Disaster Diplomacy of South Korea toward North Korea as Efforts to Create Peace in the Korean Peninsula (2017 – 2020)

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the reason why South Korea as a North Korea rival in the Korean peninsula willing to give aid toward North Korea. The tension in Korean peninsula has happened since a long time ago especially after the cold war between USA & USSR. The conflict event become worst because of North Korea always threatening South Korea by testing the Nuclear missile. Despite of what North Korea done in the region, South Korea still gave abundance of aid in term of health assistance, food, and others basis of human necessity. By using qualitative approach and collecting data from credible literature resource and using the concept of disaster diplomacy this research found that South Korea has special type in term of conflict resolution, South Korea often using soft diplomacy and negotiation in order to creating peace. South Korea also believe positive peace diplomacy should be implementing in order make better condition in Korean peninsula. This research also believe that the actor has a big impact in successfully to support better condition between both countries and strengthening the relation. Lastly, this paper proof if in order to win in some competition not always using hard diplomacy or military power.

Keywords: Disaster, Diplomacy, Korea, Peace

Abstrak


Kata Kunci: Bencana, Diplomasi, Korea, Perdamaian
INTRODUCTION

The United States won the final round of the Second World War, so Japan as the losing party had to hand over its territories to the United States and its allies, including the handover of Korean territories. This area is divided into two sections, South Korea under America’s leadership, while North Korea is under the Soviet Union's hands. In 1947, in the cold war, America and the Soviet Union were fighting to get the label of superpower. Since the Second World War, the Cold War was a battle that became the focal point of all conflicts that took place in almost all parts of the world.

The world has been split into two ideologies by the political battle between socialists, the USSR and US democracy. The two parties are not involved in direct war, but proxy war through political maneuvering, military coalitions, espionage, propaganda, arms buildups, economic aid, and proxy wars between other nations (JFK, n.d.) one of them looked like what happened during the war in Vietnam. However, Korean War is different from the other wars because the war transformed the way in which East and West treated each other and was part of a shift in the conduct of war (Carson, 2018). In the East Asian community, the Korean government was deemed very powerful, therefore both the United States and the Soviet Union worked hard to win the war.

Korea had historically encountered a political vacuum at the end of Japanese colonization. The UN also engaged in the government referendum process in Korea in 1947 to guarantee fairness (C.N., 2015). In addition, as the United States and the Soviet Union interfered in it, the conflict began to escalate.

In 1953 - 1957 there was a war known as the Korean War, namely the war between the Democratic People of Republic of Korea (DPRK as North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (ROK as South Korea). The DPRK, driven by military power from the Soviet Union, managed to occupy Seoul. This battle ended because United States-proposed ceasefire. As a result of this war a number of three to four million people died, mostly civilians (Stack, 2018).

The Aftermath

Eight years after the three-year Korean War, North Korea is emerging from the challenges of modern manufacturing, whereas South Korea, on the other hand, is in a worsening period of political instability, weak administration, poor economic development, and dependency on US assistance (Seth, 2013). After suffering
a long political and economic depression South Korea eventually had enough entrepreneurs in the 1960s, who then dominated the South Korean economy or what is known as chaebal or conglomerate (Seth, 2013). Meanwhile, North Korea in 1965 for the first time the Soviet Union built a nuclear reactor for research purposes (KBS World, n.d.). North Korea's ambitions, which are very interested in developing its nuclear program, have put the country's economy in a deep slump and are facing many challenges.

Since 1980, the President of South Korea, Chun Doo Hwan has started to invite the North Korean side to carry out the process of unification, cooperation and the Korean nuclear crisis (Yunikawati, 2014). After that, the next presidents still addressed the North Korean government, but none of them made any substantial improvement. In contrast, Kim Dae Jung (1998-2002) introduced the Sunshine Policy under his administration, which aims to balance the diplomatic situations of the two countries and to carry out numerous partnerships (Anindita, 2017).

