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Northeast Asian Regionalism in Korea

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Introduction

Northeast Asia is characterized by different political and economic systems, disparate levels of economic development, and historical remnants. In particular, Northeast Asia has featured a distinct paradox: Economic integration grew but political cooperation remained sluggish for over three decades. Indeed, the region's political cooperation has traditionally lacked formal, multilateral, and regionally exclusive institutions, producing a pronounced "organization gap" compared with Europe, the Americas, Africa, and even the Gulf.¹ Professor Peter Katzenstein of Cornell University argues that two institutional features of Asian countries have contributed to the lack of formal regional institutions: (1) hierarchical state-society relationships and (2) distinctive state structures that are unfamiliar with the Western concept of community.²

It is not the purpose of this research to discover the political, cultural, and/or economic features that have contributed to the lack of formal regional institutions in Northeast Asia. Instead, this research is designed to explain how the Republic of Korea (ROK) sees Northeast Asian regionalism and determine whether the building of a regional institution is a top policy priority for the Lee Myung-bak government. To say the conclusion first, the Lee government basically puts bilateralism before multilateralism, but it is exploring ways to construct a peace and security mechanism in Northeast Asia from an eclectic perspective that takes both "realism" and "historical institutionalism" as its epistemological basic. This comprehensive approach is based on the assumption that intraregional multilateralism could be important in dealing with potential financial difficulties relating to the impact of the U.S. financial crisis and/or possible North Korean contingencies that would lead to the reunification of Korea.

The ROK should be armed with a sense of realism in tackling multilateral institutionalization because the precondition for formal institutions is great-power balance.³ Such balance has never been enduringly present in Northeast Asia, due to the complicated geopolitical relationships among Russia, China, Japan, and the United States. In order to maintain great-power stability, there needs to be a "balancer"—a role that the United States is likely to play because of its geopolitical power and geographical distance from Northeast Asia. The existence of a credible balancer provides a foundation for the emergence and endurance of regional organizations. This means that the ROK should consider the "U.S. factor" when searching for a Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism.⁴

Historical institutionalism, on the other hand, focuses on the determining role of preexisting organizational structures. Historical institutionalists focus on self-reinforcing dynamics in building regional institutions while stressing the determining effect of institutionalized norms and ideas.⁵ Their central message is that new institutions are a function of prior institutional settings.⁶ According to their philosophy, institutions like the Six Party Talks (SPT) may become the foundation of a Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism. This idea was reinforced in September 2005, when the SPT released a [joint statement](#) referencing new "ways and means for promoting security cooperation in Northeast Asia," and again in February 2007, when it created the Working Group on a Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism (NEAPSM).

Under an eclectic perspective combining both realism and historical institutionalism, this research will try to answer three questions: (1) How has South Korea's strategic thought toward Northeast Asian regionalism evolved since the end the Cold War? (2) How does South Korea anticipate transforming the SPT into a multilateral peace and security mechanism? and (3) What does South Korea think of the relationship between bilateralism, trilateralism, and multilateral institutionalization? An effort to answer these questions may aid the search for a peace and security mechanism in Northeast Asia.

Northeast Asian Regionalism and Korea's Evolving Strategic Thought

Change in Strategic Picture since the End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War changed the overall strategic picture in Northeast Asia, bringing an end to the bloc-to-bloc ideological confrontation of the past. Nevertheless, the Korean Peninsula was often described as “the last bastion of the Cold War” due to the persisting confrontation between the two Koreas. Moreover, considerable uncertainties lay ahead as the states in the region were constantly redefining their existing relations and seeking new strategies. Under these circumstances, South Korea has come to face a more complex and sensitive strategic agenda than it did in the Cold War era.

Different states have different strategic preferences that are rooted in the early or formative experiences of the state, and are influenced to some degree by the philosophical, political, cultural, and cognitive characteristics of the state and its elites.⁷ It is hard to deny that South Korea's strategic thought has been influenced by the bitter memories of territorial division that has lasted for more than half a century, particularly by the Korean War in 1950–53. South Korea is aware that the post–Cold War international system has produced new issues and dimensions it must tackle. But the continued division of the Korean Peninsula sometimes constrains South Korea's top decision-makers' ability to respond to the changes in the “objective” strategic environment. Hence, South Korea's security policies sometimes show a lack of rationality, being far away from realpolitik. Despite fluctuating circumstances, the ROK governments since the end of the Cold War have put their alliance with the United States before multilateral cooperation or regionalism in Northeast Asia.⁸

