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KOREAN PENINSULA CRISIS: TENDENCIES, WAYS OF SOLVING AND PERSPECTIVES

Abstract

For decades, Korean Peninsula used to be hot spot and current crisis is more or less a product of the old ideological and political tensions. As the Korean War was ended, the Peninsula was divided between two different states: the Republic of Korea on the South and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the North of the Peninsula. During the whole period of the so called "Cold War", both states represented opposite political and ideological preferences. The Peninsula was always at the sharp edge of a new conflict which could grow into something bigger than just a local armed conflict. As history showed, the division of the Korean Nation became a decisive stage that determined the current situation in the region. As the result, even today both Koreas are always ready to start a fight with each other.

Although, today's new political era on the Peninsula is still dangerous because North Korea now has the Nuclear Potential, but at the same time, North Korean Leader is showing his willingness for the negotiations. The question is: what may arise from current perspectives – war, peace or agreement, this text is going to study and generalize.

Keywords: Korean Peninsula, North Korea, USA, South Korea, China, Japan, Nuclear Threat, Crisis, Negotiations, Agreement.

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КОРЕЙ ТҮБЕГІ ДАҒДАРЫСЫ: ТЕНДЕНЦИЯЛАРЫ, ШЕШІМДЕР МЕН ПЕРСПЕКТИВАЛАРЫ

Аңдатпа

Корей түбегі ондаған жылдар бойы соғыс аймағы болып келген және қазіргі дағдарыс ескі идеологиялық және саяси шиеленістердің нәтижесі болып табылады. Корей соғысы аяқталған кезде, түбек екі түрлі мемлекетке бөлінді: оңтүстігінде Корея Республикасы және түбектің солтүстігінде Корея Халық Демократиялық Республикасы. «Қырғи қабақ соғыстың» бүкіл кезеңінде екі мемлекет қарама-қарсы саяси және идеологиялық лагерлерге бөлінді. Түбек әрқашан жана қарулы қақтығыстан гөрі үлкенірек болып шығатын жаңа қақтығыстың өткір жағында болды. Тарих көрсеткендей, корей ұлтының бөлінуі аймақтағы қазіргі жағдайды анықтайтын шешуші кезең болды. Нәтижесінде, бүгінде екі Корея да әрқашан бір-бірімен күресуге дайын.

Қазіргі түбектің жана саяси дәуірі әлі де қауіпті, себебі Солтүстік Кореяның ядролық әлеуеті бар, бірақ сонымен бірге Солтүстік Корея лидері келіссөздерге дайын екендігін көрсетуде. Сұрақ: қазіргі перспективалардан не пайда болуы мүмкін - соғыс, бейбітшілік немесе келісім, бұл мәтін зерттеліп, зерттелетін болады.

Түйін сөздер: Корея түбегі, Солтүстік Корея, АҚШ, Оңтүстік Корея, Қытай, Жапония, Ядролық қауіп, дағдарыс, келіссөздер, келісім.

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КРИЗИС НА КОРЕЙСКОМ ПОЛУОСТРОВЕ: ТЕНДЕНЦИИ, ПУТИ РЕШЕНИЯ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ

Аннотация

На протяжении десятилетий, Корейский Полуостров являлся горячей точкой и нынешний кризис вокруг него, является итогом старых идеологических и политических противоречий. По окончании Корейской Войны, Полуостров был разделён между двумя государствами: Республикой Корея на Юге и Корейско Народно-Демократической Республикой на Севере Полуострова. На протяжении всей, так называемой “Холодной Войны”, оба корейских государства представляли противоположные политические и идеологические лагеря. Полуостров всегда был на острие ножа нового конфликта, который, в свою, очередь, мог перерасти во нечто большее, чем просто локальный вооружённый конфликт. Как показала история, разделение Корейского Полуострова стало отправной точкой, которая определила текущую ситуацию в регионе. Как результат, даже сегодня, обе Кореи всегда готовы к противостоянию друг с другом.

