



# KANDIDATUPPSATS

The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Korea on a peaceful reunification with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

## **Abstract**

This paper examines different foreign policies of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) with regards to a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. The paper uses the theoretical framework of Social Constructivism to analyze what impact the different foreign policies of South Korea towards North Korea have had on their relations, thus providing an understanding of what impact those foreign policies have had on the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. The paper will also look at the First Korean Nuclear Crisis, the Second Korean Nuclear Crisis, the ROKS Cheonan sinking and the shelling of Yeonpyeong, and with the help from the theoretical framework of Social Constructivism, analyze what impact those incidents have had on South Korea's foreign policy and relations with North Korea, thus providing an understanding what impact those incidents have had on the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula.

*Keywords: The foreign policy of South Korea, Peaceful Reunification, Nordpolitik, The Sunshine Policy, The MB Doctrine, Vision 3000, Social Constructivism, The First Korean Nuclear Crisis, The Second Korean Nuclear Crisis, The ROKS Cheonan sinking, The shelling of Yeonpyeong*

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## **1. Introduction**

In more than half a century, the Korean Peninsula has been separated between two ideologically different countries. In the south, the Republic of Korea (officially shortened ROK, but henceforth referred to as South Korea) is since 1987 a liberal democratic country with a market economy. South Korea is supported by the United States, which currently has around 28,500 soldiers based in South Korea<sup>1</sup>. In the north, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (officially shortened DPRK, but henceforth referred to as North Korea) is an authoritarian governed country based on the socialist *Juche* idea. After the end of the Cold War, The People's Republic of China (officially shortened PRC, but henceforth referred to as China) is the only country left that is supporting North Korea. Ever since the Korean War came to a ceasefire in 1953 with the Korean Armistice Agreement, the relations between North and South Korea have been based on high tensions and brinkmanship, which eventually could lead to a Second Korean War. At the same time, both North and South Korea have and are actively seeking peace, cooperation, and a possible peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. The obstacle to a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula is that both North and South Korea are seeking it via different ways, and those ways clashes with each other. North Korea is very keen that a Korean reunification should occur without any foreign influences<sup>2</sup>. As long as the United States has soldiers in South Korea, a peaceful reunification is not possible according to North Korea. According to South Korea, North Korea's authoritarian system of government is an obstacle that cannot be accepted in a peaceful reunification. This is outlined in Article 4 of the South Korean constitution:

“The Republic of Korea seeks unification and formulates and carries out a policy of peaceful unification based on the principles of freedom and democracy”<sup>3</sup>

This has not stopped South Korea from working to improve the relations with North Korea, and different South Korean leaders have used very different foreign policies to achieve that. Although the aim from South Korea with the work to improve the relations is most of the time to get a peace treaty with North Korea, to start economic cooperation, or to unify families that got separated at the Division of Korea<sup>4</sup>, they also hope that improvements in those areas can

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<sup>1</sup> Chanlett-Avery, Emma et al., “U.S.-South Korea Relations”, *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2013, p. 9

<sup>2</sup> Kim, Il-sung, “10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country” *Korean Friendship Association*, April 6, 1993

<sup>3</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Korea, 29 Oct 1987, Chapter I

<sup>4</sup> This means the 1945 separation of the Korean Peninsula into North Korea and South Korea.

lead the way for a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. This paper will explore the foreign policies that have been used by the post-1987 democratic elected South Korean Presidents to try to improve the relations with North Korea. With the theoretical framework of this paper, the analysis will provide an understanding whether or not these foreign policies have improved or worsen the reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. This paper also seeks to research if four significant incidents on the Korean Peninsula after the end of the Cold War (i.e. the two Korean Nuclear Crises and the 2010 Incidents) have changed South Korea's foreign policy towards North Korea, and provide an understanding what impact those incidents have had on the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula.

## **1.1 Purpose**

The Division of Korea into North and South Korea occurred in 1945 after the Empire of Japan had surrendered. The separation of the Korean Peninsula took place between the Soviet Union, which occupied North Korea, and the United States, which occupied South Korea<sup>5</sup>. First, the idea between both superpowers was that the Korean Peninsula should become independent again "*in due course*"<sup>6</sup>, which could lead to a reunification. But because of the Cold War that occurred between Soviet Union and the United States, the Korean Peninsula stayed separated, and has stayed separated to this day. This means that the Korean Peninsula has been separated in 68 years now. Although the Cold War officially ended in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the separated Korean Peninsula is an unfortunate left over of the Cold War. The Korean families that became separated at the Division of Korea are still today separated from each other. And since the tensions between North and South Korea continue to be high, the people of the Korean Peninsula have to live with the fear of war, and since 2006 even with the fear of nuclear war<sup>7</sup>, which is a very unfortunate situation. It is my belief that we have to learn from this unfortunate situation, not only to find a solution for the Korean Peninsula, but also so we can prevent something similar to occur in the future.

The main purpose of this study is to outline a partial understanding to why the Korean Peninsula is still separated today. This will be done firstly by highlighting the post-1987 democratic South Korea's foreign policies towards North Korea, and with the help from the

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<sup>5</sup> Murphey, R., (2009)., "*A History of Asia*" Pearson Education, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, p. 437

<sup>6</sup> Cairo Communiqué, December 1, 1943.

<sup>7</sup> Nikitin, Mary Beth, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues", *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013.

theoretical framework, analyze what impact those foreign policies have had on the relations between North and South Korea, thus providing an understanding what impact those foreign policies have had on the peaceful Korean reunification process. It is my belief that western media in general usually points to North Korea and its foreign policies towards South Korea as the main obstacle to a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. I do not believe that blaming North Korea gives a full understanding of the problem, especially since North Korea has its own reunification policy (i.e. the “10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country” from Kim Il-sung)<sup>8</sup>. So the second purpose with this paper is to highlight another view than the one that most western media gives, and by so providing the readers with a possibility to see the problem of the separated Korean Peninsula from another perspective than what is often given to us.

Secondly, I will look at some significant incidents that have occurred after the end of the Cold War. I will research how those incidents have changed South Korea’s foreign policy towards North Korea, and with the help from the theoretical framework, provide an understanding what impact those incidents have had on the Korean reunification process. The incidents that will be looked at are the First and the Second Korean Nuclear Crisis, and the 2010 Incidents. This will be part of understanding the main purpose of this study.

## **1.2 Problem Formulation**

The research problem of this paper is to analyze what impact the foreign policy of South Korea towards North Korea have had on a peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. To answer this research problem, the questions asked need to clearly look at different foreign policies from South Korea in recent years, as well as some incidents that have impacted South Korea’s foreign policy towards North Korea. All five questions asked will highlight different South Korean foreign policies. The three first questions are concerned with what impact three South Korean foreign policies have had to the relations between North and South Korea. The last two questions are concerned with what impact some significant incidents have had on South Korea’s foreign policy towards North Korea.

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<sup>8</sup> Kim, Il-sung, “10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country” *Korean Friendship Association*, April 6, 1993.

*Research question 1: How did South Korea's foreign relations change with Nordpolitik?<sup>9</sup>*

*Research question 2: What impact on the relations between North Korea and South Korea has the Sunshine Policy had?*

*Research question 3: How did the MB Doctrine change the North Korean and South Korean relations?*

*Research question 4: How has South Korea's foreign policy changed due the 2010 Incidents?*

*Research question 5: How did South Korea react to the two Korean Nuclear Crises?*

### **1.3 Previous Research**

Since the Korean Peninsula has been separated in 68 years, there is a vast amount of research that has been done in regards to South Korea's foreign policy and about a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Because of the long time period that the Korean Peninsula has stayed separated, academic papers have been released throughout a long period of time, thus giving an interesting understanding of how the ideas of a Korean reunification have changes significantly throughout the years, especially after the end of the Cold War. The post-Cold War academic papers in regards to a peaceful Korean reunification are based upon three different views that are commonly used by academics. The first view is that South Korea needs to use a more peaceful foreign policy towards North Korea and to improve the relations with North Korea. Those academics believe that it is the only way to achieve any changes in Pyongyang, which would eventually lead to a peaceful reunification. The second view is instead that South Korea has to use a more aggressive foreign policy towards North Korea, and not have any relations at all with North Korea. The idea with this view is that if North Korea becomes isolated, Pyongyang will eventually collapse, similar to what East Germany did in 1989. They see this as the only way to achieve a reunification, since according to those academics North and South Korea cannot reunify as long as both countries are two ideological different countries. The third view is looking at the foreign influences on the Korean Peninsula, and states that it is the foreign influences that are the key obstacle to a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Usually, those academics points to the United States, which still to this day has soldiers based in South Korea, as an obstacle. But they also

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<sup>9</sup> Nordpolitik is a German word for Northern Policy. Nordpolitik was based upon West Germany's Ostpolitik, which is the reason why the South Korean government decided to use a German word for the policy.

points to China, claiming that China does not want to see a reunified Korean Peninsula because of different reasons.

There has been conducted a vast amount of studies on North Korea as well. The problem with North Korea is to find objective information. Most of the academic papers on North Korea either glorifies the country, or degrade it. Some academics (e.g. Bruce Cumings) are however giving a more objective insight into North Korea, where they highlight how North Korea is as a country, how it is ruled, and how foreign powers have impacted North Korea's foreign policy.

The analysis of this paper is a unique way of looking at the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. This paper seeks to provide an understanding of what impact South Korea's foreign policy and some recent incidents have had on the reunification process through a theoretical framework of Social Constructivism. This will give the readers a new way of looking at the situation at the Korean Peninsula, and *hopefully* a new way of understanding why the Korean Peninsula has stayed separated in 68 years.

## **1.4 Delimitations**

To manage this research with the time span given, there are some specific issues that have been left out from this paper:

- The first limitation is the most obvious one. I cannot master the Korean language. This has made it difficult for me to collect a larger amount of primary sources to this analysis, which is a limitation due to the importance of using primary sources in an analysis like this one. This will be more explained in the Material used segment of this paper.
- The main purpose of this study is to outline a partial understanding to why the Korean Peninsula has stayed separated in 68 years. But as it clearly outlines, this is just a *partial* understanding to it. To get a full understanding to why the Korean Peninsula has stayed separated in 68 years, it is required to also look at other actors (e.g. North Korea, USA and China). I would like to have done that, and by so given the reader a full understanding to why the Korean Peninsula has stayed separated in 68 years. But

due to the length of this paper and the timespan given, I cannot look at more actors than South Korea.

- Foreign Policy of North Korea. North Korea's foreign policy is one that is very unpredictable. With the timespan given to this study and the problems to find reliable sources, it is not a possibility to analyze North Korea's foreign policy, and its impact on the reunification process. This is obviously a major limitation, since North Korea is, together with South Korea, the key actors to a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. As stated, North Korea's foreign policy is very unpredictable. This can be seen in a very recent example, where Kim Jong-un stated in his New Year's Speech on January 1, 2013, that he is seeking better relations with South Korea<sup>10</sup>. But almost two and a half months later, North Korea conducts a third nuclear weapons test<sup>11</sup>, and Kim Jong-un threatens the United States, Japan and South Korea with nuclear war<sup>12</sup>. I will however explain their policy (i.e. the 10-point programme) towards a peaceful reunification that Kim Il-sung outlined in 1993<sup>13</sup>.
- While this paper was written (April and May 2013), a very unpredictable situation is ongoing on the Korean Peninsula, now referred to as the 2013 Korean Crisis. Ever since North Korea launched a rocket in late 2012<sup>14</sup>, tensions between the United States and North Korea have been high. This situation took a very critical stance in early April 2013, when North Korea started to threaten with nuclear war, and the United States using bomber planes that can carry nuclear warheads in the annual South Korean – American military exercises to respond on those threats from North Korea. North Korea did also enter a state of war with South Korea, according to Pyongyang<sup>15</sup>. This situation has not reached a solution while this paper was written, so due to that I will not use it in the analysis. This is a limitation since the unpredictability of this situation can lead to a second Korean War, which would make the purpose of this study to look at a *peaceful* reunification irrelevant.

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<sup>10</sup> New Year Address Made by Kim Jong-un, Pyongyang: January 1, 2013

<sup>11</sup> Nikitin, Mary Beth, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues", *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013, p. 14

<sup>12</sup> "In Focus: North Korea's Nuclear Threats", *The New York Times*, April 16, 2013

<sup>13</sup> Kim, Il-sung, "10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country" *Korean Friendship Association*, April 6, 1993

<sup>14</sup> "North Korea launches successful rocket in face of criticism", *The Guardian*, 12 December 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Evron, Yoram, "The Korean Crisis, China-US Relations, and the Global System", *INSS Insight*, No. 417, April 12, 2013, p. 1

## **2. Background**

The Korean Peninsula was brutally occupied by the Empire of Japan during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Japanese brutally repressed the Koreans during the occupation, by trying to eradicate the Korean identity, and forcing the Koreans to adopt a Japanese identity. The brutal Japanese occupation ended in September 1945, when the Empire of Japan surrendered to the Allied powers of the Second World War<sup>16</sup>. Prior to the Japanese defeat, the Allied leaders had agreed that the Korean Peninsula shall become free and independent again, but after the Korean Peninsula has been occupied by the Allied powers for some time. In the Communiqué from the Cairo Conference, this was declared like this:

“... determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent”<sup>17</sup>.