Regional Cooperation and Korea's Strategic Thought in the Post-Cold War Era

The Kim Young-sam government (1993–98) was not an exception in the sense that the ROK-U.S. alliance was located at the top of its strategic priorities. While maintaining its alliance relationship with the United States in a robust manner, the Kim Young-sam government raised awareness for broader regional security cooperation. Broader regional cooperation implied “Asia-Pacific regionalism” that included not just the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plus Three, but also Pacific countries like the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. President Kim recognized such cooperation as an important channel for advancing regional peace and stability and alleviating tensions on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, he actively participated in global and regional organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the ASEAN Regional Forum. Government officials, in their private capacity, participated in the Northeast Asian Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) at the track-two level, while seeking ways to have North Korea join them.

The Kim Dae-jung government (1998–03) had a similar logic, although it emphasized the vision of an East Asian community rather than trying to realize a Northeast Asian security dialogue. That was because President Kim Dae-jung wanted to be the “king,” or the leader of an East Asian community, rather than strengthen the alliance with the United States. He defined the geographical boundary of East Asia as being based upon ASEAN Plus Three (APT), excluding the United States as well as other Pacific countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

The Roh Moo-hyun government's (2003–08) vision of regional cooperation dwindled from East Asia to Northeast Asia. President Roh declared the “Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative for Peace and Prosperity” upon his inauguration, and he emphasized “Korea as a hub of Northeast Asia.” The Roh government highlighted a strategic message that Korea should be a “bridge” linking continental and maritime powers, a hub of ideas and interregional networks, and a cooperater catalyzing a regional community of peace and prosperity.

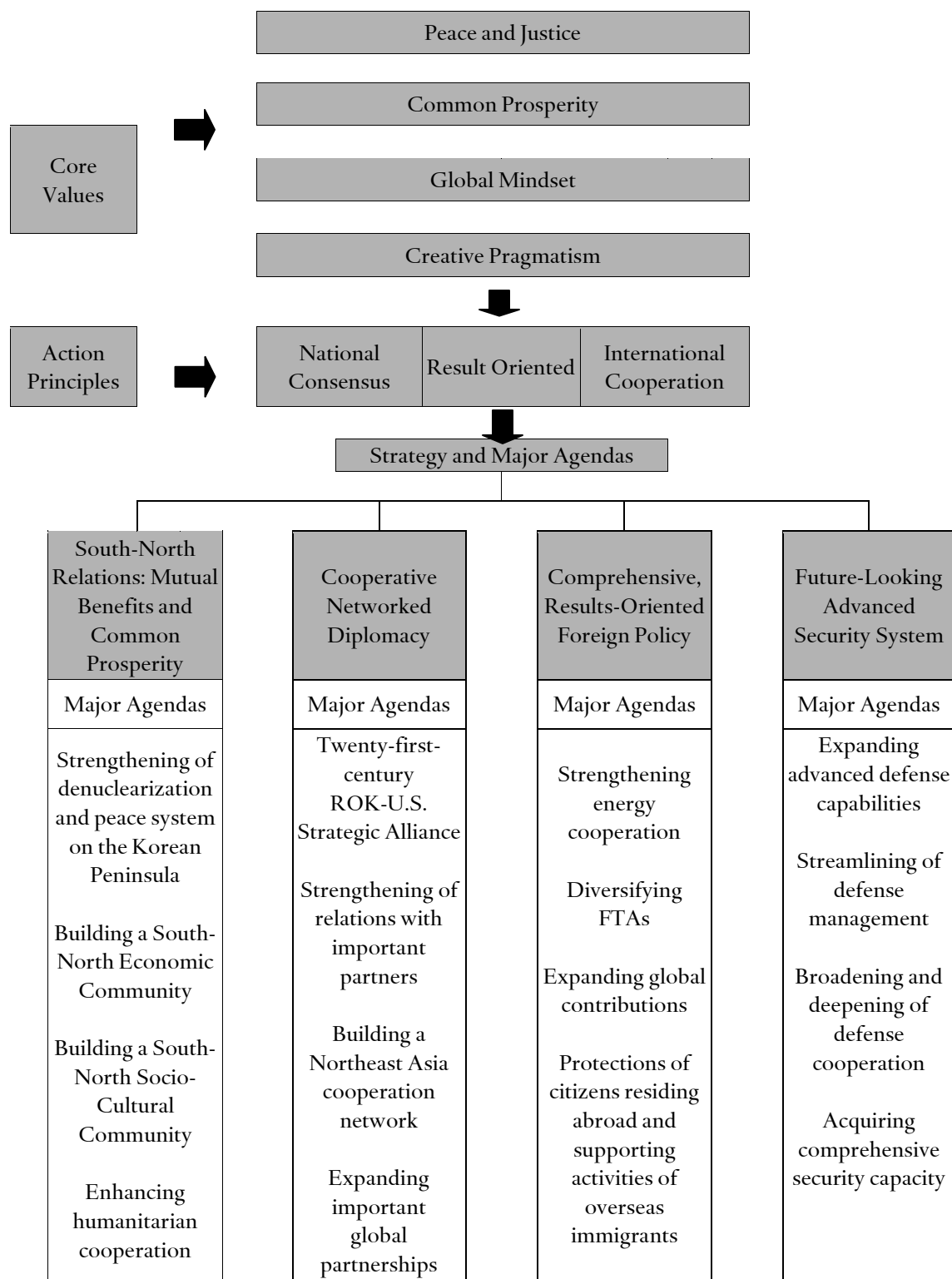
Since it took power in 2008, the Lee Myung-bak government appears to believe that the United States has been “detached” from East Asia since it was preoccupied with the Middle East during the George W. Bush administration. At the same time, the United States lost its deep-rooted trust in its traditional allies who had been rather reluctant to send troops to Iraq. The Lee Myung-bak government, as a traditional ally of the United States, would like to help the United States to restore its trust in a traditional alliance and it has been trying to expand and revitalize the pan-Pacific regional cooperation under the leadership of the United States.⁹ It seems that the Lee Myung-bak government believes in the synergistic effect between Asia-Pacific regionalism and U.S.-led bilateral alliances.

