment for the improvement of peace negotiations on the peninsula. The political situation of implicit confrontation among the four nations has a negative impact on the establishment of the peace regime. In particular, the process of establishing a peace regime will be more or less complex if it is delayed until 2010 and overlaps with the OPCON transfer.

Once the peace agreement is made, the UN Command is likely to disappear as it loses its *raison d'être* and the matter of the USFK's status will emerge anew. The scale, role and transformation of the USFK should be resolved between the administrations of South Korea and the United States in terms of alliance management. Yet Japan, China and Russia will also be very interested in the status of USFK. China, in particular, is going to build an aircraft carrier around 2010 to advance its maritime defenses and the United States and Japan will complete their military identification of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces by 2014. Under the situation where the arms race in Northeast Asia is strengthened, China and Russia will expect the USFK status to be included in the agenda of the peace regime agreement. Although there are some expectations to see North Korea's regime change, U.S.-DPRK and Japan-DPRK diplomatic normalization, a mature alliance among the four nations in the region, and the USFK's status will be hot issues during the

peace agreement negotiations if the current confrontational structure continues among the four nations. Thus, it is necessary to simultaneously endeavor to achieve peace in Northeast Asia in the course of establishing the peace regime on the peninsula. Namely, the six-party talks should be expanded to a multilateral security consultative body in Northeast Asia and should be made to institutionalize the relationship of the four countries through regular dialogue.

The ASEAN Regional Forum, a governmental multilateral security cooperative organization in the Asia-Pacific region, makes significant advancements in confidence-building among the member states.³¹ But the Northeast Asia Cooperation dialogue (NEACD), a non-governmental forum, seeks to have regular dialogue among regional member states. The multilateral security-related organizations do not have sufficient capabilities to constrain the military build-up of power states and create a new security order. But these produce some achievements in promoting the transparency of military and security policies and keeping and managing the order. It is difficult to expect a lot in resolving the regional arms race, although a new multilateral security consultative body in the wake of an expansion and development of the six-party talks is made. However, it will contribute to promoting the transparency of security politics and narrowing the policy differences among the member states. Particularly, this is highly expected in the role of peace management that is restricted to the Korean peninsula. While recognizing the limits and possibilities of multilateral security cooperation, there needs to be continuous efforts to expand and develop the six-party talks

³¹ Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) was launched on July, 1993 by the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC) of the University of California, San Diego, that invited the government officials and civilian experts from South and North Korea, U.S., Japan, China and Russia to hold a preparation seminar on the body.

into a multilateral security consultative body in conjunction with existing security systems.

V. Conclusion

The side effects in the wake of the U.S.-Japan alliance have sharply emerged as the conflicts over past history and territories among Korea, China and Japan. But the actual behavior of diplomacy among the four nations is a cycle of cooperation and contest according to each issue related to international matters. It is thus difficult to interpret the four-nation conflicts as the inevitable by-products caused by confrontational formation in that they seek pragmatism diplomacy. This is because the competing axis among the four nations is not the rigid confrontational one toward ideology and regime competition. The conflicts and cooperation among the four has the characteristic of a strategic optional behavior which was purposely made in order to maximize national interests. This means, in turn, that the relationships will likely be reestablished in accordance with calculated national interests.

South Korea should see the four-nation relationship objectively and make a hard and realistic judgment to maintain peace and stability on the peninsula where the maritime and continental

powers cross over. First of all, South Korea needs to realize that U.S.-based leadership will be continued for a longer time in this region. The dynamic reality in the region shows that it is more realistic for South Korea's foreign and security policies to be based on the Korea-U.S. alliance while expanding the relationship with Japan, China and Russia gradually. The strengthening of the traditional ROK-U.S. alliance should be an important base in order to advance an inter-Korean relationship that is still marked by much uncertainty. Moreover, it is helpful in solidifying the South's diplomatic position against Japan and China over the controversial past history and territories.

The alliance cannot be kept by a certain side's advantage only. Unless the two sides share a common threat recognition and advantage, the alliance will not be maintained for long. Therefore, South Korea and the United States need to endeavor to resolve the differences of recognition toward North Korea and of policy priorities toward North Korea. Besides, they need to make diplomatic efforts to reactivate the Seoul-Washington-Tokyo cooperation system against the North, which began to rupture with the start of the strengthened U.S.-Japan alliance. In the meantime, the diplomatic rift with Japan will be a negative element in maintaining and strengthening the confidence in Korea-U.S. trust for the long term. There needs to be the reestablishment of the Korea-Japan relationship in a futuristic way from the strategic perspective with regard to the future of the advancement of the six-party talks, the maintenance of peace in Northeast Asia and the Korea-U.S. alliance as well as in a simply bilateral relationship.

The four states in Northeast Asia seek pragmatism-based diplomacy for national interests despite their clear differences in security policies. South Korea, too, should promote pragmatic diplomacy expansively aside from security policy. The South should expand the cooperative relationship with China and Russia for the purpose

of stable progress in inter-Korean relations, not to mention the economic advantages. For the establishment of a peace regime on the peninsula, it is an essentially diplomatic task to secure a constructive role with China and Russia. It is more realistic to proceed with the peace regime negotiations as a four-party forum that includes the two Koreas, the United States and China. But the positions of Japan and Russia should definitely be considered in the process of the peace negotiations.

The relationship among the regional four nations directly and indirectly influences the stability of the peninsula and changes on the peninsula affect regional order as well. Thus, it is of utmost importance to set up a dialogue forum to discuss a wide range of issues to be possibly raised in the process of the peace establishment. In other words, it is necessary to institutionalize the multilateral security consultative body. To this end, it is advisable to expand and develop the North Korean nuclear issue-focused six-party talks into a new multilateral security consultative body to discuss the relationship among the four states. It is expected that the multilateral security consultative body will promote the transparency of each nation's security policy and greatly contribute to maintaining and managing the peace regime on the peninsula.