The Inter-Korean Summit in Pyeongyang was successfully held during the Kim Dae Jung period to communicate with the President of North Korea, Kim Jong Il, and to establish a Reunification Deal for humanitarian and economic cooperation (Shin, 2018). A very significant step forward undertaken by the South Korean side is the establishment of the Inter-Korean Summit. Relations between North and South Korea are also facing ups and downs despite getting a reciprocal agreement. Provocative actions against South Korea are frequently carried out by North Korea, such as the eviction of South Korean workers from the Inter-Korean Communication and Cooperation Consultation Office in Kaesong on March 27, 2008, and the shooting of South Korean visitors at the Keumgang Mountain Tourist Facility on July 11, 2008. (Sudirman, 2018). Furthermore, North Korea unilaterally canceled plans to reunify Korea on 30 January 2009. The North side believed that Korean reunification would economically and ideologically humiliate or harm North Korea (Liviamanda, 2012).

The South Korean government apparently took further restrictive measures against North Korea during its next administration, which was still insistent on developing its nuclear technology. The turbulent past of North Korea, with South Korea, is still visible today. North Korea is sealing itself off and planning to create its own country from the outside community. Meanwhile, South Korea has grown as a country with considerable economic power capable of becoming one of the
developed countries in the Asian region. The relationship between the Southerners and the North is quite complex, but in response to the actions of the North, the Southerners seem to be much more careful.

The author explains through this paper is about how South Korean government diplomacy able to create peace relation with North Korea, especially through disaster diplomacy. South Korea assumes that this can lead to greater relations with North Korea by utilizing a soft power approach.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

The dispute in East Asia region especially in Korean peninsula has become hot topic since a long time ago and become one of the objects to be research by many of scholars in International studies. The reason behind why this issue be attention toward many of scholars is because this issue was consisting of many unique and interesting issues that should be discuss. For the example is about how South Korea diplomacy toward North Korea, the way how North Korea threatening the South Korea by nuclear weapon. Thus, the issues of Korea peninsula dispute become the case that should be analyses in order to get lesson learn especially the way of South Korea resolution conflict and creating peace condition.

In this paper the authors decided to focus on the way of South Korea diplomacy toward North Korea by implementing the disaster diplomacy. Many of scholars who has made these issues become the object of analysis are not trying to analyses how the South Korea diplomacy by implementing the disaster diplomacy as part of the South Korea foreign policy. According from some scholars who has created a paper which published in journal or credible repository does not puzzle out and analyses the dispute between South and North Korea by disaster diplomacy. For the example the final research which has made by Rafi Widyadhana Saputra which concern on how the Moon Jae-in foreign policy toward North Korea through Inter-Korean summit in 2018, this research concern on the trust peace diplomacy by the current president of South Korea (Saputra, 2020). In the others research which made by Simela Victor Muhammad, he believe if the security issues in Korea peninsula in struggling to make peace situation is able to finished by using parliament way which this is concern on the previous policy under the president Park Geun-hye who believe the stabilization in region can achieve trough the essence of trust among two countries (Muhammad, 2016). The last literature review that authors used in this paper
is the journal article which has made by Fahrin Umarama and team whose pessimistic regarding the conflict which happened in Korean peninsula but his believe the way to creating peace in the region is can archive by negotiation, bilateral agreement and economic cooperation (Fahrin Umarama, 2020). From these three research that become the literature review it shown if the disaster diplomacy by the South Korea still rarely to be discussed and this paper try to concern on how the South Korea disaster diplomacy as one of tools in creating better condition between both of countries.

By this part of literature review, the author able to show the novelty regarding the South Korea soft and disaster diplomacy which still rarely to be discussed in the scholars which this is become the concern on this research. Because of that this research become interesting to be discuss and analyses. However, this paper believe if the disaster diplomacy which has implemented by South Korea toward North Korea can become one of the instrument the reason behind why the dispute between South and North Korea are not going in war until nowadays.

METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the research problem regarding the impact of South Korea disaster diplomacy toward North Korea relation, this paper using the qualitative research as a method of analysis. Qualitative research itself is an interpretative approach, which attempts to gain insight into the specific meanings and behaviors experienced in a certain social phenomenon through the subjective experiences of other participants or data that collected as evidence of analysis (Bolderston, 2006). Which supported by literature review from secondary resources based on credible books, journals, and media as the type of data that can prove the analysis and concluding the result of analysis.

To support the qualitative research as a method of analysis this paper using conceptual approach by using disaster diplomacy as the tool of analysis in explaining the South Korea aid toward the North Korea. According to Ilan Kelman as the scholar who concern on disaster diplomacy and has advocated a lot of disaster problems. Ilan Kelman try to divide disaster into two type of disaster, first natural hazard, and natural disaster. Ilan Kelman believe if the natural hazard will not be the natural disaster which can affecting toward a lot of destructive which can give negative impact. However, the natural disaster cannot be worst if there is good management in handling
the disaster. However, disaster is not only able to give negative impact but in the other side disaster also able to give the positive impact (Kelman, 2007).

According to the literature definition, disaster diplomacy is can be understood as the reason behind why and how disaster can become the instrument of resolution conflict, and able to create peace condition which analysis after the disaster happened (Surwandono, 2014). Cannot be denying the disaster can inviting many countries to donate and give the aid toward the countries who gain the disaster and because of that it can strengthening the relation between countries. The reason is because it can make the debt of gratitude from one country to the others country. By using the disaster become of the tool of diplomacy it can make better condition between both of countries especially in helping a thousand people from starving, misery, suffering and others negative impact which produce by the disaster. Simply, this methodology believes if the situation of conflict and peace of countries can be influence by the disaster. Thus, the answer of how to manage the disaster become the positive thing.

According to Geo-forum statement, disaster is not only because of the nature but also can be happened because of the economic problem, internal conflict, and other problems (UN-ISDR Informs, 2007). The reason is because its similarly effect toward the condition of human life inside of the countries. For the example, the issue of hunger, poverty and health issues due to the government who cannot create better management inside of the country also can be categorize as one of the disasters which effect to the condition of human being. However, in this paper will concern on analyzing how south Korea done toward the North Korea by giving aid in economic, health and others necessity due to the unstable condition of North Korea. However, it can create better relation between both countries and at least can reduce the tension which can drive into worst condition.

DISCUSSION

The Reason South Korea Implementing Disaster Diplomacy toward North Korea

The election of South Korea new president on 2017, President Moon Jae in, giving it hopes to settle the tension between South Korea and North Korea. Trust Policy itself introduced to the public on year 2011 by President Park Geun Hye. The initiation of the trust policy is to building trust through promise keeping and ultimately establishing inter-Korean institutions to facilitate cooperation and peace (Howe & Lee, n.d.). The trust policy or
known as trust politic taken as the remembrance that South and North Korea needs is to believe each other eliminate the suspicion. The trust policy intended to believe North Korea as long they redeem its nuclear weapon testing.

The reason President Moon Jae in continue the Trust policy used by President Park Geun Hye because under the leadership of the previous president, this policy is only considered a naught rhetoric policy where a rhetoric in policy should play very important to make and influencing people. However, Moon Jae In felt that in achieving peace on the Korean peninsula, mutual trust was also needed (Nadhiva, et al., 19).

Reducing provocation in military activities from South Korea such as postponing joint military exercises with the United States. This is done so that there is no negative response from North Korea. (Nadvia, et al., 2019) the purpose of the trust policy itself is to reduce any suspicion that could worsen the situation of these two countries. The thing that is feared is the reoccurrence of the missile test during a joint exercise between South Korea and United States in 2013 under the leadership of President Park Geun Hye.