Alliance and Northeast Asian Regionalism of the Lee Myung-bak Government

Coincident with the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the ROK, the Lee Myung-bak administration was inaugurated in February 2008 and announced its vision of building a “Global Korea.” A Global Korea signifies a country that cooperates actively in the world stage and proffers solutions to common issues facing the global village. Global Korea also refers to a Korea that contributes vitally to world peace and development based on wider perspectives and more engaging exchanges with the international community. Based on core values like peace, justice, common prosperity, global mindset, and creative pragmatism, the Lee government has set out four strategic agendas: (1) inter-Korean relations centered on mutual benefits and common prosperity; (2) cooperative networked diplomacy; (3) comprehensive and results-oriented foreign policy; and (4) future-looking and advanced security.

As seen in Figure 1 on the following page, Korea’s cooperative networked diplomacy reflects the diplomatic priorities of the Lee government. As Korea further develops its alliance with the United States, it will also try to ensure that this alliance strengthens Korea’s good-neighbor policy with important regional partners. On that basis, Korea is well poised to contribute to the construction of a Northeast Asia cooperative network, or the institutionalization of multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia. In addition, Korea will strengthen cooperative partnerships with Southeast Asia, Central Asia, India, Australia, and New Zealand as a way of opening a new “Asian Era.” A Global Korea will contribute and participate on issues of mutual concern confronting East Asia and the global village. As the ROK’s cooperative network expands in tandem with a greater emphasis on engagement and persuasion, its soft-power capabilities will also increase.

Figure 1: Birds-Eye-View of a Global Korea



Source: The Blue House, *Global Korea: The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Korea*, March 2009.

Moving Toward a Strategic ROK-U.S. Alliance

The United States and the ROK envision transforming their current alliance into a comprehensive strategic alliance. This is one way to realize a Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism. As long as North Korea continues to pose a tangible threat, South Korea should push ahead with the “Koreanization” of its defense. But once this threat is gone, South Korea should seek to transform the alliance into a cooperative security arrangement designed to stabilize Northeast Asia. Rather than solely focusing on military threats, this alliance would enable the two countries to share the values of democracy and a market economy, while striving to maintain peace and stability in the region. Moreover, this security alliance would allow South Korea and the United States to pursue horizontal rather than vertical relations, thereby contributing to the increased flexibility and autonomy of South Korea’s national security initiatives. In the more robust alliance, South Korea would regain operational control over South Korean forces from the United States in times of military contingency, and it would assume a higher profile as the host for U.S. forces essential to both U.S. and regional stability.¹⁰ In this manner, the two allies would be able to create a cooperative security alliance that would facilitate enhanced interoperability compared to the existing security arrangement.¹¹