Не смотря на это, сегодняшняя, совершенно новая политическая эра на полуострове, хоть и остаётся опасной из-за наличия у Северной Кореи Ядерного Оружия, но в тоже время, Северокорейский Лидер проявляет заинтересованность в переговорах. Вопрос таков: к чему же всё таки приведут эти переговоры? К войне, миру или же соглашению? Данная статья собирается выяснить и обобщить.

Ключевые слова: Корейский Полуостров, Северная Корея, США, Южная Корея, Китай, Япония, Ядерная Угроза, Кризис, Переговоры, Соглашение.

The Korean Peninsula always has a lot of attention on the situation around it. The Interest of the Korean Crisis is based on the several factors. First, it is still represent the ghost of the “Cold War”, the time that passed but which is influential in the area of Korean Peninsula. Second, suddenly, the armed conflict may become global, which might include such states as North Korea, South Korea, USA, China, Japan, Russia and their aliases. Lastly, it may affect the whole world, as the sides of the conflict have Nuclear Potential and may use it if necessary. However, it is important to say, that in order to understand the conflict, it is better to look at the roots of it, which are hidden in history. Also, it is better to observe the internal and external policies of two Korean States, because it is obligatory to have a right knowledge about the structure of involving regimes.

Korean Nation has a deep and ancient history of statehood. Considering true history, avoiding the mythological part, Korean People created their states in 4th century. There were several kingdoms that used to fight with each other to control the lands and human resources. At that time, Buddhism and Confucianism entered Korea through China, which helped Korea and China to cooperate with each other. Chinese Emperors were always interested in controlling those lands, so they dominated this region culturally and politically.

Unfortunately, Korean Nation is divided into two different states, but looking at their history, it is not the first time they are separated politically. Taking the origin of a Korean Statehood, it is clearly shown that this Nation emerged from the three ancient kingdoms, which were unified under the ruling dynasties. On the one hand, Korean Rulers were always about to fight with each other, to remain the political power in the hands of one or another clan. On the other hand, Korean Statehood always had to fight against the invaders to save their right to exist. Several times, China invaded Korea, at the end, China saved the protectorate above these territories for a centuries. Also, Korea suffered from the Mongol Invasion, but the main political power which always was looking for controlling those lands was Japan. As the result, Japanese Empire conquered Korean Peninsula and destroyed Korean Statehood in the beginning of XX century. Starting from the fall of Korean Empire and continuing to the end of the WWII, Koreans did not have their own united statehood and after that they faced another challenge, which brought a war to the Korean Peninsula.

As WWII was ended, Korea was divided into two zones of interests of USSR and USA. The Peninsula was divided according to the 38 parallel, the North was under the influence of the Soviet Union and the South was under the ruling of the United States. The ideological and political tensions between two most superpowers of those time influenced the situation on the Peninsula which finally led to the Korean War which started in 1950 and ended in 1953.

During the Korean War, North was more industrialized and had a lot of men power which helped them to conquer all the lands till the city of Busan. However later, with the help of International Coalition led by the USA, United forces could through North Forces back to the Chinese borders.

Understanding the situation, Soviet Leader – Joseph Stalin asked for the Chinese Commander – Mao Zedong to help North Korean forces to fight against the UN coalition. Millions of Chinese soldiers, who were fighting on the North Korean sides, played significant role in the results of war. The war was ended in 1953, when Korean Peninsula was finally divided into two Korean States.

A lot of tensions between two Koreas were emerged during the whole period of the Cold War, two states acted differently and even South Korea suffered from the several dictatorships. In the end, we have what we have, prosper and economically developed South, and totalitarian and poor North. For the sake of justice, it is also important to mention the fact, that for example in 60th, North was more developed economically than South, even Japan wanted to cooperate with North Korea, and at the same time, South Korea was a cruel place to live during the Park Chung-hee ruling, who is consider as the founder of the upcoming South Korean Economical Miracle.

South Korea took the American model of developing free economy, open markets but most importantly they did not forget about other cultural, Asian, specifics. Korean Family Companies called Chaebol, were able to push Korean Economy further as it happened with their Japanese analogies in Japan. The creation and regulation of these companies was a key factor that helped South Korea to reach their famous economical miracle.