On August 9, 1945, Stalin decided to take the Soviet Union into the war against the Empire of Japan. On the same day, the first Soviet forces marched into Korea. This move stunned the new Truman administration in the United States, which had a larger fear of the Sovietization of the world (i.e. Soviets influence on the countries they occupy), than what the previous Roosevelt administration had<sup>18</sup>. In hope to not lose the whole Korean Peninsula to the Soviets, the Truman administration came with the idea to divide the Korean Peninsula at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel between a Soviet and an American ruled part of the Korean Peninsula<sup>19</sup>. This is what led up to the Division of Korea into North Korea and South Korea.

In 1948, the agreement made at the Cairo Conference was lived up to, when Soviet forces left North Korea, as well as most of the American forces leaving South Korea<sup>20</sup>. But due to the start of the Cold War in 1947, the two vastly different governments in North and South Korea were not willing to reunify when they became independent<sup>21</sup>. This led to the Korean Peninsula becoming highly involved in the Cold War, which has been a *main* reason to why the Korean Peninsula has stay separated to this day, 68 years after the division.

The Korean War started on June 25, 1950, when North Korean troops crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and marched into South Korea. The war continued until 1953, when both sides of the war reached a ceasefire agreement. Besides the two Koreas, the war also involved China and a

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<sup>16</sup> Murphey, R., (2009)., *“A History of Asia”* Pearson Education, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, p. 436

<sup>17</sup> Cairo Communiqué, December 1, 1943.

<sup>18</sup> “Milestones: 1945-1952: The Truman Doctrine, 1947”, *U.S. Department of State: Office of the Historian*.

<sup>19</sup> Oberdorfer, D., (2001)., *“The Two Koreas”* Basic Books, p. 6 – 10.

<sup>20</sup> “Korean War”, *History World International*.

<sup>21</sup> Oberdorfer, D., (2001)., *“The Two Koreas”* Basic Books, p. 6 – 10.

multinational collective UN force<sup>22</sup>. The UN force involved 16 countries, although predominantly American and the command of the UN forces were also under the American control<sup>23</sup>. The fighting was first occurring in South Korea<sup>24</sup>, but after the collective UN force intervened, the fighting moved into the North Korea instead. After China decided to intervene, the war stayed around the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel until the ceasefire agreement in 1953<sup>25</sup>. The Korean War was a very brutal war, with an estimated 2.8 million soldiers killed, and 2 – 5 million civilian casualties<sup>26</sup>. Both sides have been accused for war atrocities, such as massacres and the use of torture against captured enemies<sup>27</sup>. Bruce Cumings highlights in his book *North Korea: Another Country* from 2004, that the whole of North Korea was destroyed by the bombardment from the dominant UN airpower. He is also arguing that the dominant UN airpower bombed several North Korea cities where North Korean civilians still lived, leading to a large amount of civilian casualties<sup>28</sup>.

The war reached a ceasefire on July 27, 1953, with the Korean Armistice Agreement, which had finally been signed by both sides after negotiations had been going on in almost 2 years<sup>29</sup>. The Korean Armistice Agreement is based on three essential Articles. The first Article states that there should be a peaceful border between North and South Korea, by creating a demilitarized zone (DMZ) at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. The second Article states the ceasefire and non-aggression pact between North Korea and South Korea / the United States. The third Article states that both countries should send back all their prisoners of war (POW)<sup>30</sup>. This began in August 1953 and ended in December the same year. This historic exchange of POWs is known as Operation Big Switch<sup>31</sup>. The Armistice Agreement was only a ceasefire agreement, not a peace treaty between North Korea and South Korea / the United States. This means that North Korea and South Korea / the United States *de facto* still is diplomatically at war with each other.

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<sup>22</sup> Murphey, R., (2009)., *"A History of Asia"* Pearson Education, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, p. 437 - 438

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 85.

<sup>24</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 31-32

<sup>25</sup> Murphey, R., (2009)., *"A History of Asia"* Pearson Education, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, p. 437 - 438

<sup>26</sup> IBID, p. 438

<sup>27</sup> "US and S Korea accused of war atrocities", *The Guardian*, Tuesday 18 January 2000.

<sup>28</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 28-42

<sup>29</sup> Stokesbury, J.L., (1990)., *"A Short History of the Korean War"* Harper Perennial, p. 144 - 245

<sup>30</sup> Text of the Korean Armistice Agreement, Panmunjom: July 27, 1953.

<sup>31</sup> "1953: UN and Korea begin prisoner exchange", *BBC*, 20 April, 1953

## 2.1 North Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established on September 9, 1948 under the leadership Kim Il-sung. North Korea is an authoritarian governed country (i.e. a single-party state)<sup>32</sup>. The North Korean regime is based around the Workers Party of Korea (WPK), created by Kim Il-sung after Soviet forces left North Korea in 1948<sup>33</sup>. The capital of North Korea is Pyongyang. North Korea has a population of almost 24.5 million people, with almost 2.5 million of these 24.5 million living in Pyongyang. North Korea is considered to be a poor country, with a living standard below the average of developing countries<sup>34</sup>, even though North Korea's living standard and economy used to be better during the 1970s and early 1980s<sup>35</sup>. North Korea has the fourth largest military in the world, with an estimated 1.1 million active military personnel<sup>36</sup>. North Korea's military is named the Korean People's Army (KPA). North Korea is also believed to possess nuclear weapons after they have announced to have conducted three successful test detonations of nuclear bombs (in 2006, 2009 and 2013)<sup>37</sup>.

North Korea adopted a Marxist-Leninism system if communism during the Soviet occupation. However, following North Korea's support to China during the Sino-Soviet Split in 1960, Kim Il-sung decided to create his own version of a political system, called Juche (pronounced, and sometime referred to as Chuch'e). The basic idea of Juche is that everyone is the master of everything and that everyone decided everything (e.g. that the people are the masters of revolution and construction of a country). Kim Il-sung also stressed three main principals of Juche: self-reliance in defense, political independence and economic self-sustenance<sup>38</sup>. The ideas in Juche led to the ideas of Songun, which is North Korea's Military First policy<sup>39</sup>. It gives North Korea's military high positions in the North Korean regime, as well as the highest priority to North Korea's finances and resources<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> "East & Southeast Asia: Korea, North", *CIA World Fact Book*, May 7, 2013

<sup>33</sup> Kim, Jong-il, "The Workers' Party of Korea is The Party of the Great Leader Comrade Kim Il Sung", October 2, 1995.

<sup>34</sup> "East & Southeast Asia: Korea, North", *CIA World Fact Book*, May 7, 2013

<sup>35</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., "*North Korea: Another Country*" The New Press, p. 128- 155

<sup>36</sup> The International Institute of Strategic Studies, "*The Military Balance 2013*", March 14, 2013, p. 245 - 350

<sup>37</sup> Nikitin, Mary Beth, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues", *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013.

<sup>38</sup> Lee, Grace, "The Political Philosophy of Juche", *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Volume 3, Number 1, Spring 2003, p. 105 - 108

<sup>39</sup> "Songun Politics", *Korean Friendship Association*, 2011

<sup>40</sup> Hassig, Ralph C. & Kongdan, Oh, "North Korea: The Hardest Nut", *Foreign Policy*, No. 139, (Nov – Dec, 2003), p. 46.

On July 8, 1994, Kim Il-sung passed away from natural causes. He was succeeded by his son, Kim Jong-il, even though Kim Jong-il did not officially become the leader of North Korea until 1997. In 1994 to 1998, North Korea experienced an unprecedented famine due to devastating weather conditions and an economic recession. The North Korean regime also badly mishandled the situation, sending more financial support to the military (as outlined in the Songun policy)<sup>41</sup>.

Kim Jong-il passed away from a heart attack on December 17, 2011. His third son in order, Kim Jong-un became the new leader of North Korea. It is believed that Kim Jong-un might have studied in Switzerland during the 1990s, but it cannot be confirmed as true or not<sup>42</sup>.

### **2.1.1 10-Point Programme**

On April 6, 1993, North Korea released a 10-point plan, written by Kim Il-sung. The 10-point plan stresses the importance of unity and independence for the Korean Peninsula, as well as the idea of North and South Korea creating a Korean Federation, where both states can have their own political system. This is how Kim Il-sung explained it in the 10-Point Programme:

“The north and the south should found a pan-national unified state which can represent all parties, groupings and all the members of the nation from all walks of life, while leaving the existing two systems and two governments as they are. The pan-national unified state should be a federal state in which the two regional governments of the north and the south are represented on an equal footing, and an independent, peaceful and nonaligned neutral state which does not lean to any great power.”<sup>43</sup>

The idea of a Korean Federation does however violate South Korea’s constitution, which stresses that South Korea can only accept a reunification on the principles of freedom and democracy<sup>44</sup>, thus making the idea of a Korean Federation impossible to become a reality.

After North Korea released this 10-point plan, it has been the bases of North Korea’s post-Cold War foreign policy towards South Korea<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., “*North Korea: Another Country*” The New Press, p. 155- 192

<sup>42</sup> “Inside the world of Kim Jong Un: North Korea’s strange hermit king”, *The Week*, April 13, 2013

<sup>43</sup> Kim, Il-sung, “10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country” *Korean Friendship Association*, April 6, 1993

<sup>44</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Korea, 29 Oct 1987. Chapter I

<sup>45</sup> Kim, Jong-il, “Let Us Carry Out The Great Leader Comrade Kim Il Sung’s Instructions for National Reunification” *Korean Friendship Association*, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1997

## 2.2 South Korea

The Republic of Korea was established on August 15, 1948 under the leadership of Syngman Rhee<sup>46</sup>. Today, South Korea is a liberal democratic country with a presidential system of government (South Korea has a prime minister as well, but the prime minister is appointed and acting under the president, and the president has executive power over the country, the government, and the armed forces)<sup>47</sup>. The capital of South Korea is the city of Seoul. South Korea has a population of almost 50 million people, with 10 million of these 50 million living in Seoul. South Korea is considered a develop country, and with a high living standard<sup>48</sup>. South Korea is also considered to be one of the most democratic countries in the East and South East Asian region<sup>49</sup>. The economy of South Korea is an export-oriented economy, based on a strong export-oriented industrial sector<sup>50</sup>. This has made South Korea's economy the 15<sup>th</sup> strongest economy in the world<sup>51</sup>, even though South Korea experienced a bankruptcy as late as 1997 due to the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis<sup>52</sup>.

The history of South Korea is based upon 6 different Republics and one time under Military rule. This paper will be based on the Sixth Republic, which is the post-1987 democratic Republic, and the current Republic of South Korea. All the 5 Republics prior to the Sixth Republic were undemocratically governed, and the South Korean military was highly involved in those governments<sup>53</sup>. Communism and other “enemies of the state” were being repressed by the South Korean leadership. Massacre was one of the tools the government used to repress the enemies of the state. It is believed it that up to a million people can have been killed due to those repressions<sup>54</sup>. The undemocratic control of South Korea ended in June 1987, when mass protests in South Korea forced a new, democratic South Korean constitution to be established in October that year<sup>55</sup>. According to the 1987 constitution of South Korea, a

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<sup>46</sup> “East & Southeast Asia: Korea, South”, *CIA World Fact Book*, May 7, 2013

<sup>47</sup> Xiaoming, H., (2009)., “*Politics in Pacific Asia: An Introduction*”, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 63

<sup>48</sup> “East & Southeast Asia: Korea, South”, *CIA World Fact Book*, May 7, 2013

<sup>49</sup> Chaibong, Hamn, “South Korea's Miraculous Democracy”, *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 19, Number 3, July 2008, p. 128 – 130.

<sup>50</sup> “East & Southeast Asia: Korea, South”, *CIA World Fact Book*, May 7, 2013.

<sup>51</sup> World Development Indicators database, “Gross domestic product 2011”, *World Bank*, 15 April 2013

<sup>52</sup> Kim, Kihwan, “The 1997-1998 Korean Financial Crisis: Causes, Policy, Responses, and Lessons”, *The International Monetary Fund*, Singapore: July 10, 2006, p. 12 - 19

<sup>53</sup> Croissant, Aurel, “Electoral Politics in South Korea”, *Electoral Politics in Southeast and East Asia*, 2002, p. 236 – 242.

<sup>54</sup> Chang, Paul Y. et al., “South Korea's Democracy Movement (1970-1993): Stanford Korea Democracy Project Report”, *The Korean Democracy Foundation Shorenstein Asia Pacific Research Center*, Stanford University: December 2007

<sup>55</sup> Ahn, Byung-Ook, “Truth and Reconciliation: Activates of the Past Three Years”, *Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea*, March 20, 2009, p. 5 – 9.

president is elected through democratic elections, and shall serve as president in five years. After the presidential time of five years is over, the president cannot be re-elected<sup>56</sup>, thus forcing a new president to be elected. Roh Tae-woo became the first ever democratic elected President of South Korea in 1988. In South Korean politics, there are two major political parties. The first one is the Saenuri Party, which is a conservative party. The second party is the Democratic United Party, which is a liberal party<sup>57</sup>.