Such a comprehensive ROK-U.S. security arrangement would also help create a “human security alliance” designed to address twenty-first-century security matters, such as terrorism, drug trafficking, environmental destruction, illegal migration, and piracy. A human security alliance would acknowledge that democratic development, human rights, the rule of law, good governance, sustainable development, and social equity are as crucial to lasting global peace and stability as arms control and disarmament. South Korea and the United States should therefore advocate a “soft-power diplomacy” that builds empowering networks among like-minded countries with respect to Asia-Pacific human security issues, such as natural disasters, infectious diseases, and human rights violations. In the face of these transnational threats, control over information is a crucial facet of power, because the diffusion of new ideas can generate new patterns of international behavior. Even if it is not an explicit part of the alliance charter, an agenda based on common values and human security will help promote a relationship that stands for something, not against something.¹²

Should the threat from North Korea disappear, the existing ROK-U.S. military alliance must expand to avert rivalry between China and Japan, ensure energy security in the region, and prevent interference from either China or Japan in the unifying peninsula.¹³ The United States has historically been perceived as a benefactor of South Korean security, but regional instability would threaten both ROK and U.S. interests. The United States will likely favor a new form of security alliance, which would retain bilateral ties with South Korea but refocus from deterring North Korea to creating a broader security network for stability throughout the region. This would effectively harmonize Washington’s global strategy with Seoul’s national strategy.

Building a Northeast Asian Cooperative System

With respect to Korea’s relations with its main neighbors, the Lee Myung-bak government seeks to enhance synergies arising from the complementary pursuit of bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral engagements.¹⁴ It is important to move beyond the concept of bloc politics. The Lee government must shift its efforts to jointly address common threats and enlarge common interests through a comprehensive security cooperation mechanism. As South Korea, the United States, and Japan continue to participate in a partnership based on core values, they must cooperate not only in the foreign policy arena, but also in the economic, trade, social, and cultural fields. In addition, they must strengthen intelligence-sharing and strategic coordination to resolve the North Korean nuclear problem and maintain stability on the Korean Peninsula.

At the same time, accentuating trilateral cooperation between Korea, China, and Japan will serve to expand East Asia's role and standing internationally—and all the more critical, to upgrade joint efforts in addressing important challenges confronting Northeast Asia. The institutionalization of the Korea, China, and Japan trilateral summit, which began with its inaugural meeting in December 2008, has already paved the way toward the potential prevention of regional tensions and reinforcement of confidence-based relationships. Expanding people-to-people exchanges, bolstering cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, and finance, and participating together in environmentally friendly growth cannot but result in upgrading the Korea-China-Japan trilateral relationship that has been stymied by historical legacies.

Peace in Northeast Asia is inexorably linked with securing a more permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. Ongoing efforts to dismantle North Korea's nuclear weapons and foster reforms in North Korea through the Six Party Talks are therefore important for the security of the entire region.¹⁵ If North Korea decides to denuclearize, the Six Party Talks can transform into a Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism. The resolution of the North Korean nuclear problem will be accompanied by the establishment of the permanent peace system on the Korean Peninsula. When the truce system becomes a peace system, the United States and China should endorse an inter-Korean peace treaty based on four-party talks, and secure acknowledgement of this accord for a Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism.¹⁶

Making Trilateralism Workable

Trilateral cooperative mechanisms might become effective and governments should explore their trilateral options. Trilateral arrangements can facilitate cooperation if each one deals with a different agenda and includes parties to whom the agenda is particularly relevant. The agenda should be fairly limited to avoid greater conflict. After a certain stage in the trilateral relationship, there should be a mechanism for expansion so that other countries' fears of being excluded will be lessened. In most cases, trilateral arrangements should not be considered an interim solution to regionalism—they need to be part of any mechanism by which stability, peace, and prosperity can be ensured in Northeast Asia.

