
Abstract

This study proposes the basic direction of the Korean Peninsula Mega Region with the international cooperation among the relevant parties, which starts with the declaration of end of war in the Korean Peninsula and promotes denuclearization process and will accomplished the peace regime as a mid- to long-term plan for the peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula.

As a key concept of inter-Korean peace and cooperation by Gyeonggi-do, “The Korean Peninsula Mega Region” is to realize the peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula. It is a strategy to form a core economic zone on the Korean Peninsula and transform it into a core growth base for the future development of the Korean people. Spatially, it includes Seoul, Gyeonggi, and Incheon, which correspond to the metropolitan area of South Korea, as well as northern Chungcheong and western Gangwon-do. It also covers Pyongyang and Nampo, which correspond to the North Korean metropolitan area, as well as North and South Hwanghae. and the Northern Limit Line area of the West Sea.

The core of the long-term vision for the Korean Peninsula Mega Region is multilateralization and internationalization of the inter-Korean cooperation. The reason for the failure of the Gaesong Industrial Complex and Mt. Geumgang tourism is related to the shortage entering the stage of institutionalization, internationalization, and multilateralization, and internationalization of inter-Korean cooperation.

For the sustainability of the Korean Peninsula Mega Region, this study aims to promote institutionalization of cooperation leading to

denuclearization, declaration of an end to the war, peace agreement, normalization of diplomatic relations, and the establishment of a multilateral cooperation organization. I would like to present a specific roadmap for building the peace and prosperity for the Korean Peninsula based on an analysis of the relevant parties' perceptions. This paper intends to propose a plan to develop bilateral cooperation between South and North Korea into multilateral cooperation. The plan also includes the relevant countries as participants for the inter-Korean cooperation and develop it into an economic and security cooperative regime and into an international organization as a long term international cooperative institution.

The introduction part of this study explains the perception of the denuclearization and discuss the details of the West Sea Special Zone for Peace and Cooperation, Gyeonggi-do's Inter-Korean Cooperation Comprehensive Plan, the Peace Free Economic Zones of Paju and Gimpo, border cities, and North Korea's Special Economic Zone, which have been suggested by the central and local governments of North and South Korea. Based on this introductory part, this study provides new concepts and the basic framework for peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and the roadmap of the cooperation by the two Koreas.

Next topic is analyzing the basic perceptions of all relevant parties for the Korean Peninsula Mega Region, which consists of a series of stages such as denuclearization, declaration of the end of war, peace agreement, diplomatic normalization and finally institutionalization of economic cooperation and multilateral security system on the Korean Peninsula with neighboring countries, the U.S., China, Japan, and Russia. The Korean Peninsula Mega Region will ultimately eliminate the risk of war and establish the peace in the region.

The United States is requesting South Korea to play an active and independent role for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and inter-Korean cooperation. As the United States expands cooperation in the field of military security, it accepts that the South Korean government is the main agent of resolving the Korean Peninsula security risk. The Biden administration clearly expressed its support for by promoting denuclearization and inter-Korean cooperation. The United States comprehensively acknowledged that South Korea would autonomously lead inter-Korean relations without prior coordination of the working group on the issues of humanitarian assistance and economic cooperation with North Korea within the principles of UN Security Council sanctions.

It is clear that China is approaching the Korean Peninsula issue from the perspective of the US-China strategic competition. And China as a major power wants to maintain its influence on the Korean Peninsula as a policy tool for leading the competition for hegemony with the United States. At the same time, it can be seen that China prefers the status quo. Since South Korean continues to improve its diplomatic status and its influence on the regional order, China wants to check and curb South Korean role on the North Korean issue without specific consideration of South Korea's national interest.

Regarding the possibility of participation in the Korean Peninsula Mega Region, Japan presented the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as a prerequisite and demanded that the abductee issue be addressed as a major agenda at the North Korea-U.S. summit and the inter-Korean summit prior to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Regarding the institutionalization of multilateral cooperation in East Asia through the promotion of the Korean Peninsula Mega Region, Japan asks South Korea to resolve the historic issues regarding

compensation and apology for the comfort women and the conscripts labors during the Pacific War. In the sense that Japan demands North and South Korea to resolve these historical issues, it is difficult or practically impossible to solve these issues as prerequisites for the establishment of a peace regime in the Korean Peninsula. As a result, Japan should be viewed as negative participants for the Korean Peninsula Mega Region since it will results in a powerful and unified nation in the Peninsula through social integration between the two Koreas. Therefore, Japan intends to avoid the peace process of the Korean Peninsula which leads to the denuclearization, a declaration of the end of war, and a peace treaty.

Russia understands that strategic interests is related to North Korea and the economic interests is related to South Korea, respectively in East Asia. Therefore, Russia supports the political survival of North Korea as a buffer zone for its security in the far East. Since North Korea has been considered as a traditional ally of Russia, the sudden change in North Korea will act as a loss to Russia's security and strategic interests. Collapse of North Korean regime will automatically result in the emergence of pro-Americans state on the Korean Peninsula. As a result, Russia believes that it is in the Russian national interest to support China's position in supporting the stability and maintenance of the North Korean regime. At the same time, for the prospect of economic development in East Asia, Russia pays attention on South Korea as a key partner for economic cooperation.

The Korean Peninsula Mega Region refers to the vision of peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula as a series of processes that lead to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through multilateral cooperation in East Asia, an peace agreement, normalization of diplomatic relations between North Korea and the U.S. and Japan. It

is clear that no other country will be able to guarantee the core national interest as a unified country in which peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula can be realized through the completion of denuclearization and the peace regime. The strategy and roadmap for the entire process of the Korean Peninsula Mega Region must be pursued through the basic philosophy of “the Korean people are the masters of the fate of the Korean Peninsula.

First of all, it is necessary to overcome the structural constraints of the US-China competition for hegemony in East Asia in order to promote the Korean Peninsula Mega Region through the progress in inter-Korean cooperation. Furthermore, it is necessary to properly control interference from Japan since Japan considers the peace process as a crisis while being pushed back by China and pursued by South Korea in the regional order. Fortunately, Russia is trying to promote both security and economic interests that are compatible with the two Koreas in bilateral relations. Although there are practical tasks to overcome with, it is said that Russia is the most friendly partner in promoting the Korean Peninsula Mega Region since Russia expects synergy effects from the trilateral cooperation among Russia and North and South Korea.

Keyword

Korean Peace Regime, Mega Region, Denuclearization, Multilateral Cooperation, Inter-Korean Cooperation, International Organization