### **2.2.1 Nordpolitik**

Nordpolitik (a German word for Northern Policy) was *officially* introduced in 1988 by the 6<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea, Roh Tae-woo<sup>58</sup>. However, Nordpolitik had *unofficially* been introduced already in early 1980s by the undemocratic Chun Doo-hwan government. But it was not until Roh Tae-woo became president that Nordpolitik started to have impact on the foreign relations of South Korea<sup>59</sup>.

Nordpolitik was based upon the ideas of West Germany's "Ostpolitik", thus the use of a German word for the policy<sup>60</sup>. The idea with Nordpolitik was that South Korea was going to improve their relations with North Korea's allies, which at that time were the Eastern Bloc countries, especially the Soviet Union and China. According to Roh Tae-woo, the improved relations should then decrease Soviet Union and China's support to North Korea, thus weaken North Korea and force them to start talks with South Korea. If this could be accomplished, Roh Tae-woo's administration believed it could lead the way to improved relations, and possibly to a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula<sup>61</sup>.

Kim Young-sam became inaugurated as the 7<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea in February 1993. Nordpolitik did officially continue throughout Kim Young-sam's presidency as well, even though Kim Young-sam decided to impose harsher pressure on North Korea. He was also forced to take a more aggressive stance towards North Korea during the First Nuclear Crisis<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Korea, 29 Oct 1987. Chapter IV

<sup>57</sup> Croissant, Aurel, "Electoral Politics in South Korea", *Electoral Politics in Southeast and East Asia*, 2002, p. 242 – 243

<sup>58</sup> Cherry, Lydia, "S. Korea's 'Northern Policy' gamble", *EIR* volume 17, Number 13, March 23, 1990.

<sup>59</sup> Yoon, Sanghyun, "Decision-making Structure and The Policy Process in South Korea's Nordpolitik", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1995

<sup>60</sup> Mosher, Steven W., (1992)., "*Korea in the 1990s: Prospect for Unification*" Transaction Publishers, p.79-81

<sup>61</sup> Cherry, Lydia, "S. Korea's 'Northern Policy' gamble", *EIR* volume 17, Number 13, March 23, 1990.

<sup>62</sup> Young, Whan Kihl., (2004)., "*Transforming Korean Politics: Democracy, Reform, and Culture*", M.E. Sharpe, p. 246 – 248.

### **2.2.2 The Sunshine Policy**

The Sunshine policy was introduced in 1998 when the 8<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea, Kim Dae-jung was inaugurated<sup>63</sup>. Kim Dae-jung was a member of the Democratic United Party, and considered to be a strong supporter of liberal views. Kim Dae-jung used to lead an opposition against the different leaders that undemocratically controlled South Korea prior to 1987. He also had a more friendly view on North Korea than what was common in South Korean politics, which made him have ideas about the North-South Korean relations that were otherwise very uncommon in South Korea politics. He thought that the only way to find a solution to the divided Korean Peninsula was to start cooperation with North Korea, and not to impose more pressure on them or to use harsh foreign policies<sup>64</sup>.

The idea with the Sunshine policy was to decrease the tensions on the Korean Peninsula by soften North Korea's relations towards South Korea (which been very harsh after Kim Il-sung died in 1994<sup>65</sup>). According to Kim Dae-jung's administration, this could be done by encouraging inter-Korean cooperation and to send economic assistance to North Korea.<sup>66</sup> To achieve this, Kim Dae-jung's administration stressed two components to the Sunshine policy. The first component was to divide economics and politics. This means that South Korea's government would, for the first time, allow private South Korean corporations to invest in North Korea, thus strengthen North Korea's economy and *possibly* change North Korea's economic system<sup>67</sup>. The second component was that North and South Korea have to respect mutuality. This idea was that both countries should respect each other equally, and be ready to make compromises, so both countries can gain from each other<sup>68</sup>.

Roh Moo-hyun became inaugurated as the 9<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea in February 2003. He decided to keep the exact similar foreign policy throughout his years as president as well<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> Inaugural Address by Kim Dae-jung the 15th-term President of the Republic of Korea, Seoul: February 25, 1998

<sup>64</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 76 - 77

<sup>65</sup> Young, Whan Kihl., (2004)., *"Transforming Korean Politics: Democracy, Reform, and Culture"*, M.E. Sharpe, p. 246 – 248

<sup>66</sup> Moon, Chung-in, "The Sunshine policy and the Korean Summit: Assessments and Prospects", *East Asian Review*, Vol.12, No.4, Winter 2000, p. 5-7.

<sup>67</sup> IBID, p. 8-9

<sup>68</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 77

<sup>69</sup> Kim, Choong Nam, "The Roh Moo Hyun Government's Policy towards North Korea", *East-West Center Working Papers: Politics, Governance and Security Series*, no. 11, August 2005

### **2.2.3 The MB Doctrine**

When Lee Myung-bak became inaugurated as the 10<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea in February 2008, he decided to introduce the MB Doctrine (Myung-bak Doctrine) into South Korean politics<sup>70</sup>. Lee Myung-bak used to have a business career, being Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Hyundai before starting a political career in the Saenuri Party<sup>71</sup>. With his inauguration in 2008, the decade long liberal control of South Korea had ended, and South Korea entered the new, conservative path of the MB Doctrine.

The MB Doctrine involves ideas about both domestic and foreign policies. In regards of the foreign policy of the MB Doctrine, Lee Myung-bak stressed three significant pillars to it. The first pillar is to improve the relations between the United States and South Korea, and to strengthen the U.S. - South Korean alliance. The second pillar to the MB Doctrine is to improve South Korea's relations with the other East and Southeast Asian countries, especially improved business relations (i.e. trade) with China<sup>72</sup>. The third pillar to the MB Doctrine is what Lee Myung-bak described as Vision 3000. The idea of Vision 3000 is to go back to a harsher foreign policy towards North Korea as long as North Korea does not denuclearize and improve their human rights issues. If North Korea denuclearizes and stops with their human rights violations, then Lee Myung-bak would be willing to continue and increase the economic cooperation between North and South Korea introduced during the Sunshine Policy<sup>73</sup>.

In February 2013, the 11<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea, Park Geun-hye held her inauguration speech. It stated that she will continue with a similar foreign policy introduced by Lee Myung-bak, thus making the MB Doctrine continue during her presidency as well<sup>74</sup>. The analysis of this paper will only analyze Lee Myung-bak's presidency, since Park Geun-hye has only been president in 3 months while this paper was written.

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<sup>70</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008

<sup>71</sup> "Profile: Lee Myung-bak", *BBC*, 25 February, 2008.

<sup>72</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008

<sup>73</sup> <sup>73</sup> Suh, Jae Jean., (2009)., "The Lee Myung-bak Government's North Korea Policy – A Study on its Historical and Theoretical Foundation" Korea Institute for National Unification

<sup>74</sup> The 18th Presidential Inauguration Address, Seoul: February 25, 2013

## **2.3 The Korean Nuclear Crises**

The two Korean Nuclear Crises have been two of the more severe incidents that have occurred on the Korean Peninsula after the end of the Cold War. Although both the First and the Second Nuclear Crisis have been clashes in the relations between North Korea and United States, the foreign policy of South Korea has been vastly affected by them<sup>75</sup>.

*The First Nuclear Crisis* occurred in 1993 and 1994, and is considered to be one of the closest times the United States has been to war with North Korea since the Korean War<sup>76</sup>. Ever since the end of the Korean War, North Korea had been trying to develop nuclear technology, which was going to be used as a domestic energy source. The United States did however suspect that North Korea was *de facto* trying to develop nuclear weapons<sup>77</sup>. In 1985, North Korea ratified the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)<sup>78</sup>. But they never allowed inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to start inspect North Korea's nuclear facilities until 1991, when North and South Korea agreed to the Joint Declaration, which was an agreement about a denuclearized Korean Peninsula<sup>79</sup>.

The First Nuclear Crisis started in February 1993, when North Korea refused the IAEA inspectors to continue with their inspections of North Korea's nuclear facilities. The new Clinton administration in the United States reacted aggressive towards this refusal, warning to conduct a preemptive strike on North Korea's nuclear reactors (especially their largest, the Yongbyon reactor). They reacted aggressive because some American officials had warned that North Korea might already possess one or two nuclear bombs in 1993. The next month, North Korea announced that they were planning to leave the NPT<sup>80</sup>. This announcement sparked severe international criticism and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) voted to condemn North Korea's actions in UNSC Resolution 825<sup>81</sup>. No sanctions were imposed on North Korea however, since North Korea had warned that sanctions imposed on them would lead to war<sup>82</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 43 - 102

<sup>76</sup> "Washington was on brink of war with North Korea 5 years ago", *CNN*, October 4, 1999.

<sup>77</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p 57-59

<sup>78</sup> Nikitin, Mary Beth, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues", *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013, p. 1

<sup>79</sup> Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, Seoul: 19 February 1992

<sup>80</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 65 - 73

<sup>81</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 825.

<sup>82</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 70 - 71

The tensions between North Korea and the United States continued to stay dangerously high until the *former* President of the United States, Jimmy Carter decided to visit Pyongyang and negotiate a solution to this crisis with Kim Il-sung in June 1994. Following Carter visits, talks between North Korean and American delegates started in Geneva, Switzerland<sup>83</sup>. On October 21, 1994, the First Nuclear Crisis ended, when both sides reached the Agreed Framework. In the Agreed Framework, North Korea accepted to halt its program to construct “heavy water” nuclear energy (which it is possible to construct nuclear weapons from); while the Americans agreed to help North Korea construct “light water” nuclear reactors (which it is not possible to construct nuclear weapons from)<sup>84</sup>.

*The Second Nuclear Crisis* started in 2003 and is still ongoing to this day. Although it is a new crisis, it occurred in a similar fashion as the first crisis. After the 9/11 attacks in the United States, the Bush administration decided to introduce a new, aggressive doctrine of American foreign policy. The Bush administration was keen to eliminate all the threats towards the United States; especially states they believed had a nuclear weapons program. North Korea was considered a threat towards the United States (Bush described those states as “Axis of Evils”)<sup>85</sup>. To protect the United States and its allies, the Bush administration ratified the use of preemptive warfare<sup>86</sup>.

The Second Nuclear Crisis started following President Bush’s 2002 State of the Union Address, where he deliberately condemned North Korea’s nuclear program, and labeled North Korea as an Axis of Evil<sup>87</sup>. To this North Korea again refused the IAEA inspectors to continue their inspections (the first time since the Agreed Framework was signed). North Korea also restarted their Yongbyon reactor, which was their only “heavy water” nuclear reactor at that time. On January 7, 2003, North Korea announced that if UNSC sanctions will be imposed on them, they will see that as a declaration of war (similar to what they said in 1993). Three days later, North Korea declared that they have *de facto* left the NPT. In March 2003, the United States conducted a preemptive invasion of Iraq (an Axis of Evil); an invasion that many

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<sup>83</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., “*North Korea: Another Country*” The New Press , p. 71- 73

<sup>84</sup> Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Geneva: October 21, 1994

<sup>85</sup> President George W. Bush, State of the Union Speech, Washington D.C: 2002

<sup>86</sup> National Security Council, “V. Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction”, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington: September 2002.

<sup>87</sup> President George W. Bush, State of the Union Speech, Washington D.C: 2002

experts believe made Kim Jong-il keen to construct nuclear weapons in defense against a similar American preemptive invasion of North Korea<sup>88</sup>.

The Bush administration was however willing to solve this crisis with diplomatic means. After North Korea had announced that they had left the NPT in 2003, the Bush administration was able to create the “Six-party talks”. In the Six-party talks, high diplomatic delegates from the United States, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China and Russia met and discussed a solution to the Second Nuclear Crisis. Even though the Six-party talks had several rounds of talks until 2007, a real solution to the Second Nuclear Crisis was never reached<sup>89</sup>. On October 9, 2006, North Korea announced that they had conducted their first ever test detonation of a nuclear bomb<sup>90</sup>. This was followed with severe international criticism, as well as with UNSC sanctions imposed on North Korea in UNSC Resolution 1718<sup>91</sup>. On April 13, 2009, North Korea announced that they have withdrawn from the Six-party talks<sup>92</sup>. North Korea has stayed outside the Six-party talks ever since. Following North Korea’s test detonation of a nuclear bomb in 2006, North Korea has announced that they have conducted a second test detonation on May 25, 2009, and a third on February 12, 2013<sup>93</sup>. The Second Nuclear Crisis is ongoing, and has to be considered to not be close to a solution yet.

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<sup>88</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., “*North Korea: Another Country*” The New Press, p. 90 - 100

<sup>89</sup> Howlett, Darryl, “Nuclear proliferation” in Baylis at al. *The Globalization of World Politics: An introduction to international relations*”, Fourth Edition: 2008, p. 395

<sup>90</sup> Nikitin, Mary Beth, “North Korea’s Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues”, *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013, p. 15 – 16.

<sup>91</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718.

<sup>92</sup> “North Korea Says It Will Halt Talks and Restart Its Nuclear Program”, *The New York Times*, April 14, 2009

<sup>93</sup> Nikitin, Mary Beth, “North Korea’s Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues”, *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013, p. 14-15.