However, there is no auspicious historical precedent for cooperation among the three countries. Equitable relations among them will be extremely difficult to achieve, as each party tends to envision a nightmarish scenario of the two other nations ganging up on it. A traditional concern in Japan is that the United States may revive its strong affinity for China and form a new China-U.S. relationship, bypassing Japan. Some people in the United States worry that the two Asian powers may forge an anti-U.S. condominium that might become the cornerstone of an East Asian bloc. Similarly, the Chinese are anxious about possible U.S.-Japan collaboration to “contain” China. Nevertheless, shifting bilateral cooperation among the three, depending on issues, could dilute mutual suspicions and contribute to trilateral and even multilateral cooperation in the region.

Against this backdrop, the United States is expected to play a balancer role between Japan and China to avoid the situation in which their mutual mistrust develops into a cruder rivalry. But the United States should also avoid its own temptation to exploit and even create Sino-Japanese tension. In order to check an East Asian arms race, the United States must maintain its security umbrella for Japan.¹⁷ And both the United States and Japan should continue to involve China in the economic, security, and political arrangements that the United States and its allies have sponsored.

Where, then, is the ROK-U.S. alliance located in the U.S.-Japan-China relationship? Neither the Kim Young-sam nor the Kim Dae-jung government of South Korea included a trilateral U.S.-Japan-China relationship in its strategic thinking. The Lee Myung-bak government expects a positive contribution from trilateral cooperation as long as South Korean is consulted on the Korean issue.¹⁸ China now appears to believe that the ROK-U.S. alliance is a stabilizing force that can keep a reunified Korea restrained and

Japan reassured.¹⁹ This implies the possible coexistence of bilateral alliances and a multilateral security cooperative mechanism.

Agendas and Architectures of Northeast Asian Security Cooperation

Exploring Bilateral-Multilateral Synergy

If the process of inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation is accelerated, it would contribute to a favorable environment for multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia. The Kim Young-sam government introduced the “Republic of Korea’s Paper on Northeast Asia Security Cooperation” at the ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials Meeting (ARF-SOM) in May 1994. According to the report, multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia, as a form of preventive diplomacy, should be pursued on the basis of the following principles: (1) respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; (2) nonaggression and no threat or use of force; (3) nonintervention in internal affairs; (4) peaceful settlement of disputes; (5) peaceful coexistence; and (6) democracy and respect for human dignity. Up until now, this idea has not materialized, but if North Korea makes progress in its negotiations with South Korea, the United States, and Japan, it might be more open to the ideas expressed in the report.

Despite strategic uncertainty and prevailing bilateralism, Northeast Asia needs to search for a multilateral setting like the Northeast Asia Security Dialogue (NEASED) that was proposed by the Korean government in 1994. The United States, Japan, and South Korea should try to realize such a forum and participate in multilateral activities at the track-two level. When a multilateral security dialogue is launched in Northeast Asia, Korean issues will be discussed. But they will not be the sole or central issue of discussion. The multilateral dialogue in Northeast Asia will deal with a broad range of issues related to regional security, including traditional political and military issues as well as nontraditional transborder security threats.

A multilateral security dialogue in Northeast Asia should be based on the following considerations: First, it should be seen as a supplement, rather than as a substitute to the system of bilateralism in the region, for a considerable period of time. Second, it should be pursued in a manner consistent with improved inter-Korean relations because stable inter-Korean relations are a prerequisite for real peace in the region. Third, it needs to maintain a cooperative relationship with the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which will continue to discuss some items involving the Northeast Asian sub-region. Finally, a gradual approach should be taken to build a common security framework in Northeast Asia, which will build the blocks of a Northeast Asian identity.

Keeping the United States Engaged in the Region

Historically, the United States has never prioritized multilateralism in East Asia as much as it has multilateralism in Europe. Shared factors, such as similar democratic cultures, have never existed in East Asia. Nor did the United States have a strategic, long-term interest in each East Asian country as it did in western Europe.²⁰ While there is much talk of the interests the United States has in Asia, the United States is still far from embracing an identity as a member of the Asia-Pacific community similar to its membership in the North Atlantic community, which would be needed to sustain a multilateral commitment in the region.²¹

The United States did not oppose the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) because Europe did not oppose the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) despite the end of the Cold War, and even expanded it on the basis of a “new strategic concept.”²² This means that U.S. confidence in its European alliance network contributed to the initiation and reinforcement of security cooperation in Europe. Security cooperation in Northeast Asia thus requires U.S. confidence in its alliance network in the region. Otherwise, the United States is likely to block Northeast Asian cooperation as it did the East Asia Economic Caucus in the early 1990s.