In addition, seeing Moon Jae-In own personality, he is known as a humble person and makes his character liked by many people. Moreover, the background of his life is interesting. The parents of President Moon Jae In are a refugee who comes from North Korea where they became one of the families evacuated during the Chosin Reservoir war (Ray, 2020). President Moon Jae-In himself was an activist, lawyer and also the right-hand man of the previous president Mr. Roh Moo Hyun who was his best friend during their childhood.

One of the policies he promotes is the peace of the Korean peninsula. Moon Jae-In himself has the principle of promoting peace, mutual respect, and open policy. Peace is appointed as the most important thing as the basis of prosperity.

The first, Peace’ First. Peace is the value that we should uphold with the highest priority, as well as the foundation for prosperity.

The second. Mutual respect We pursue a "Korean Peninsula of co-prosperity", where South and North respect and cooperate with each other, by defining our stance as the "3-Nos" - no desire for the North's collapse, no pursuit of unification by absorption, and no pursuit of unification through artificial means.

The third. Open’ Policy. The policy will be completed through public participation and interaction to ensure
that the policy can be fully understood by – and made by – the people.

Apart from the 3 important points in his leadership, Moon Jae In’s leadership also created 5 principles (Ministry of Unification South Korea, 2020), namely:

*The fourth*, Korea-led Initiative. As the party directly concerned, we will take the lead in promoting inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation, as well as in establishing peace and co-prosperity on the Korean Peninsula.

*The fifth*, Strong Defense. By maintaining a strong security posture based on the solid ROK-US alliance and national defense, we will deter North Korea’s provocation and maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula.

*The sixth*, Mutual Respect. We will realize a Korean community of co-prosperity by promoting mutually beneficial dialogue, exchange, and cooperation based on the spirit of mutual respect.

*The seventh*, Interaction with the People. We will institutionalize participation of – and interaction with – the National Assembly, local government bodies, civil organizations, and experts to draw a national consensus and agreement on unification issues and our North Korea policy.

*The eighth*, International Cooperation. We will elicit international cooperation through ‘openness’.

Figure 1. Total Amount of Humanitarian Assistance to North Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Government Assistance</th>
<th>Free Aid</th>
<th>NGOs</th>
<th>International Organizations</th>
<th>Food Loans</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>NGO Assistance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995-2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|            |                       | 11,262   | 1,177| 2,744                        | 15,183     | 8,728 | 23,911         | 9,308 | 32,948

The existence of assistance provided has an important point of how much South Korea wants to return to peace. At the beginning of 2020, the arrival of the covid-19 virus provided an opening and an effort so that peace could be achieved. Namely by returning to aid in the form of masks and medical equipment.
However, the assistance given is often not accepted, refused, or even returned. This indicates that North Korea still has suspicions about South Korea. The important thing that must be highlighted is that the provision of this assistance may not yet be able to become an opening for peace in both these years, but that does not mean it has no impact. Providing assistance during the Covid-19 pandemic can be intended as an effort in disaster diplomacy, where experts say that disaster diplomacy will be a catalyst for diplomatic action between countries (Kelman, 2011).

The Effect of South Korea Disaster Diplomacy toward North Korea

Under the Kim Dae Jung era, South Korea sent unconditional assistance to the food shortages in North Korea through the implementation of the Sunshine Policy because of humanitarian concerns (MOREN, 2014). Sunshine Policy emphasizes the solution to soft power, that is, in the form of dialogue and humanitarian assistance. North Korea has reacted positively by welcoming all negotiations, by participating in dialogue and by accepting the assistance offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year(s)</th>
<th>Amount (in 100 million KRW)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3,228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://eng.unikorea.go.kr

The assistance that South Korea provides is humanitarian aid in the form of money, food, and fertilizer. The policies of Kim Dae Jung created very significant impacts, both from a political and economic perspective, for relations between the south and the north. From a political perspective, the provision of economic assistance can reduce the tension between North and South Korea aimed at the unification process. This may also promote the democracy and collective welfare of the North Korean people from an economic point of view. In addition, South Korea and Hyundai succeeded in creating the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) opposite the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and the workers come from the North Korean region, which is an economic growth
The economic situation of the North Korean citizens has been improved and is much stronger with humanitarian aid from South Korea. The economic support that South Korea offers implicitly helps to harmonize ties with North Korea. North Korea restricts itself to engaging with other countries with an isolationist state structure, meaning that it also faces difficulty fulfilling the needs of the citizens. On the other side, in an attempt to alleviate tensions, especially in the Korean peninsula, the South Korean government is taking advantage of the hardships of North Korean citizens who are suffering food shortages, hunger, and lack of health facilities to provide financial assistance. (Puimara, 2008).