Soviet Union always felt a responsibility for the North Korean survival and developing. Even the first North Korean leader – Kim Il-sung, was a Soviet protégé, he participated in the liberation of Korean Peninsula from the Japanese Empire and was a communist. In fact, communistic movement played a huge role during the fighting with Japanese Army. A lot of Koreans entered communistic partisan movements to fight against Japan. Soviet Union rebuilt the North after the Korean War and also fought using Air Forces and military advisors. Kim il-Sung visited the Soviet Union for about five times. The last time was in 1986 during the beginning of Perestroika reforms.

It is important to mention that during the first period of Cold War it was unclear who is going to win in the ideological battle between East and West. At the same time, when US army invaded Vietnam, a lot of South Korean soldiers fought against the Vietcong, sometimes even committing war crimes. Overall, South Korea sent more than 300,000 troops to fight communism in foreign country. As it was explained, they did not want the same scenario for another nation.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, North Korea lost its main ally, which brought a lot of challenges to the North Korean Administration. After the fall of the USSR, the new Russian leader - Boris Yeltsin, even cut all the connections with the North Korea, focusing on the South Korea instead. The famine was not a rare phenomenon on the territory controlled by the DPRK. A lot of people died at that time and tried to leave the country. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea Government was looking for a new main partner and found it in Chinese People Republic. The Chinese Communist Party was interested in having a buffer state between them and US friendly South Korea, it started to invest the finances into the North Korean economy. Meanwhile, North Korean leader - Kim Jong-il, declared a successful nuclear testing, which started even in his father's era. This information made Washington nervous, so they promised to cancel some sanctions if North Korea stops their attempts to have a Nuclear Weapon. So they did, but nothing changed since that time.

When Kim Jong-il passed away, his son Kim Jong-un started to rule the country. The young Leader Understood that his regime in the hard situation and something is needed to be changed. But in the North Korea, any big change may bring the fall of the regime, so he needs a plan to reach his goal. At the same time, in 2017, Donald Trump won the presidential elections in the US, which did not reduce the hate and criticism toward his person. And here, both leaders had a good opportunity to achieve their political goals. North Korea may develop its economy by canceling some sanctions and be sure about the existence of a status quo, and Donald Trump may put the attention of the American Public into another direction by facing the “Political Enemy”. Donald Trump wants to transfer his domestic political failures on the foreign policy success and as the bonus, to create a historical success.

The important fact about North Korean regime is that it challenges a lot of inner political challenges which is connected to the hidden political games in the North Korea. In this regard, new Korean Leader assassinated his own brother, executed his uncle and imprisoned a lot of high-ranked politicians who were suspected into the conspiracy. However, after this “cleaning”, Kim Jong-un understood who should be beside him. He promoted his young sister, who is now playing a huge role inside and outside the North Korea.

In 2018, South Korea held the Pyeongchang Winter Olympiad, where North Korean delegation was leaded by the Kim Yo-jong, who is sister of North Korean Leader. By the way, North and South Korea teams were played under the one Unification Flag of the Korean Peninsula. This act was aimed to send a

message to the South Korea and further to the US about Kim Jong-un's intentions for the negotiations. She met the South Korean President Moon Jae-in, which made her into the big policy. She also escorted her brother during the most important summits in 2018.

Japan – one of the biggest and important allies of the US in the region wants their borders to be safe from the Nuclear Threat, because they already faced the irritability of the Nuclear Weapon in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Also, Japanese have own community of Koreans who are loyal to the North Korean Regime. They are living in special areas and they send a lot of financial support to their homeland. Their donations are the one of the main money-streams which supports North Korean economy.

It is important to add, that the author of this article was able to visit South Korea and Japan in 2019, so the credibility of this research is seems indisputable. The author lived in Seoul, the Capital of South Korea, one of the biggest cities of the world and Asian financial centers, for about a half of a year. It is only about the 30 km till the borderline of North and South, and according to the military experts, Seoul may become one of the main targets for the North Korean Artillery in a possible armed conflict.