But alliances have been weakened by Washington's preference for "coalitions of the willing" over joint security organizations.²³ The United States has more diverse interests in Asia than peace and security in Northeast Asia and, for the moment, seems less alliance-friendly than it was prior to September 11, 2001 (though the Obama administration may be slowly changing that). During the Cold War, U.S. leadership was accepted in the context of institutionalized coalitions, consultations, and joint decision-making. But since September 11, the United States has been more focused on a unilateral role in combating transnational threats. Therefore, the ROK needs to try to lessen U.S. skepticism toward traditional alliances so that restored U.S. confidence in traditional alliances may contribute to facilitating multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia.

Advocates of multilateral security cooperation are divided as to how multilateralism would relate to U.S.-ROK relations. Many advocate for multilateral security cooperation because they believe that a bilateral military alliance is an anachronism and a vestige of the post-Cold War era. They call for the establishment of the Northeast Asian Multilateral Security Dialogue to include South and North Korea, Japan, China, Russia, and the United States. It is in what would essentially be a scaled-down version of the OSCE. There are two different views. Some say that the ROK-U.S. alliance should be replaced by multilateral security cooperation while others want a complimentary role for such multilateral cooperation within the framework of an alliance with the United States.

While it may sound paradoxical, a strong alliance with the United States is a prerequisite for realizing multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia. Multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia can be realized when the United States has confidence in its alliances with South Korea and Japan. Since multilateral security cooperation can be instituted only when the ROK-U.S. alliance is well maintained, South Korea's security policy should be so directed. When a strategic alliance covers the human security issues that are being dealt with mainly by the multilateral forum, it is more likely to be compatible with multilateral security cooperation mechanisms. This is what the Lee Myung-bak government appears to be aiming for.

Promoting U.S.-led Virtual Alliances

Will bilateral alliances of the United States facilitate the deepening and widening of multilateral cooperation mechanisms such as NEASED and ARF? The current relationship between U.S. alliances and multilateral cooperation mechanisms is rather unbalanced because regional organizations lack institutionalization. That does not mean, however, that bilateral alliances are reinforcing regional institutions. What if bilateral networks of the United States are "multilateralized" through closer ties among U.S. allies? Would they induce other countries to participate more actively in ARF and to have more positive views toward the launching of a multilateral security cooperative mechanism in Northeast Asia?

The U.S.-Japan-ROK relationship is the so-called virtual alliance.²⁴ The ROK and Japan do not have a military alliance with each other, but each has an alliance with the United States, making the ROK and Japan "virtual allies." The United States might also foster greater security ties between Japan and the Philippines, and South Korea and Australia. The multilateralization of U.S. alliances can be seen as a process of expanding a "virtual alliance" network among U.S. allies. Many neoconservatives in and out of the Bush administration were interested in building a democratic alliance network among the democratic countries in the Asia-Pacific region.²⁵

However, this kind of process is unlikely to induce other countries to express more positive views regarding regional multilateral institutions unless the United States contributes to the regional institutionalization. The process of expanding the virtual alliance network would be seen by China, in particular, as an attempt to create an Asian NATO.²⁶ That is why the United States should also try to create an inclusive regional security community based on the concept of "cooperative security." The United States needs to show leadership in regional cooperation by joining the East Asian Summit (EAS). Gatherings

such as ARF, APT, and EAS are not designed to supplant or unify American alliances but rather to be a confidence-building measure for the region. In short, they are to complement U.S. alliance leadership, not replace it. They open the prospect for an institutional evolution in the region over a longer period.²⁷

Conclusion

As South Korea seeks to strengthen its cooperative networks with Southeast Asia, Central Asia, India, Australia, and New Zealand, it will be cognizant of the need for more customized approaches toward these and other countries. Bilateral relations will be strengthened based on critical interests. But South Korea also needs to enhance cooperative networks that can contribute toward Asia's overall development. Korea's Lee Myung-bak government is well poised to promote a Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism, but, for now, Northeast Asian regionalism is not an end in and of itself. The ROK-U.S. alliance will remain the central axis of South Korea's foreign and security policy for the foreseeable future, while Northeast Asian regionalism will be seen as a means to eventual peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Important multilateral settings such as APEC, ASEAN Plus Three, the ARF, and the EAS continue to enlarge and deepen regional trade and security cooperation, and are venues in which the ROK participates. It is also important for the ROK to take the lead on processes that respond to global issues such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and sustainable development. In Northeast Asia, bilateral security arrangements will remain the backbone of Northeast Asian security for a considerable period of time. But despite strategic uncertainty and prevailing bilateralism, Northeast Asia needs to search for a multilateral arrangement like a Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism. Strategic thinking based on realism will be necessary to foster multilateral security cooperation.²⁸

A Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism should take the following points into consideration. First, it should supplement, rather than substitute, the system of bilateralism in the region for a considerable period of time. Bilateralism, multilateralism, and trilateralism are not mutually exclusive. If a small-scale, three-way multilateralism—or “minilateralism”—can be activated even before multilateral cooperation among SPT members, it can catalyze security cooperation in the region. Relations between the United States and China and between Japan and China can be stabilized by opening (official or unofficial) channels for three-way talks between South Korea, Japan, and the United States (or between South Korea, Japan, and China).

Second, U.S. attention toward Asia should be “restored,” either by expanding the security role of APEC or by participating in the EAS. During the Bush administration, the United States was preoccupied by the Middle East, but Asia-Pacific regionalism would not be possible without active U.S. commitment. Of twenty-seven EU member states, twenty-one are NATO members, which means the United States can actively pursue Asia-Pacific regionalism while going beyond its traditional “hub-and-spoke” approach to expand its alliance network in Asia.

Third, China should signal a willingness to champion East Asian regionalism, while Japan should be reminded of former Prime Minister Obuchi's “human security diplomacy.” The Hatoyama government appears interested in the Obuchi period as it solidifies its concept of “East Asian Community.” In this context, China could propose that the United States join the EAS. In the meantime, Japan and South Korea should be role models for human security cooperation.²⁹

Fourth, Northeast Asia should reinforce the forging of a credible subregional confidence- and security-building mechanism (CSBM). Examples include greater transparency in force modernization and enhanced coordination regarding nontraditional security threats.

Finally, a Northeast Asian peace and security mechanism should be pursued in a way that is consistent with and conducive to progress on the North Korean nuclear problem. A charter of the NEAPSM emphasizing multilateral security cooperation and nonaggression could be used by North Korea to legitimize its nuclear power status. As long as inter-Korean relations remain unstable, real peace and

stability in the region will be remote. Tangible progress in inter-Korean relations should be the precondition of a security guarantee in Northeast Asia. For South and North Korea, participation in a multilateral security mechanism could contribute to a solid peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

There remain significant differences between the security environments in Europe and Asia. But while it might be premature to replicate the OSCE process in Northeast Asia, the OSCE experience provides a useful lesson for addressing a combination of traditional and new security threats. In particular, the OSCE's experience with the CSBM regime could serve as an important reference for building upon multilateral dialogue and mutual trust. Northeast Asia needs to make extra efforts to enhance international cooperation on addressing new security threats, including terrorism, human trafficking, and natural disasters. In that regard, the OSCE could serve as a valuable reference for the region.³⁰

Continued negotiations with a sense of urgency are needed to bring about a complete resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue through peaceful and diplomatic means. Once the issue of North Korea's nuclear weapons program is peacefully resolved, some people will expect the SPT to evolve into a multilateral forum to address a range of security challenges. Whether or not that comes true, the United States must still play a crucial role in both bilateral security arrangements and multilateral security dialogues to maintain peace in Northeast Asia.

The OSCE and the ARF should also enhance their cooperation. To achieve that goal, the OSCE and the ARF could hold a conference and, in that context, make some track-two efforts to address common issues and common interests. Additionally, the idea of pursuing subregional dialogue on the occasion of a region-wide meeting such as the ARF can be suggested. But, all of these ideas and efforts should be implemented with the sense of realism.