## 2.4 The 2010 Incidents

The new decade that started in 2010 began very dramatic and unfortunate than what was expected on the Korean Peninsula. The two incidents that will be explained here have vastly increased the tensions between North and South Korea, and led the way for the current 2013 Korean Crisis.

*The ROKS Cheonan sinking* occurred on March 26, 2010, when South Korea's corvette ROKS Cheonan sank just outside of the South Korean island Baengnyeong in the Yellow Sea, which left 46 South Korean sailors dead<sup>94</sup>. The ownership of the water around the island has been a highly debated topic between North and South Korea, which has led to clashes in that area throughout the years following the end of the Korean War<sup>95</sup>. With that being a fact, many journalists believed just after the sinking that a North Korean submarine had sunk the ROKS Cheonan, by hitting it with a torpedo<sup>96</sup>. However, this was denied by South Korea's Minister of Defense, since South Korea did not have any knowledge of how or what sank the ROKS Cheonan<sup>97</sup>. But an international investigation team was established, in hope that it might be able to find the answer to why ROKS Cheonan sank. On September 13, 2010, the investigation team released its final report, which stated that they had found overwhelmingly evidence that North Korea was behind the sinking. They claimed to have found pieces of a torpedo at the site of the sinking, which had markings in Hangul (Korean alphabet) on them. They also claimed that the torpedo had exploded some meters away from the ROKS Cheonan, and that the powerful shockwave from the torpedo had damaged the ROKS Cheonan so much that it started to sink<sup>98</sup>. These findings were highly criticized by many experts around the world, which instead claimed that the ROKS Cheonan probably sank by hitting a mine, or from an internal explosion<sup>99</sup>. Still to this day, North Korea is officially only *believed* to be behind the sinking, even though North Korean defectors have claimed that North Korea was behind the sinking<sup>100</sup>.

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<sup>94</sup> "South Korea Publicly Blames the North for Ship's Sinking", *The New York Times*, May 19, 2010

<sup>95</sup> Roehrig, Terence, "The Northern Limit Line: The Disputed Maritime Boundary Between North and South Korea", *The National Committee on North Korea*, Washington D.C: September 30, 2011 p. 2-3

<sup>96</sup> "South Korea Publicly Blames the North for Ship's Sinking", *The New York Times*, May 19, 2010

<sup>97</sup> "South Korea urges restraint over sunken warship", *BBC*, 1 April 2010.

<sup>98</sup> The Joint Civilian-Military Investigation Group, "Investigation Result on the Sinking of ROKS 'Cheonan'", 20 May, 2010

<sup>99</sup> Byun, See-Won & Snyder, Scott, "Cheonan and Yeonpyeong: The Northeast Asian Response to North Korea's Provocations", *The Rusi Journal*, April/May 2011 VOL. 156 NO. 2 pp. 74-81.

<sup>100</sup> "NK sailors awarded hero's title for attack on S. Korean warship: defector", *The Korea Times*, 2012-12-08

*The shelling of the Yeonpyeong Island* occurred on November 23, 2010, when North Korea shot artillery shells towards the South Korean island Yeonpyeong. Both military and civilian targets on Yeonpyeong were hit by the shelling, which left 4 South Koreans dead. South Korea retaliated by shelling North Korean artillery positions located close to the border<sup>101</sup>. North Korea claimed that they conducted this act of aggression in response to a South Korean Navy artillery exercise, which had occurred earlier on the same day as the shelling occurred. North Korea meant that the South Korean Navy had shot their artillery inside North Korean waters, which then was the reason to why North Korea conducted the shelling of Yeonpyeong. South Korea however claimed that their Navy never shot its artillery into North Korean waters<sup>102</sup>. The maritime border between North and South Korea was drawn in the Armistice Agreement. But since the 1970s, North Korea has claimed that they own more of the southern parts of the Yellow Sea<sup>103</sup>. So North Korea believed that the shells from the South Korean Navy artillery exercise landed in North Korean owned waters, even though the shells landed in South Korean waters according to the Armistice Agreement. North Korea received severe international criticism because of the shelling, and a lot of experts claim that this incident is the worst incident between North and South Korea since the end of the Korean War<sup>104</sup>.

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<sup>101</sup> Bermudez Jr., Joseph S., "The Yeonpyeong Island Incident", *38 North Special Report*, January 11, 2011 p.3-8

<sup>102</sup> "'Crisis Status' in South Korea After North Shells Island", *The New York Times*, November 23, 2010

<sup>103</sup> Roehrig, Terence, "The Northern Limit Line: The Disputed Maritime Boundary Between North and South Korea", *The National Committee on North Korea*, Washington D.C: September 30, 2011

<sup>104</sup> Cheon, Seong Whun, "North Korea's Attack on Yeonpyeong and the Choices for South Korea", *Korean Institute for National Unification*, Seoul: 2010-12-02, p. 1-2

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

In this study, I conducted a Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) by analyzing three “eras” of the post-1987 democratic South Korea’s foreign policy towards North Korea. Before I start to describe the theory chosen for this study, I would like to clarify some points. Firstly, I have decided to describe the three foreign policies that will be looked at, as eras of South Korean foreign policy towards North Korea. The reason for that is because all three have been used in a decade, (the MB Doctrine has been used in only five years, but will most likely be ongoing for five more years) and in every era; two different Presidents of South Korea have been in office. So, I will describe these foreign policies and analyze their impact on the North-South Korean relations. I will also describe what changes the second South Korean president in the era might have brought to the actual foreign policy. With those highlighted facts, I believe it is justified to describe these three foreign policies as “eras” of South Korean foreign policy towards North Korea.

Secondly, I would like to describe why I have conducted a FPA in this study. In a FPA, scholars highlights the decisions actors make, why those actors made those decisions, evaluate if the decisions were the right decisions made by the actors, and if other decisions would have generated better or worse results for the actors<sup>105</sup>. The purpose of this study is to partially understand why the Korean Peninsula has stayed separated in 68 years. When conducting a FPA to research South Korea’s foreign policy towards North Korea, the purpose of this study can then be understood by the readers, since the FPA will present the answers to the research questions asked, which will construct the answer to the purpose of this study. While conducting the FPA, I have used the theoretical framework of Social Constructivism to obtain the best answers to the research questions asked. In the following segment, I will explain the theoretical framework of Social Constructivism, as well as motivate why I believed Social Constructivism to be the appropriate theory for this study.

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<sup>105</sup> Dunne, Tim et al., “Introduction” in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 1

### **3.1 Social Constructivism**

Social Constructivism (henceforth referred to as Constructivism) is a new way of thinking in International Relations compared to the more traditional ways of thinking in International Relations (e.g. Realism and Liberalism). Constructivism sees the world as social constructed, thus putting more emphasis on ideas, norms, identity, language and interest than what the traditional theories do. Constructivist scholars argue that the social interaction between different actors (e.g. states, NGOs or policymakers) constructs the world politics<sup>106</sup>. While the traditional theories put a lot of emphasis on the material of the world (e.g. possession of nuclear weapons, or a large army), Constructivism is emphasizing the social of the world more than the material of the world. However, the material of the world is still important in Constructivism. The difference is that Constructivism is arguing that it is the social of the world that gives the material of the world different meaning to different actors in the world<sup>107</sup>. Prominent Constructivist scholar Alexander Wendt states this very clearly in his masterpiece *Anarchy is what states make of it* from 1992. This is how Wendt states it:

“A fundamental principle of constructivist social theory is that people act towards objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them. States act differently towards enemies than they do towards friends because enemies are threatening and friends are not.”<sup>108</sup>

When Constructivism is used to analyze Foreign Policy, several different contributions need be studied in the analysis. Jeffrey T. Checkel (a prominent scholar in Constructivist FPA) has highlighted three contributions that he believes are essential to study when conducting a Constructivist FPA. These three contributions are bureaucracies' role in policy-making, the social part in decision-making and the role of international society in foreign policy<sup>109</sup>. The Analysis of this paper will be based on these three contributions, since they have a significant role in the policy-making of the foreign policy of South Korea towards North Korea.

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<sup>106</sup> Fierke, K.M, “Constructivism” in Dunne et al. *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Third Edition: 2013, p. 189

<sup>107</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, “Constructivism and foreign policy” in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 75

<sup>108</sup> Wendt, Alexander, “Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics” *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 1992, p. 396 - 397

<sup>109</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, “Constructivism and foreign policy” in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 73 - 74

The first contribution is about bureaucracies' role in the policy-making. Checkel outlines that state bureaucracies have always had a heavy role in states policy-making. Every state in the world has several state bureaucracies (e.g. a trade department, defense department, etc.). This is also the case in South Korea, where several state bureaucracies (e.g. the Ministry of Unification, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Assembly, the president secretariat, and the national intelligence agency) are having a strong say in the decision-making process. According to the traditional theories in FPA, these different state bureaucracies act upon the interest of the state to gain a material profit, which at the end benefits the state. So, in the traditional theories, state bureaucracies own interest is not highlighted, since the traditional theories see their own interest as already given, and unproblematic for the state. According to Constructivism however, researching state bureaucracies own interest is seen as a vital component in analyzing a country's foreign policy. Constructivism stresses that different state bureaucracies own interest is having a major impact in the policy-making, and can shape the actual foreign policy. Constructivism also argues that state bureaucracies own interest is being created through interactions in the social of the world, instead of seeing their own interest as already given<sup>110</sup>. It can be seen in South Korean policy-making that state bureaucracies own interest has had a strong part in the decision-making process<sup>111</sup>, thus making it an essential component to research when analyzing South Korea's different foreign policies.

Checkel is also outlining that ever since the end of the Cold War, non-state bureaucracies have been getting a stronger say in states foreign policy-making. These non-state bureaucracies can be everything from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to international corporations. Non-state bureaucracies are seeking their own interest rather than the state's interest during a decision-making process, since they are not related to the state as state bureaucracies are. Since Constructivist FPA is interested in bureaucracies own interest, non-state bureaucracies own interest is then also vital to research, since the social interaction between a policymaker and a non-state bureaucracy can shape the foreign policy<sup>112</sup>. This has been the case in South Korean policy-making, especially after South Korean corporations have been getting access to invest in North Korea during the Sunshine Policy<sup>113</sup>. So, it then

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<sup>110</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, "Constructivism and foreign policy" in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 74 - 76

<sup>111</sup> See e.g. the Ministry of Unification's and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs webpages

<sup>112</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, "Constructivism and foreign policy" in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 75- 76

<sup>113</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., "*North Korea: Another Country*" The New Press, p. 76- 89

becomes essential to research what part non-state bureaucracies own interest have had in the South Korean policy-making process.

The second contribution that Checkel stresses is the actual decision-making process in foreign policy. The traditional theories argue that the decision-making process between different actors is rational, and their ontology (i.e. the nature of being) is an individualist ontology of rationalism. In other words, an actor has a decided goal, and will bargain and haggle with other actors in trying to reach that decided goal<sup>114</sup>. For example, Realism stresses that states will maximize their state interest in decision-making in regard of survival<sup>115</sup>. Constructivist FPA argues instead about the arguing and persuading in the decision-making process. In other words, actors will socially interact in trying to convince each other into reaching the goal, instead of bargaining to reach a set goal. Also, Constructivism stresses that when a decision-making process is going on, actors do not start with a decided goal. Instead, the idea of arguing is to learn what the other actors want to achieve, thus deciding its own interest on the information gained while arguing<sup>116</sup>. So, instead of an individualist ontology, Constructivism has a social ontology of rationalism<sup>117</sup>. Alexander Wendt highlights this in his masterpiece *Anarchy is what states makes of it*. This is how Wendt highlights it:

“Identities are the basis of interests. Actors do not have a “portfolio” of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead, they define their interests in the process of defining situations.”<sup>118</sup>

The arguing and learning part of a Constructivist FPA can be proven to have had a large role in the decision-making process in South Korea and between North and South Korea, especially when researching the first and the second inter-Korean summit<sup>119</sup>.

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<sup>114</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, “Constructivism and foreign policy” in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 76

<sup>115</sup> Fierke, K.M, “Constructivism” in Dunne et al. *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Third Edition: 2013, p. 190

<sup>116</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, “Constructivism and foreign policy” in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 76 - 77

<sup>117</sup> Fierke, K.M, “Constructivism” in Dunne et al. *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Third Edition: 2013, p. 190

<sup>118</sup> Wendt, Alexander, “Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics” *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 1992, p. 397 - 398

<sup>119</sup> See e.g. ‘South-North Joint Declaration’ and ‘Declaration on Advancement of South-North Korean Relations, Peace, Prosperity’

The third contribution that Checkel outlines is the international society's impact on states policy-making, which has become more important in foreign policy analysis since our world has become more and more globalized after the end of the Cold War. According to Checkel, it is essential in a Constructivist FPA to research what is connecting the international to the domestic in a state's policy-making. To be able to answer this, it is important to research the interplay between international and domestic actors<sup>120</sup>. An example of that can be the problem with nuclear weapons and the Korean Peninsula. While North Korea tries to construct nuclear weapons, several NGOs with the interest of a non-nuclear world, might socially interplay with the domestic foreign policy-makers in South Korea, in hope to persuade the domestic South Korean policy-makers into constructing South Korea's foreign policy towards the effort to denuclearize North Korea<sup>121</sup>. This persuading can be achieved from social connections, for example international NGOs connecting with domestic activists, or multi-national corporations (MNC) influencing the state policy-makers due to a social connection between them. This is important to analyze in a Constructivist FPA, because the material of the world is socially connecting the domestic actors with the international actors, which then socially constructs the foreign policy towards that material of the world<sup>122</sup>. This contribution also highlights international or regional powerhouses, which can dictate the domestic identity of states, and by so having a large impact in states policy-making<sup>123</sup>. This can be proven in the case of the Korean Peninsula, where both the United States and China are having a major role. While a peaceful reunification is North and South Korea's business, the Chinese and American encounter in the region of East Asia can influence the process of a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula, through the use of arguing and persuading with a domestic actor (e.g. the head of state or a particular state bureaucracy)<sup>124</sup>.