However, the citizens of Seoul are not feeling any pressure about their “enemies”. Except the some gas masks in the metro, which are aimed to protect the people during the possible chemical attack, there are no any signs of military preparations. Moreover, South Korean male citizens must go through the military trainings for about 2 years, even some famous stars do not allowed to skip them. The author visited the JSA, the most armed border in the world. Also, the author was able to visit the villiage, where Donald Trump, Kim Jong-un and Moon Jae-in met each other during their very first negations in history. This historical place played a significant role during the Korean War and Current Political and Nuclear Crisis in the Korean Peninsula.

The author of this article also made a research by asking some South Korean citizens do they will the reunification with the North Korea or not. Surprisingly, a lot of people are not interested in what will happen with North Korea in the future (39%), others do not want any unification (23%) and the rest are willing the United Korean Peninsula (38%). By asking why those who are not interested in unification what is the reason of their opinion, some of them explained their position by claiming that their states are so much different right now and they should continue to go in a separate direction. Those who do not will any unification said that if something like this will happen, they will be forced to pay for the Economical Gap that was created between North and South Korea.

According to the current tendencies, COVID-19 made a pause in the political life of the World, and Korean Peninsula Crisis is no longer the most interested thing to observe for those who are not involved , however, the world remembers the historical handshake of Donald Trump, Kim Jong-un and Moon Jae-in Panmunjom village. If the tendencies will continue in the direction of negotiation process, then the conflict will end with the long living Kim's regime in North, Stable and developing economy in South and quite political atmosphere in US.

Hopefully, the author was also able to travel to Japan and the situation there was miraculous. The only problems this Nation is facing are the growing percentage of elders, territorial disputes with their neighbors and Nuclear Crisis. It is interesting, because in the middle of XX century, Japanese were aimed to cooperate economically with the DPRK, neither the South Korea. It happened even though Japan and Korea were at the same US allies camp. For the sake of objectivism, it is important to mention that North Korea was quite successful after the Korean War. North recovered its manufactory and industrialized rapidly because of the benefits of the plan economy and financial support of USSR, while South suffered from the crisis. Pragmatic Japanese government was looking for the more beneficial partnership, so they decided to focus on the DPRK. After announcing their intention, Japanese Government faced a lot of criticism from the US and stopped this idea.

Still, North Korea has the huge active military personal and it can defend its borders well. That's why the fact of having it the Nuclear Weapon, potently means that it can use it if it's needed. Moreover, this fact may open the hands to those countries that are willing to enter the Nuclear Club, that's why this Crisis is so sensitive to the whole World. North Korea develops the methods of delivery of their Nuclear Missiles and now can easily reach the territories of several states, including US. Nevertheless, the crisis stage right now seems to be calm, but may arise with the new power soon. The situation should take some time to develop.

CONCLUSION

Taking everything into account, the best option for the resolving the crisis is the political dialogue and negotiations. The Korean Peninsula Crisis has very complicated issues from the perspective of analysis and prediction. But the thing that can help to make a conclusion around it, using all the diplomatic means, is the will of the political leaders to keep the peace around the Korean Peninsula. A lot

of political players of the crisis have their own political views and interests, regarding the circumstances of the affairs around the crisis and its outcome; however it is pretty possible to look for the common points. Otherwise, the crisis may go to the intensive phase. Although 2020 brought new challenges to the humanity, COVID-19, US – Iran tensions, Unstable Economical Situation, the Korean Peninsula negotiation process is far from its logical ending. Trump's administration could use the card connected with the crisis, to calm down the American society in the case of political charges as it was before with the Trump's impeachment case. Meanwhile, South Korea faced COVID-19 with all its medical, financial forces and succeeded, moreover, South Korea promised to help their Northern neighbors if it's needed. At the same time, China made the same gesture of respect toward the US, showing Chinese intentions not to continue the "trade wars". China is interested in stable economical growth, so it could continue to support North Korea. As we are talking about DPRK, it is obvious that Kim Jong-un's clan is confident in the current status quo and it is waiting for the another chance to force other political players to sit down at the negotiating table. It is hard to predict how the crisis will end, however the fact that current political situation is slowing down its temps, the upcoming negation process may be quite effective, as the political powers will do their best to follow their political interest, when the world will wake up from the COVID-19 fall. We all shall see what is coming in the direction of Korean Peninsula soon.

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