Endnotes

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10. Robert Dujarric, *Korean Unification and After: The Challenge for US Strategy* (Indianapolis: Hudson Institute, 2000), p.56.
11. Kim Sung-han, "Envisioning the ROK-U.S. Alliance: A Korean Perspective," Presented at SAIS-IRI Conference on *U.S.-Korea Alliance and the Future of Northeast Asia*, Washington, DC, December 67, 2004.
12. In this light, the recent "U.S. beef scandal" in South Korea can be taken as an alliance issue, since this stands for "food safety," which is a human security issue. If those two allies could not resolve this human security issue, they would not be able to move forward to become a strategic alliance that is supposed to deal with human security issues in the region and in the world.
13. See Kim Sung-han, "US Military Presence in a Unified Korea," *IFANS Review*, Vol.7, No.1 July 1999. The U.S.-Japan alliance will also be adjusted given technological changes and regional developments. See Richard L. Armitage, Kurt M. Campbell, Robert A. Manning, and Joseph S. Nye, "The US and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership," *National Defense University*, October 11, 2000.
14. The Blue House, *Global Korea: The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Korea* (March 2009).
15. The "Vision 3,000: Denuclearization and Openness" enunciated by the Lee Myung-bak government is a strategic plan that provides critical incentives to the North should it opt to abandon its nuclear capabilities and programs. Through the process of denuclearization as set forth in the Six Party Talks, the North would not only be able to receive sustained economic assistance from the South, it would also enable North Korea to normalize relations with the United States and the broader international community by following universal norms and values.
16. Kim Sung-han, *op.cit.*, pp.139140.
17. Recent developments signal the advent of a U.S.-China-Japan triangle that is fundamentally different from the preexisting model. The U.S.-China-Japan triangle played the role of a balancer in Sino-Japan relations during the Clinton era: the United States maintained the *status quo* of its alliance with Japan while defining its relations with China as a strategic partnership. Conversely, the Bush administration has bolstered the U.S.-Japan alliance while sustaining a system of cooperation with China on counterterrorism and counter-proliferation with a view to countering global security threats in the short term and gearing up for a Chinese strategic challenge over the middle to long term.
18. Interview with an anonymous high ranking official at the Blue House, September 18, 2009.
19. C. S. Eliot Kang, "Managing Change: Korea and U.S. Security Strategy in Northeast Asia," paper delivered at the Conference on East Asian Security, Charleston, South Carolina, November 57, 1999.
20. Frank Umbach, "The Future of Multilateralism in Asia," *IRI Review*, Vol.9, No.1 (winter 2003/spring 2004), pp.179–226.
21. Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Why Is There No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism," *International Organization*, Vol.56, No.3 (Summer 2002), p.602.
22. See "The Alliance's Strategic Concept: Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C. on 23rd and 24th April 1999," <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>
23. "Coalition of the willing" is a term used to denote a group of states that cooperate in an *ad hoc* or informal fashion, outside of more formal multilateral institutions and alliances. The term has been used recently to describe the group of countries supporting the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, but its origins predate the George W. Bush administration. While the term usually refers to cooperation for military purposes, it has also been used in relation to other economic and human security issues in the Asia-Pacific region.
24. Ralph Cossa pointed out that the creation of a "virtual alliance"—achieved through the maintenance of the U.S.-Japan alliance, the continuation of a U.S.-Korea security relationship after Korean reunification, and the strengthening of bilateral security cooperation between Tokyo and Seoul – was seen as necessary, achievable, and in the interests of long-term peace and stability. See Ralph Cossa, ed., *U.S.-Korea-Japan Relations: Building Toward a "Virtual Alliance"* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 1999).
25. William Kristol, deputy director of the *Project for the New American Century*, said in his *Memorandum to Opinion Leaders* in July 29, 2005, "Asia's regional organizations do not make democracy a priority, or even a criterion for membership ... America's embrace of democratic multilateralism would break with the past, it would also bring the Bush administration's policy there into line with its defining philosophy:

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- putting democracy and the character of states at the heart of its foreign policy," <http://www.newamericancentury.org/asia-20050729.htm> (July 31, 2005).
26. See Derek Chollet, "Time for Asian NATO?" *Foreign Policy*, March/April 2001, pp.91–2.
 27. Joseph S. Nye Jr., "The Case for Deep Engagement," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1995, p.95.
 28. Kim Sung-han, *op.cit.*
 29. Regarding Korea-Japan human security cooperation, see Soeya Yoshihide, "US-China Relations and Japan after the Global Financial Crisis: Implications for Japan-Korea Relations," presented at the 8th Korea-Japan Millennium Forum on the Global Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Korea and Japan, hosted by IIRI, Korea University, October 7–8, 2009, Seoul.
 30. P. Terrence Hopmann, "Building Security in Post-Cold War Eurasia: The OSCE and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Peaceworks* no.3 (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace, 1999).