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<sup>120</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, "Constructivism and foreign policy" in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 77 - 78

<sup>121</sup> See e.g. Nikitin, Mary Beth, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues", *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013

<sup>122</sup> Fierke, K.M, "Constructivism" in Dunne et al. *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Third Edition: 2013, p. 189

<sup>123</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, "Constructivism and foreign policy" in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008, p. 78

<sup>124</sup> See e.g. Chanlett-Avery, Emma et al., "U.S.-South Korea Relations", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2013

## 4. Method

This paper has used Case Study with a qualitative approach as the method. To answer the research questions asked, as well as to understand the purpose of this study, a quantitative approach is not justified to be used. Quantitative data such as statistics and survey research would not help me answer the research questions. Instead, Qualitative data, such as text/discourse analysis and quotes from policy-makers are more justified to be used in answering the research questions asked<sup>125</sup>. As the appropriate method for this study, I have used the Case study approach. Case study is used to analyze a specific issue (e.g. a person, an event or a foreign policy) in an in-depth way, and by doing so, reach better understandings of the natural context of that case. This is different compared to the other methods available, since they look more at a broader picture in an analysis than what the Case study approach does<sup>126</sup>. Gary Thomas (a prominent British scholar in qualitative method) has stressed an interesting explanation to the Case study approach. This is how he stresses it:

“Case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. The case that is the *subject* of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame — an *object* — within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates.”<sup>127</sup>

Case study is also a method that fits well with the theoretical framework of Constructivism. Prominent Constructivist scholar John G. Ruggie highlights this in his article *What Makes the World Hang Together* from 1998. This is a citation from Ruggie’s article:

"Constructivism does not aspire to the hypothetico-deductive mode of theory construction. It is by necessity more "realistic", to use Weber's term, or inductive in orientation. Additionally, its concepts in the first instance are intended to tap into and help interpret the meaning and significance that actors ascribe to the collective situation in which they find themselves. It is unlikely that this function could be performed by concepts that represent a priori types derived from some universalizing theory-sketch or from purely nominal definitions"<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Vromen, Ariadne, “Debating Methods: Rediscovering Qualitative Approaches” in Marsh, David and Stoker, Gerry, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Political Analysis Third Edition, 2010, p. 250

<sup>126</sup> Yin, Robert K., (2008), “*Case Study Research: Design and Methods*” SAGE Publications

<sup>127</sup> Thomas, Gary, “A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure”, *British Journal of Social Work*, August 1, 2012, p. 511-521

<sup>128</sup> Ruggie, John G., “What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge”, *international organization*, vol. 54, no. 4, 1998, p. 880

This citation clearly indicates that an inductive, Case study approach is appropriate to be used while a student is conducting a Constructivist study. That is one of the main reasons to why I decided to use Case study as the method of this study.

In the Case study method, different types of approaches can be used while analyzing a case. I have decided to use the collective Case study approach. This approach focuses on analyzing several cases in an attempt to explain a broader issue, instead of only analyzing one particular case, which is otherwise the most common approach in the Case study method<sup>129</sup>. I have used the collective Case study approach in this study, since I believe it is the most appropriate approach for this study. To understand this, I have to explain what main case and underlying cases I have analyzed in this study, and why an in-depth research of these underlying cases has explained the main case.

The main case of this paper is the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. To be able to understand this main case, I have analyzed three “eras” of the post-1987 democratic South Korean foreign policy in an in-depth way. While analyzing these three cases in-depth, an understanding has been provided to the reader what different impacts these three cases have had on the main case, which is in accordance with the collective Case study approach<sup>130</sup>. Also, a comparative approach has been used, although not in a dominant way. The comparison has been used to highlight the differences between the three cases, as well as the different impact the three cases have had on the main case. However, the Comparative method is not justified for this study, since this study is not a comparison study in its natural form. Instead, this study’s natural form is in analyzing these three cases in-depth, so the understanding of the impact on the main case can be understood by the reader<sup>131</sup>. In other words, this study has provided the reader with an in-depth analysis about Nordpolitik, the Sunshine Policy and the MB Doctrine, while at the same time explained these three foreign policies impact on the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. This is in accordance with the collective case study approach<sup>132</sup>. It also makes this study a unique study, since it gives the reader in-depths analysis of the three cases, as well as an understanding to the main case.

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<sup>129</sup> Stake, Robert E., (1995), “*The Art of Case Study Research*” SAGE Publications

<sup>130</sup> IBID

<sup>131</sup> Vromen, Ariadne, “Debating Methods: Rediscovering Qualitative Approaches” in Marsh, David and Stoker, Gerry, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Political Analysis Third Edition, 2010, p. 250

<sup>132</sup> Yin, Robert K., (2008), “*Case Study Research: Design and Methods*” SAGE Publications

## 4.1 Material used

With the theoretical framework of Constructivism and with a qualitative approach to the case study as method of this study, it is important for me to take a careful approach to the type of material that has been used in this study. With a qualitative approach, it is justified to use documents and texts as the material used. In that case, primary sources is to prefer in an analysis like this one, since secondary sources already has an analysis in them<sup>133</sup>. Primary sources can be everything from governmental documents, bureaucracy's documents to quotes from a policy-maker in an interview. This suits well with the theoretical framework of Constructivism used in this study, since Constructivism is concerned with bureaucracies own interests in the policy-making, as well as the social in the decision-making process<sup>134</sup>. By analyzing the information found in primary sources, the purpose of this study has been explained and understood by the readers. Ariadne Vromen (a prominent scholar in the techniques with qualitative method) stresses this idea very well:

“This also emphasizes that the qualitative use of texts and documentary primary sources is to make meaning from them by using them to ‘tell the story’ or recreate a historical sequencing of events”<sup>135</sup>

In this study, I have used a vast amount of primary sources to ‘tell the story’ as Vromen stresses it. However, I cannot stress enough one of the major limitations that I have with this study. The fact that I cannot read the Korean language complicated my changes to use a large amount of primary sources. It should be stressed that South Korea's government, and the different ministries that have been looked at, do release primary sources in English<sup>136</sup>. Those with a relevancy to this study have been used in this analysis. But there is a lack of primary sources in the analysis due to my limitation of not mastering the Korean language. To compensate for the lack of primary sources, I have been forced to also rely on a large amount of secondary sources. This becomes a problem due to the credibility of the sources, since political and ideology beliefs of the authors will make the secondary sources biased<sup>137</sup>. To solve the problem of biased secondary sources, I have used a large amount of different secondary sources, with scholars of different political views, from different countries, and

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<sup>133</sup> Vromen, Ariadne, “Debating Methods: Rediscovering Qualitative Approaches” in Marsh, David and Stoker, Gerry, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Political Analysis Third Edition, 2010, p. 261 - 262

<sup>134</sup> Checkel, Jeffrey T, “Constructivism and foreign policy” in Dunne et al. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 2008

<sup>135</sup> Vromen, Ariadne, “Debating Methods: Rediscovering Qualitative Approaches” in Marsh, David and Stoker, Gerry, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Political Analysis Third Edition, 2010, p. 262

<sup>136</sup> See e.g. the Ministry of Unification's webpage

<sup>137</sup> “Finding Secondary Sources”, *University at Illinois*, 2013.

with different interests in writing their papers. By doing so, I solved both the problems with biased secondary sources, as well as with the already existing analysis in secondary sources. By analyzing a large amount of different secondary sources, I have been able to construct my own view of the cases that I have researched, which made me able to compose my own analysis in this paper<sup>138</sup>. In secondary sources, I have also been able to find necessary information to outline in the background segment of this paper.

In regard of the primary sources that will be analyzed and used in this study, I have based my analysis and use of the qualitative data on the discourse way of studying qualitative data. In the discourse analysis, it is important to interpret the broader social, cultural and political frameworks of the qualitative data used. For example, while analyzing a bureaucracy's official document, with the discourse analysis, it is justified to research if their might be a political or social reasoning to why they are making decisions as they are. The discourse analysis is also interested in analyzing the language in primary sources, since language can be analyzed into providing an understanding of an actor's interest<sup>139</sup>. The discourse analysis is fitting well together with a theoretical framework of Constructivism, since both are interested in similar information. The use of a discourse approach by analyzing the qualitative data has helped me answer the research questions asked, as well as to provide an understanding to the purpose of this study.

The last point that will be highlighted is that Bruce Cumings has been used in a large amount in this study. Bruce Cumings is a very prominent American scholar on Korean politics and on the Korean Peninsula. Cumings information is in most parts objective, and gives a good insight into North Korea and its leadership (which it is basically impossible to find objective data about). Cumings also gives some great information in his books, which otherwise would be difficult to obtain by students that do not master the Korean language<sup>140</sup>. When information is used from a prominent scholar, it has been stated before highlighting the information, that it is that scholars information and views. For example, I have stated that it is "according to Cumings" before highlighting his ideas. This makes this study less biased, and increases the quality of the paper<sup>141</sup>.

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<sup>138</sup> "Using Secondary Sources Effectively", *Illinois Valley Community College*, 2001.

<sup>139</sup> Vromen, Ariadne, "Debating Methods: Rediscovering Qualitative Approaches" in Marsh, David and Stoker, Gerry, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Political Analysis Third Edition, 2010, p. 263 - 264

<sup>140</sup> "Bruce Cumings", *The University of Chicago* 2013.

<sup>141</sup> "Using Secondary Sources Effectively", *Illinois Valley Community College*, 2001.

## 5. Analysis

Before this analysis starts to explore the research problem, it is important to highlight that this study will analyze the post-1987 democratic South Korean foreign policies towards North Korea. Prior to South Korea becoming a democracy in 1987, the foreign policy of South Korea towards North Korea was based upon high tensions and bad relations. After the Korean War ended in 1953, North and South Korea did not have any formal relations at all<sup>142</sup>. No talks were held for almost two decades between both states, until the Red Cross was able to get North and South Korea to start talking with each other in 1971. During those talks, both North and South Korea agreed that ending the hostile relations and reach a peaceful reunification should be the aim for both countries. Several talks were held between delegates from both countries until the talks broke down in 1973<sup>143</sup>.

But in regard to a peaceful reunification, significant progress had been made in 1972, when the North-South Joint Statement was issued. This statement outlined some agreements that North and South Korean officials had reached in regard to a peaceful reunification. Some example of these agreements were that a reunification must be done independently and without any foreign influences, that it must be done peacefully and that the differences of ideologies and institutions between both states have to be exceeded, so the Korean people can become ethnically united with each other again<sup>144</sup>.

After the talks broke down in 1973, no more talks were held between both states until a decade later. In 1984, North Korea offered to provide goods to victims of a recent flooding in South Korea, which left 190 South Koreans dead and over 200,000 homeless. South Korea accepted those goods, and it became a starting point to new talks between both states. Unfortunately, the talks became shorted lived since North Korea decided to suspend them in 1986 as a protest against the annual South Korean - American military exercises. No further talks were hold between both nations until the end of the Cold War. Tensions between both states also increased significantly after the 1987 Korean Air Flight 858 terrorist attack<sup>145</sup>.

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<sup>142</sup> “North Korea: Government”, *Michigan State University*, 2012

<sup>143</sup> Cheon, Seongwhun, “Negotiating South Korea and the U.S: North Korea’s Strategy and Objectives”, *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. XVI, No.1, Spring 2012.

<sup>144</sup> July 4th North-South Joint Statement, July 4, 1972

<sup>145</sup> “North Korea: Government”, *Michigan State University*, 2012.

## **5.1 The era of Nordpolitik**

The 5<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea, the Army General Chun Doo-hwan had in close secrecy in early 1980s initiate the South Korean effort to normalize the Soviet-South Korean relations, and the Chinese-South Korean relations. This effort was contrary to the national interest of South Korea, which had during the entire Cold War been based on stagnant relations with the communist countries. To understand how Chun Doo-hwan achieved this changed foreign policy known as Nordpolitik, it is important to highlight the decision-making structure of the Chun Doo-hwan government. The Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) had a strong position in the decision-making structure of Chun Doo-hwan's government. KCIA was at that time known as Agency for National Security Planning, and is today known as National Intelligence Service. But due to simplified reasons, I will describe the agency as KCIA throughout this paper. KCIA could gather essential information about the communist countries due to its close contacts with other states intelligence agencies, such as the American CIA. This led to the KCIA becoming the highest bureaucracy involved in the decision-making process of Nordpolitik. In other words, Chun Doo-hwan and the KCIA were the two actors only involved in the *secret* decision-making process of Nordpolitik<sup>146</sup>.

