THE CHANGING SITUATION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA AND ITS IMPACT ON SECURITY FUTURE

Recommended Citation

Great and positive changes have taken place on the Korean Peninsula in the year 2000. The reconciliation, to a great extent, resulted from North Korea's positive response to an external environment favorable to it. The current situation on the Korean Peninsula is the result of two Koreas having restrained their nuclear ambitions and reducing the possibility of North-South conflict to a minimum. A new opportunity for multilateral cooperation is emerging and the Korea policies of China, Russia, the US, and Japan are being challenged simultaneously. Since the beginning of this year, the US and South Korea have changed their policies on North Korea to improve the relations with the peninsula. The current situation is the best that has been observed on the Korean Peninsula, and it is the result of the fact that North Korea has changed its closed-door policy and expressed its will to resolve this issue through negotiation. Therefore, the position of the US, as a superpower with military presence in the region, is decisive in the future of inter-Koreans and regional stability.

INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the new century, great changes have taken place on the Korean Peninsula. The relaxation of the tensions became the main trend in the 1990s when the Korean Peninsula transformed from the Cold War to the post-Cold War era. After the 1991 Geneva Declaration, the Cold War remained on the Korean Peninsula in the 1990s, but the confrontation of US and North Korea was downgrad to co-existence. In the year 2000, however, some tremendous changes occurred on the Korean Peninsula (actually changes in North Korea's external policy), which went beyond the expectations of many Korea watchers. In June, President Kim Jong Il of North Korea visit Beijing, and in January 1999, both Koreas declared their intention to establish a peace mechanism on the Korean Peninsula. Why did the basic trends of confrontation and relaxation exist side by side in 1990s changed so rapidly in 2000? What impacts do the changes have? How will it influence the security future of the Korean Peninsula?

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In the 1990s, the structure of bipolar politics on the Korean Peninsula which lasted for forty years changed with the end of the Cold War, and the ideologically delimitation of states became less clear. As a result, the nuclear issue and military threat have become a focal point in the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. The problem of monitoring nuclear sites led to an increase in tension between North Korea and the US. The US had to adopt various diplomatic and other strategies (including a strategy of brinkmanship) to contend with the US. This was the source of the security crises on the Korean Peninsula in 1990s.

THE IMPLICATION OF RECONCILIATION ON THE PENINSULA

Great and positive changes have taken place on the Korean Peninsula in the year 2000 beyond the expectation of most observers. The changes, to a great extent, are changes of North Korea's foreign policy. 1. The US. The US has played a dominate role on the Korean issue for a long time, and North Korea has tried to place its relations with the US above its relations with South Korea. However, the process of the relations to develop to its advantage and at lease prevent them from developing to its disadvantage. The US rejection of Pyongyang's offer to negotiate an end to its exports and the development of new missiles. After it shifted its diplomatic focus on the US in the early 1990s, North Korea tried to place its relations with the US at the very top of its foreign policy. This was the source of the security crises on the Korean Peninsula in 1990s.

PROSPECTS FOR SECURITY ON THE PENINSULA

The reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula symbolized by the Summit Meeting has influenced not only inter-Korean relations, but also geopolitics and the security situation in the region. In June, both North and South Korea agreed to resolve the question of reunification independently and through the joint effort of the Korean people, who are masters of the country," making it crystal-clear that the two Koreas would aim to be one state with unity. The reconciliation on the Korean peninsula symbolized by the Summit Meeting has influenced not only inter-Korean relations, but also geopolitics and the security situation in the region. The reconciliation on the Korean peninsula symbolized by the Summit Meeting has influenced not only inter-Korean relations, but also geopolitics and the security situation in the region.