This lasted only temporarily, however, when South Korea was under a conservative government throughout the Lee Myung Bak administration, implementing a requirement that if North Korea closed its entire nuclear arsenal, South Korea would provide economic assistance to raise per capita income. (Arpan, 2018). North Korea reacted aggressively and resisted this strategy, in particular by challenging South Korea’s physical warfare and increasing its military power. (Agusta, 2010).

South Korean Disaster Diplomacy is a Pilot Diplomacy in Creating Peace

The dispute between South and North Korea has happened since a long time ago and until nowadays the relation between both of countries are still in the war status event though both of countries are not directly war in the field (Sudirman, 2018). This conflict become one of the main problems which become the concentration the South Korea government to make this situation become more better and able to create peace situation. A lot of efforts have done by the South Korea administration since a long time ago under different president. The reason why the South Korea always doing so is because actually this separate between South and North Korea is happened not because the desire of Korean society but it happened due to the cold and the national interest of two super power countries at the time, USA and USSR. because of that South Korea until todays still struggling to approach North Korea and always want to stabilize the condition in Korean peninsula.

South Korea has stronger than North Korea in military power. South Korea also has big alliance with USA, and it make the South Korea become save compare with North Korea. Uniquely, South Korea rarely threatening
North Korea by the Military power and prefer to the soft foreign policy in approaching North Korea, which actually if South Korea would like to use the military power South Korea can easily won the war (Fitzpatrick, 2018). South Korea from year to year always think about how to make harmony situation with North Korea because South Korea believe if South and North Korea is the brotherhood who forced apart. South Korea implementing the negotiation, discussion, summit, and other soft diplomacy to make North Korea want to discuss and make a close relation with South Korea. In the other side, South Korea also implementing foreign aid toward North Korea which this is unusual action between two countries whose in war status but South Korea willing to do so for creating harmony and in an attempt to persuade North Korea to end the war or at least not creating worst situation.

From the foreign policy which has implemented by South Korea it can become the good example to the other countries around the world who dealing with the conflict especially with neighboring county. South Korea successfully give a best example to the others country the way how to create best way as the practice of resolution conflict. By this action other countries will understand to combat military forces not always should use military as well to win the war but it could by negotiation, discussion event foreign aid toward the county who not willing to make a peace. South Korea also successfully make better condition in the East Asia region where the countries in those area where vulnerable to conflict creation. And this paper believes if what South Korea done can become the pilot diplomacy which can be implemented around the world in order to make better condition of the world.

**CONCLUSION**

The war between South and North Korea is one of the complicated disputes that happened in the world. Not to mention, this dispute was happened since the cold war period between USA and USSR. However, until nowadays this conflict still on going and still deadlock without any exact resolution conflict and agreement between both governments to end this dispute. The conflict become more dangerous when North Korea always try to threaten the South Korea by using nuclear weapons and it made unstable condition in Korean peninsula.

However, this research found if the struggle of South Korea government by using the disaster diplomacy successfully push the worst condition between both countries. Eventually, this research also believes
the significant impact by the disaster diplomacy which has been conducted by the South Korea can become the role model of resolution conflict strategy in achieving a peace, it proven based on how South Korea can giving positive impact which can reduce the negative impact of the policy that has made by the North Korea by using disaster diplomacy to strengthen the relation between both of countries. The author does believe if the disaster diplomacy can create better condition time by time regarding the conflict in Korean Peninsula.

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