Roh Tae-woo had been a close friend to Chun Doo-hwan ever since they both had studied in the Military Academy together. Roh Tae-woo even served in Chun Doo-hwan's government as Minister of State for national security and foreign affairs<sup>147</sup>. When Roh Tae-woo became president in 1988, he decided to keep several persons involved in Chun Doo-hwan's government in his government, and the decision-making structure of Roh Tae-woo's government was similar to the structure of Chun Doo-hwan's government. The decision-making structure of Nordpolitik in Roh Tae-woo's government circulated around three actors; Roh Tae-woo, Park Chul-un and the KCIA<sup>148</sup>.

First of all, the 1987 democratic South Korea constitution continued to give the president executive powers over the country and the policy-making. With that being the case, Roh Tae-woo was able to be the strongest actor involved in the decision-making process of Nordpolitik. Nordpolitik under his government was based on his ideas and views<sup>149</sup>, and the

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<sup>146</sup> Yoon, Sanghyun, "Decision-making Structure and The Policy Process in South Korea's Nordpolitik", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1995, p. 93 - 94

<sup>147</sup> Adesnik, David & Kim, Sunhyuk, "If At First You Don't Succeed: The Puzzle of South Korea's Democratic Transition", *CDDRL Working Papers*, July 2008, p. 1

<sup>148</sup> Yoon, Sanghyun, "Decision-making Structure and The Policy Process in South Korea's Nordpolitik", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1995

<sup>149</sup> Cherry, Lydia, "S. Korea's 'Northern Policy' gamble", *EIR* volume 17, Number 13, March 23, 1990.

bureaucracies involved in Nordpolitik based their decisions on his orders. Also, the National Assembly and the opposition were not able to become part of Nordpolitik (which indicate that Roh Tae-woo actually controlled his government a bit undemocratic, and something Western media ignored). The reason to this is because the information that the KCIA had gathered stayed close to Roh Tae-woo and his aides, and the National Assembly was never able to receive it. The decision-making process of Nordpolitik became based on KCIA's gathered information, and by keeping it to himself, Roh Tae-woo undermined the opposition and the National Assembly to become part of the policy-making of Nordpolitik<sup>150</sup>.

Secondly, Park Chul-un served a key role in the decision-making process of Nordpolitik. Park Chul-un had been involved in the decision-making of Nordpolitik during Chun Doo-hwan's presidency, and he had close contacts in the KCIA after he worked there earlier in his career. Park Chul-un was related to Roh Tae-woo, something that increased Roh Tae-woo's confidence in him. By so, Park Chul-un became a close aide to Roh Tae-woo, and a dominating force inside Roh Tae-woo's Secretariat. Through the close contacts Park Chul-un had in the KCIA, he was able to contact the communist countries. By so, Park Chul-un became a key figure involved in the normalizing process of South Korea's relations with several East European countries (e.g. Hungary) in 1988 and 1989, as well as the key actor that was able to start talks between Seoul and Moscow, and Seoul and Beijing<sup>151</sup>. Park Chul-un acted very much in hands with the KCIA, which by so increased their part in Nordpolitik and undermined other state bureaucracies' involvement. This can be answered with the help of Constructivism. The interest of KCIA has always been to strengthen South Korea's security, and weaken North Korea<sup>152</sup>. Although the aim with Nordpolitik in the long run was to reunify the Korean Peninsula by opening up North Korea, it had to be done by first weaken North Korea<sup>153</sup>. This interest connected with the interest of KCIA, thus making it understandable that KCIA was highly involved in Nordpolitik. Other state bureaucracies interests were often to normalize the North-South Korean relations by soften tensions, or by finding possible economic benefits for South Korea in improved relations<sup>154</sup>. By so, their part became undermined due to their interest clashing with Roh Tae-woo's interest with Nordpolitik.

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<sup>150</sup> Yoon, Sanghyun, "Decision-making Structure and The Policy Process in South Korea's Nordpolitik", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1995

<sup>151</sup> "Ex-NK pointman calls for strategic flexibility" *The Korean Times*, 2011-12-30

<sup>152</sup> "Mission" *National Intelligence Service*, 2011.

<sup>153</sup> Cherry, Lydia, "S. Korea's 'Northern Policy 'gamble'", *EIR* volume 17, Number 13, March 23, 1990.

<sup>154</sup> Yoon, Sanghyun, "Decision-making Structure and The Policy Process in South Korea's Nordpolitik", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1995, p 98 - 102

Roh Tae-woo's ideas and views were actually in connection of what was going on in the world at that time. Constructivism argues about the international society's impact on policy-making. To attest this, it has to be highlighted what occurred in the second half of the 1980s. When Mikhail Gorbachev became the new leader of the Soviet Union in 1985, he decided to introduce Glasnost (i.e. opening up) in the Soviet Union. Glasnost had a domino effect in the Eastern Bloc, where most of the former closed communist countries decided to open up to Western investments and to diplomatic relations with the Western world<sup>155</sup>. By so, it can be regarded that Roh Tae-woo socially connected with the international society in late 1980s, which then constructed his ideas and views in Nordpolitik. This is how Roh Tae-woo described his ideas in a speech from 1989:

“In order to change North Korea, we must create an international environment in which North Korea can open up. Since we cannot let North Korea open its doors directly, we decided to go to Pyongyang through Moscow and Beijing”<sup>156</sup>

Kim Young-sam was appointed by Roh Tae-woo to work with the normalization process of South Korea's relation with the Soviet Union. Kim Young-sam visited Moscow several times during 1989 and 1990, which later led to diplomatic relations being established between the Soviet Union and South Korea<sup>157</sup>. Roh Tae-woo's Secretariat played a key role in this as well, since it was through the contact links that Park Chul-un had established that Kim Young-sam became able to visit Moscow. Kim Young-sam also had a lot of help from several actors in the Secretariat and KCIA when decisions were being made between the Soviet Union and South Korea<sup>158</sup>. In June 1990, a summit between Roh Tae-woo and Mikhail Gorbachev took place in San Francisco, which indicated the improved relations between both countries. Following this, North Korea's relations with the Soviet Union worsened, and North Korea condemned Mikhail Gorbachev's policies<sup>159</sup>.

China and South Korea started talks between each other in 1991, especially due to the contact links that Park Chul-un had established. This led to diplomatic relations between both countries in August 1992, although these relations were still very strained due to China's

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<sup>155</sup> Powel, Nicolas, “The Effect of Glasnost on the Dissolution of the Soviet Union”, *The Concord Review*, Vol 22, No. 3, Spring 2012.

<sup>156</sup> “Ex-NK pointman calls for strategic flexibility” *The Korean Times*, 2011-12-30

<sup>157</sup> “Relations with the Soviet Union”, *U.S. Library of Congress*

<sup>158</sup> Yoon, Sanghyun, “Decision-making Structure and The Policy Process in South Korea's Nordpolitik”, *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1995, p. 97 - 98

<sup>159</sup> “After the Summit: Gorbachev, ending U.S Trip, Meets South Korea Leader, Who Sees A Renewal of Ties” *The New York Times*, June 4, 1990.

support to North Korea<sup>160</sup>. However, key actors in Roh Tae-woo's Secretariat played a large role in the establishment of the diplomatic relations with China. Since the relations were strained, Roh Tae-woo's Secretariat looked for increased trading between both states. To be able to achieve this, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became involved in the negotiations with the Chinese. The interest at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to find economic benefits with improved relations (e.g. increased trading). By so, it became important for the key actors in Roh Tae-woo's Secretariat to involve the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the negotiations, since their skills in trade talks were unmatched by the Secretariat<sup>161</sup>. This led to significantly increased trade between China and South Korea throughout the 1990s<sup>162</sup>. The Chinese-North Korean relations took a severe downturn in response to this<sup>163</sup>.

During one of Kim Young-sam's visit to Moscow in 1989, he met several high officials from North Korea, such as North Korea's ambassador in Moscow. They discussed the possibility of an inter-Korean summit between Roh Tae-woo and Kim Il-sung, which however never became a reality. But the meeting did serve a purpose, because talks between North and South Korean delegates resumed following Kim Young-sam's meeting in 1989<sup>164</sup>. In a Constructivist point of view, it clearly indicates that Kim Young-sam was learning about North Korea's interest, and that he was ready to make decisions based on persuading North Korea into a summit. From the resumed talks, a high-minister meeting was held in Seoul in September 1990, and two essential agreements were made during the meeting. The Basic Agreement was about continuing the effort for peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula<sup>165</sup>, and the Joint Declaration was about a denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula<sup>166</sup>. These improvements in the North-South Korean relations were key achievements by Nordpolitik, and the achievements had a positive impact on the reunification process. However, since no further improvements were made following the 1990 meeting in Seoul,<sup>167</sup> Nordpolitik can be regarded to never have had a significant impact on the

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<sup>160</sup> "Relations with China", *U.S. Library of Congress*

<sup>161</sup> Yoon, Sanghyun, "Decision-making Structure and The Policy Process in South Korea's Nordpolitik", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1995, p. 98 - 100

<sup>162</sup> Zhou, Shengqi, "Sino-South Korean Trade Relations: From Boom to Recession", *EAI Background Brief* No.508, 3 March 2010, p. 1 - 4

<sup>163</sup> Hildebrandt, Timothy, "Uneasy Allies: Fifty Years of China-North Korea Relations", *Asia Program Special Report*, September 2003, p. 9

<sup>164</sup> "Relations with the Soviet Union", *U.S. Library of Congress*

<sup>165</sup> Full Text of North-South Joint Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Cooperation and Exchange, Seoul: December 31, 1991

<sup>166</sup> Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, Seoul: 19 February 1992

<sup>167</sup> "Relations with North Korea", *U.S. Library of Congress*

reunification process. In fact, it can be argued that the First Nuclear Crisis occurred due to the effects of Nordpolitik. North Korea's relations to the Soviet Union and China worsened following South Korea's established relations with them, and that did isolate North Korea. So, the North Korean regime might have felt threatened by Nordpolitik, and by so acted in response to Nordpolitik. With that being a possibility, Nordpolitik during Roh Tae-woo's presidency can be regarded to have had a fairly negative impact on the reunification process.

### ***5.1.1 The presidency of Kim Young-sam and the First Nuclear Crisis***

Kim Young-sam's government became the first civilian South Korean government, where the military lost its long lasted strong hold of the policy-making. Kim Young-sam was keen to reform the decision-making structure of South Korea's foreign policy, weakening the KCIA and the military's part, and strengthen other bureaucracies' part in the decision-making process. Kim Young-sam believed it was essential to end South Korea's strong military control over the government to strengthen the democracy in South Korea. By so, several key ministry positions were given to civilian politicians, rather than high military personnel that had occupied those positions in earlier governments<sup>168</sup>. To attest this change in the structure of the government, as soon as Kim Young-sam was inaugurated as president, he decided to start investigations about Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo's involvements in the 1980 Gwangju massacre, where an uprising demanding democracy in South Korea was brutally crushed by the South Korean Army. They were also suspected for bribery. Both Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo were later arrested and convicted for several crimes<sup>169</sup>. With the help of Constructivism, an understanding can be created to why Kim Young-sam decided to change the structure of the government. The military has always seen itself as the "guardian of the state". This structured the military to argue that they should have undemocratic executive powers in the decision-making structure of the government, since it would help them protect the state<sup>170</sup>. However, this interest of the military was opposite to the democratic reforms that had occurred after 1987, and also what the South Korean people demanded. Also, Kim Young-sam had always had a strong interest in democracy. He used to be a member of the National Assembly throughout the undemocratic years of South Korea, and his interest

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<sup>168</sup> Young, Whan Kihl., (2004)., "*Transforming Korean Politics: Democracy, Reform, and Culture*" , M.E. Sharpe, p. 139-141

<sup>169</sup> Hanson, Cynthia & McLaughlin, Abraham T., "Former South Korean presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo were formally indicted", *Christian Science Monitor*, Vol. 88, Issue 2, Dec 1995. p2

<sup>170</sup> Hong, Young-Gi, "Evangelical Christians and Political Society: Kim Young-sam, and other Evangelical Politicians", *Media Mission Department*, April 2, 2010.

was to democratize South Korea, and weaken the military's role in the government<sup>171</sup>. In other words, his interest, and his social connection to the demand of the population, socially constructed Kim Young-sam to conducted structural reforms in the decision-making structure of the government.

Kim Young-sam's presidency is today known mostly about his domestic politics and about different domestic reforms (especially economic reforms). In regards to Kim Young-sam's foreign policy, relations with Russia continued to improve, and trade with China continued to increase<sup>172</sup>. Towards North Korea however, Kim Young-sam changed the policy that Roh Tae-woo had used. Due to Kim Young-sam's strong interest in democracy, his foreign policy became based on democracy, human rights and free market economy. So, Kim Young-sam was looking to democratize North Korea, which fitted well with the international society at that time. The world order of the Communist/Capitalist clash had come to an end in 1991, and a new world order had started, where it was believed that democracy was going to be spread into the former communist countries. Kim Young-sam believed these changes can be achieved through summit talks<sup>173</sup>. So it was a key part of Kim Young-sam's North Korean policy to achieve an inter-Korean summit, which he had failed to achieve during Roh Tae-woo's presidency.

However, Kim Young-sam's effort to democratize North Korea became undermined due to the First Nuclear Crisis, which started only some months into Kim Young-sam's presidency. At first, South Korea did not reacted as aggressively to this crisis as the United States did, especially since Kim Young-sam's government believed this crisis can be solved bilaterally between North and South Korea. Kim Young-sam's government argued that North Korea will follow the Joint Declaration from the meeting in Seoul 1990, if only the Americans stay out of this crisis, and instead let the South Koreans solve it<sup>174</sup>. However, tensions increased, and again did the Korean Peninsula enter a stance of brink of war, especially following Bill Clinton's plan of bombing the Yongbyon reactor. But Kim Young-sam rejected this idea, and

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<sup>171</sup> Young, Whan Kihl., (2004)., "*Transforming Korean Politics: Democracy, Reform, and Culture*" , M.E. Sharpe, p. 139

<sup>172</sup> Ahn, See Hyun, "Russian-South Korean Security Relations Reconsidered: The Lost Two Decades of Promises and Perils", *The Korean Social Science Journal*, Vol. 39, No.2 (2012),p. 33 - 36

<sup>173</sup> "Foreign Policy Agenda", *Presidents & Prime ministers*, May/June 1997, Vol. 6, 1-5p.

<sup>174</sup> Heo, Uk, & Roehrig, Terence., (2010) "*South Korea since 1980*" Cambridge University Press, p.134-136

instead argued that this crisis will be solved with the frequent talks at Panmunjom, which is located in the demilitarized zone<sup>175</sup>.

But in March 1994, those talks at Panmunjom ended up having a devastating impact on the North-South Korean relations, when a North Korean delegate deliberately threatened South Korea by stating that Seoul will be “turned into a sea of fire”. Kim Young-sam’s government took this threat very serious, and reacted very aggressive to this threat. This increased tensions to the highest it been since the end of the Korean War<sup>176</sup>. Constructivism can help me attest this, by looking at the language that Kim Young-sam’s government used following this threat. This is what Kim Young-sam’s Minister of Defense aggressively stated after the threat:

“...depending on the circumstances, if North Korea attacks, we may see that as an opportunity of war for reunification.”<sup>177</sup>

Many scholars (e.g. Bruce Cumings) argue however that Kim Young-sam’s government reacted this aggressively due to the strong social influence that the United States have in South Korea. It was only in the United States that high officials believed that North Korea already might possess nuclear weapons, and this can have socially constructed Kim Young-sam’s government to react this aggressively to this threat. Also, those scholars argue that Western media used this threat to justify a preemptive strike on North Korea, and that Western media ignored the fact that Kim Il-sung disassociated North Korea from the threat, and dismissed the delegate that had made the threat<sup>178</sup>.

Following Jimmy Carter’s visit to Pyongyang, the high tensions between North and South Korea soften a bit. Kim Young-sam’s government once again pushed for a summit to be held with Kim Il-sung, which this time seemed closer than ever to become a reality<sup>179</sup>. However, due to Kim Il-sung’s death in July 1994, the talks about a summit broke down. North Korea’s new leader Kim Jong-il decided to take North Korea into a stance of isolation, and suspended the frequent talks at Panmunjom. This stance of isolation by Kim Jong-il’s North Korea

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<sup>175</sup> “Korean Crisis Is Different This Time”, *The New York Times*, August 3, 2009

<sup>176</sup> Heo, Uk, & Roehrig, Terence., (2010) “*South Korea since 1980*” Cambridge University Press, p.137

<sup>177</sup> Minn, Chung, “The Korean Nuclear Crisis: ‘Seoul Will Become a Sea of Fire’”, *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, vol. 26, nos. 1-2, January – June 1994

<sup>178</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., “*North Korea: Another Country*” The New Press, p. 68

<sup>179</sup> Heo, Uk, & Roehrig, Terence., (2010) “*South Korea since 1980*” Cambridge University Press, p.137-138

increased tensions again between both states, and tensions stayed high throughout the remaining years of Kim Young-sam's presidency<sup>180</sup>.

The First Nuclear Crisis had in the short run a very devastating effect on the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. In the long run however, it can be argued that the concluding parts of the First Nuclear Crisis had a fairly positive impact on the Korean reunification process. An inter-Korean summit seemed close to become a reality in 1994 following Jimmy Carter's visit to Pyongyang. Had a summit been held, it could have had a major impact on the North-South Korean relations. In an interview from 2009, Kim Young-sam stated what impact he felt the summit could have had, by stressing this:

“If I had met Kim Il-sung, I would have changed the nation's history.”<sup>181</sup>

Instead of the First Nuclear Crisis, it was the *de facto* death of Kim Il-sung, and political position of Kim Jong-il that worsened the North-South Korean relations. By so, it can be argued that Kim Jong-il's decision to take North Korea into a stance of isolation had a greater negative impact on the Korean reunification process, than what the actual First Nuclear Crisis had. Also, Kim Young-sam's effort to democratize North Korea became a failure. By so, Nordpolitik's overall impact on the Korean reunification process can be stressed to been fairly negative.

## **5.2 The era of the Sunshine Policy**

The Ministry of Unification was established already in 1969 under the name of National Unification Board. However, prior to the Sunshine Policy, the Ministry of Unification had always had a minor role in the decision-making process of South Korea's foreign policy towards North Korea<sup>182</sup>. However, as one of his first changes, Kim Dae-jung decided to give the Ministry of Unification a stronger part in the decision-making process of South Korea's North Korean policy. Constructivism can answer why the Ministry of Unification always had a minor role. The Ministry of Unification's interest is to normalize the North-South Korean relations through inter-Korean cooperation, which they believe will be a significant step in the Korean reunification process<sup>183</sup>. This interest clashes with other state bureaucracies own

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<sup>180</sup> Young, Whan Kihl., (2004)., “*Transforming Korean Politics: Democracy, Reform, and Culture*” , M.E. Sharpe, p. 247-248

<sup>181</sup> “Korean Crisis Is Different This Time”, *The New York Times*, August 3, 2009

<sup>182</sup> “Brief History”, *Ministry of Unification*, 2011.

<sup>183</sup> “Vision: A new Era of Hope and Happiness”, *Ministry of Unification*, 2013.

interest, which mainly is to weaken North Korea, or to find economic benefit with improved North-South Korean relations. Kim Dae-jung's interest has always been to normalize the North-South Korean relations through inter-Korean cooperation, instead of putting pressure on North Korea to reach a collapse of the regime, or to weaken North Korea by decreasing its foreign aid, etc.<sup>184</sup>. By so, it becomes understandable to why Kim Dae-jung decided to let the Ministry of Unification take a major role in the decision-making process of the Sunshine Policy, since they had a social connection to each other with the same interest.

The masterminds of the Sunshine Policy were Kim Dae-jung and Lim Dong-won. Lim Dong-won is a former South Korean general, who had after his military career served as ambassador in Chun Doo-hwan's government, and been part in Roh Tae-woo's Nordpolitik. However, Lim Dong-won shared a similar view of how South Korea's foreign policy towards North Korea should be like with Kim Dae-jung, with a special emphasis on the normalization process of the North-South Korean relations through inter-Korean cooperation. So, in 1995, Kim Dae-jung and Lim Dong-won became close friends, which in 1998 led to Lim Dong-won becoming appointed the huge role of Unification minister in Kim Dae-jung's government<sup>185</sup>. With the position of Unification minister, Lim Dong-won became the director of the Ministry of Unification<sup>186</sup>. By so, the major decision-making structure of the Sunshine Policy became based around Lim Dong-won, who represented the Ministry of Unification, and Kim Dae-jung himself. Other state bureaucracies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the KCIA got a very minor role in the decision-making process of the Sunshine Policy, a decision that *de facto* had a fairly negative outcome in the long run.

The era of the Sunshine Policy started when Kim Dae-jung held his inauguration speech on February 25, 1998. In his speech, Kim Dae-jung stressed three points that were essential in the Sunshine Policy. These three points were that South Korea will not accept military threats from North Korea, that it is important for South Korea to leave the idea of a reunification by a collapsed North Korean regime, and about the importance of continued exchange and cooperation, first agreed on in the Basic Agreement from 1991<sup>187</sup>. The Sunshine Policy received severe domestic criticism in the beginning, especially from several bureaucracies or organizations in close contact with the military. Also, the conservative politicians in South

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<sup>184</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., *"North Korea: Another Country"* The New Press, p. 76 - 77

<sup>185</sup> Han, Yong-Sup & Norman, Levin D. , "Sunshine in Korea: The South Korean Debate over Policies Toward North Korea", *RAND*, 2002, p. 63-66

<sup>186</sup> "Analysis: South Korea's options" *BBC*, 4 September 2001.

<sup>187</sup> Inaugural Address by Kim Dae-jung the 15th-term President of the Republic of Korea, Seoul: February 25, 1998

Korea saw the Sunshine Policy as a threat towards South Korea, believing it will lead to a strengthened North Korean military<sup>188</sup>.

One of the main components of the Sunshine Policy was to let South Korean corporations to invest in North Korea. This became a reality already in the first year of the Sunshine Policy, when North Korea accepted to allow South Korean tourists to visit Mount Kumgang. Mount Kumgang is a well-known mountain place in North Korea, located close to the demilitarized zone. While the agreement was made between North and South Korea, it was Hyundai Asan, an affiliate to the large and powerful Chaebol (i.e. South Korean version of a conglomerate) Hyundai Group that was allowed to run the tourist routes that took South Koreans to Mount Kumgang<sup>189</sup>. This became the first time ever South Koreans were allowed to visit North Korea as tourists, and it has to be regarded as a significant step in the process to normalize the North-South Korean relations<sup>190</sup>. By so, Hyundai Asan now became part of the decision-making process of the Sunshine policy as well. This is interesting in a Constructivist viewpoint, since it is important to study non- bureaucracies own interest as well. In the case of Mount Kumgang, Hyundai Asan and Kim Dae-jung's government had the same interest in the short run, to normalize the North-South Korean relations. But in the long run, Hyundai Asan was probably looking for the approval to place its production in North Korea, while as part of the Sunshine Policy; Kim Dae-jung's government was looking for a peace treaty and a peaceful reunification.

While the routes became a success in regards to the Korean reunification process and for Kim Dae-jung's government, they did not become a success for Hyundai Asan. Hyundai Asan had baldly miscalculated how many South Koreans that would visit the routes, which made Hyundai Asan unable to pay the North Korean regime. This created large financial debts for Hyundai Asan, which the Hyundai Group could not bailout. In June 2001, Hyundai Asan was forced to leave the Mount Kumgang tourist route project, and The Korea National Tourism Organization took over the routes instead<sup>191</sup>. The routes continued to stay open until 2008, when a South Korean tourist was shot to death by North Korean military at Mount Kumgang. The new Lee Myung-bak government decided to temporarily close the routes for South Koreans. But they promised that they will reopen them after a joint investigation about the

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<sup>188</sup> Han, Yong-Sup & Norman, Levin D. , "Sunshine in Korea: The South Korean Debate over Policies Toward North Korea", *RAND*, 2002, p. 67 - 77

<sup>189</sup> "Heavenly beauty landed on Mt. Kumgang", *Hyundai Asan*.

<sup>190</sup> "History", *Mt. Kumgang tour*,

<sup>191</sup> Han, Yong-Sup & Norman, Levin D. , "Sunshine in Korea: The South Korean Debate over Policies Toward North Korea", *RAND*, 2002, p. 84

shooting has taken place. However, due to North Korea's unwillingness to participate in an investigation, the routes have stayed closed to this day<sup>192</sup>. With that as a fact, the Mount Kumgang tourist routes should probably be considered to have had a fairly positive impact on the Korean reunification process. While the populations of both Koreas have to be allowed to visit the other Korea if normalization in relations could be accomplished, the Mount Kumgang tourist routes never really achieved any large impact. With the evidence of the miscalculation that Hyundai Asan did, it can be proven that the routes never became particularly popular around the South Korean population. By so, I think it can be regarded that the routes had a fairly positive impact on the reunification process.

In the third year of the Sunshine Policy (year 2000), Kim Dae-jung's government was able to reach one of the most significant achievements in regards to improved North-South Korean relations. While the two predecessors to Kim Dae-jung had failed to achieve an inter-Korean summit, Kim Dae-jung's government was able to achieve one to be held in Pyongyang. It was officially announced that a summit has been agreed to by both Koreas through the frequent talks between delegates in 1998 and 1999<sup>193</sup>. The summit occurred between June 13 – June 15, 2000, and Kim Dae-jung flew to Pyongyang with an airplane. Except for Kim Dae-jung, some of his closest aides followed him, as well as Lim Dong-won, who had been having a large part in achieving the summit<sup>194</sup>. The summit is interesting to study while conducting a Constructivist foreign policy analysis (FPA), since arguing and learning is important to study. This summit is a clear example of that, where neither Kim Jong-il nor Kim Dae-jung had set goals before the summit. Instead, both Kim Dae-jung and Kim Jong-il seemed to be willing to learn about the others interest, and then arguing to reach equal agreements<sup>195</sup>. Bruce Cumings stresses that Kim Dae-jung used to say that Kim Jong-il told him during the summit that he can accept American troops being stationed on the Korean Peninsula after a reunification has been achieved, in defense against a possible future Japanese or Chinese expansion in the region<sup>196</sup>. This is a great example of the learning part that the summit had.

An agreement was made between Kim Jong-il and Kim Dae-jung during the summit, which is known as the June 15 Declaration. The June 15 Declaration was agreements made between

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<sup>192</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 32

<sup>193</sup> "Inter-Korean summit and years of Sunshine Policy", *The Korean Times*, 2010-06-20.

<sup>194</sup> Manyin, Mark E., "North-South Korean Relations: A Chronology of the 'New' Dialogue", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2001

<sup>195</sup> South-North Joint Declaration, Pyongyang: June 15, 2000.

<sup>196</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., "North Korea: Another Country" The New Press, p. 84

both leaders about continued cooperation, peace, and about reunification. This is an interesting point from the June 15 Declaration:

“The South and the North have agreed to resolve the question of reunification independently and through the joint efforts of the Korean people, who are the masters of the country.”<sup>197</sup>

Since language is important in a Constructivist study, this point from the June 15 Declaration that I highlighted seems to use a language that is similar to the ideas of Juche (the people are the masters of the country)<sup>198</sup>. Kim Dae-jung probably accepted this language in the agreement, to justify North Korea’s part of the agreement. The summit and the June 15 Declaration are two of the most significant steps in the normalization process of the North-South Korean relations. By so, it has to be regarded to be a significant positive impact on the Korean reunification process.

In September 2001, Lim Dong-won lost a no-confidence vote by South Korea’s parliament mostly due to the fact that the opposition parties had no support for him. The conservatives had continued with their mistrust against the Sunshine Policy, and this lost vote for Lim Dong-won was one of their larger steps in achieving a changed foreign policy. This was obviously a setback for Kim Dae-jung. But improvements in the North-South Korean relations continued even after Lim Dong-won was forced to leave his minister post, indicating that North Korea did not react particularly negative towards this<sup>199</sup>.

In June 2003, it was publically acknowledged that the 2000 summit had been paid to become a reality by Kim Dae-jung’s administration. It was acknowledged that Lim Dong-won had a part in this scandal, as well as Hyundai Asan. Hyundai Asan was in fact behind the payment, sending several hundred million dollars to North Korea’s regime for a summit to be held. While the scandal increased the spreading of criticism towards the Sunshine Policy<sup>200</sup>, it is actually interesting to see it in another perspective. What motivated Hyundai Asan to make this huge payment? The best answer to that question is probably that they were really looking for the opportunity to place their production in North Korea, and hoped a summit would achieve an approval for that. That can then attest the idea that Hyundai Asan had another long term interest with the Mount Kumgang tourist routes than what the Kim Dae-jung’s government

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<sup>197</sup> South-North Joint Declaration, Pyongyang: June 15, 2000.

<sup>198</sup> Lee, Grace, “The Political Philosophy of Juche”, *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Volume 3, Number 1, Spring 2003, p. 105 - 108

<sup>199</sup> “Analysis: South Korea’s options” *BBC*, 4 September 2001.

<sup>200</sup> Foster-Carter, Aidan, “North –South Korea Relations: A Bumpy Road Ahead?” *Leeds University*, 2003, p.5-6

had. While this scandal increased the mistrust towards the Sunshine Policy<sup>201</sup>, it can still be regarded to not be that much of a negative thing. I believe so because a summit was held, and a very important agreement was made. And even though it was paid for, it still improved the North-South Korean relations, and took a significant step in the normalization process of the North-South Korean relations. With all that being the case, I would still regard the Sunshine Policy during Kim Dae-jung's presidency a success. I would also argue that it had a significant positive impact on the Korean reunification process.

### **5.2.1 The presidency of Roh Moo-hyun**

Roh Moo-hyun became the new president of South Korea on February 25, 2003. He was willing to continue with the foreign policy of Sunshine Policy, in hope that it will continue to take steps in the normalization process of the North-South Korean relations. Roh Moo-hyun also decided to keep with the same decision-making structure of the policy that Kim Dae-jung had used during his presidency, thus letting the Ministry on Unification continue to have a dominant role in the decision-making process<sup>202</sup>.

Already a year prior to Roh Moo-hyun became the president; the Second Nuclear Crisis had erupted. However, it was not until Roh Moo-hyun became president that it started to have an impact on the Korean Peninsula. Roh Moo-hyun's government reacted in a similar way to the Second Nuclear Crisis that Kim Young-sam's government did to the First Nuclear Crisis. In other words, Roh Moo-hyun was keen to solve the Second Nuclear Crisis through inter-Korean diplomatic means<sup>203</sup>. This was stressed in Roh Moo-hyun's inauguration speech, where Roh Moo-hyun outlined that he believes that the nuclear crisis should be solved with diplomatic means, rather than with threats of preemptive warfare that the Bush administration used. This is how Roh Moo-hyun stressed it:

“I would like to emphasise again that the North Korean nuclear issue should be resolved peacefully through dialogue.”<sup>204</sup>

When the Bush administration announced their idea about the six-party talks, Roh Moo-hyun's government reacted positive towards the idea. Even though Roh Moo-hyun believed that the nuclear crisis could be solved bilaterally, it was still considered positive by Roh Moo-hyun that the four *other* regional powers (Russia, China, Japan and the United States) were

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<sup>201</sup> “Claim Bolstered That N. Korea Took Summit Bribe”, *The Los Angeles Times*, January 31, 2003.

<sup>202</sup> Kim, Choong Nam, “The Roh Moo Hyun Government's Policy towards North Korea”, *East-West Center Working Papers: Politics, Governance and Security Series*, no. 11, August 2005

<sup>203</sup> IBID, p. 4 - 7

<sup>204</sup> Roh Moo-hyun's inauguration speech, Seoul: 25 February 2003

willing to solve the crisis through diplomatic means<sup>205</sup>. In the view of Constructivism, Roh Moo-hyun's government was socially connected with North Korea via the improved relations during Kim Dae-jung's presidency. So, South Korea became socially constructed to believe that North Korea's rhetoric in the Second Nuclear Crisis was not so much of a threat towards South Korea as the United States believed, since tensions between the United States and North Korea had continued to stay critically high. A Constructivist might also argue that South Korea socially influenced the United States to propose the Six-party talks rather than planning for a preemptive invasion. This can be argued by highlighting the importance of South Korea for the United States, and that it could be devastating for the U.S.-South Korean relations if the United States would act unilaterally towards North Korea<sup>206</sup>. By so, South Korea's strong say in these matters can then have had a large role in the decision from the Bush administration to propose the Six-party talks as the solution to the Second Nuclear Crisis.

Although the start of the Second Nuclear Crisis increased tensions between both Koreas again, improvements were still being made in the North-South Korean relations. The first, and probably most significant improvement, was the creation of the Kaesong Industrial Region. This is a joint industrial complex located in the North Korean city of Kaesong, which is located close to the border between both Koreas<sup>207</sup>. The region was agreed by both Koreas in 2002, and the construction started in June 2003, and ended in December the same year<sup>208</sup>. The idea with the Kaesong Industrial Region was that some South Korean corporations will be allowed to place their production in the region, and by so exploiting the cheap North Korean labor. Although this region would be a financial benefit for the corporations, both the Ministry of Unification and Roh Moo-hyun believed it will increase the cooperation between both Koreas, and by so be a significant step in the normalizing process of the North-South Korean relations. Also, South Korean corporations had been allowed to invest in North Korea for the first time during the Sunshine Policy, which was considered might led to a changed North Korean economic system<sup>209</sup>. The Kaesong Industrial Region can be argued to have had

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<sup>205</sup> Mo, Jongryn, "What Does South Korea Want?", *Hoover Institute*, April and May 2007, p. 6

<sup>206</sup> Chanlett-Avery, Emma et al., "U.S.-South Korea Relations", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2013.

<sup>207</sup> Manyin, Mark E, & Nanto, Dick K., "The Kaesong North-South Korean Industrial Complex", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2011, p. 1

<sup>208</sup> "Brief History", *Hyundai Asan*, 2012

<sup>209</sup> "Gaeseong Industrial Complex", *Ministry of Unification*, 2011.

a similar “hope” to it, since North Korea for the first time allowed capitalist corporations on the territory<sup>210</sup>.

Although the Kaesong Industrial Region was able to become a reality due to the improved North-South Korean relations during Kim Dae-jung’s presidency, Hyundai Asan once again had a strong part in it<sup>211</sup>. The Ministry of Unification officially reveals this on their webpage, by stating this:

“The GIC project was launched by an agreement between South Korea's Hyundai Asan Corporation and North Korea in August 2000. Following the agreement, inter-Korean consultations have been held at both the private and governmental levels.”<sup>212</sup>

This is interesting to highlight, because it attests my idea that Hyundai Asan was more interested in an approval to place their production in North Korea, rather than in reconciliation and reunification that Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun’s governments were looking for. In this case however, the difference in interest in the long run seems to actual benefit both parts. I believe so because at the Kaesong Industrial Region, Hyundai Asan will be allowed to exploit the North Korean labor while the North-South Korean relations continue to take steps in the normalization process<sup>213</sup>. So even though it can be a bit worrisome when a non-state bureaucracy becomes so much part in the decision-making structure of a policy, in this case however, it actually seems to end up having a positive outcome for both the non-state bureaucracy, and the state.

The Kaesong Industrial Region stayed open and continued to grow throughout the second half the 2000s. The region was temporarily closed in 2010 following South Korea’s accusation that North Korea was behind the sinking of South Korea’s corvette ROKS Cheonan, but reopened not long after<sup>214</sup>. However, on April 3, 2013, North Korea decided to close the entry to the region for South Korean workers due to the increased tensions between both Korea inherent the 2013 Korean Crisis. Five days later, North Korea recalled all the North Korean workers from the region. On April 17, South Korea’s government decided to evacuate all of their remaining workers at Kaesong since North Korea had rejected the South Koreans to

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<sup>210</sup> Chang Woon Nam, “Kaesong Industrial Complex: The Second Free Economic and Trade Area in North Korea”, *Internationqles Asienforum*, vol 43, No. 3-4.,p. 351-353

<sup>211</sup> IBID.,p. 355-358

<sup>212</sup> “Gaeseong Industrial Complex”, *Ministry of Unification*, 2011.

<sup>213</sup> Manyin, Mark E, & Nanto, Dick K., “The Kaesong North-South Korean Industrial Complex”, *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2011

<sup>214</sup> IBID, p. 2 – 3

deliver food to their workers at Kaesong. On May 4, the last South Korean workers left Kaesong, thus meaning that the Industrial Region now is completely closed<sup>215</sup>. While this paper was written, the region had not been reopened. It is now very unclear *when* or *if* the region will be reopened again. Prior to 2013 however, the Kaesong Industrial Region has to be considered one of the more significant improvements made in the North-South Korean relations. For the first time, North and South Koreans could work side-by-side each other, and both Koreas could officially cooperate with each other. Also, the Kaesong Industrial Region economically benefited both Koreas, but especially North Korea. This became heavily criticized by the opposition in South Korea, as well as by the United States. The Songun policy was the argument the opposition stressed to why the Kaesong Industrial Region will have devastating long term impacts on the Korean Peninsula. Also, the United States believed that North Korea will strengthen its military and its weapon arsenal (possibly to nuclear) with the money they earn from the Kaesong Industrial Region, and by so opposed the project<sup>216</sup>. Today, this criticism has to be regarded to be pretty accurate. I believe so because North Korea's first test detonation of a nuclear bomb in 2006, and the incidents that have followed it, attests that North Korea has *de facto* been able to strengthen its military even with its weak economy. Still, I would argue that the Kaesong Industrial Region has been such a significant step in the normalization process of the North-South Korean relations that it must be regarded to have had a positive impact on the reunification process. But due to North Korea's strengthened military from the money earned at Kaesong, the long term effects can end up being devastating for the Korean reunification process.

The second achievement Roh Moo-hyun was able to achieve was a second inter-Korean summit. It had been agreed on already in the 2000 summit that Kim Jong-il was going to visit Kim Dae-jung in Seoul in a near future after the 2000 summit. This is how it was declared in the June 15 Declaration:

”President Kim Dae-jung cordially invited National Defense Commission Chairman Kim Jong-il to visit Seoul, and Chairman Kim Jong-il will visit Seoul at an appropriate time.”<sup>217</sup>

However, a historic visit to Seoul by Kim Jong-il did never become a reality, and no plans were made about a new summit after the first one<sup>218</sup>. But Roh Moo-hyun had pushed for

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<sup>215</sup> “South Korea to withdraw last workers from Kaesong joint-venture with North”, *The Guardian*, 29 April 2013

<sup>216</sup> Manyin, Mark E, & Nanto, Dick K., “The Kaesong North-South Korean Industrial Complex”, *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2011, p. 18 - 21

<sup>217</sup> South-North Joint Declaration, Pyongyang: June 15, 2000.

another summit, and in 2007 Kim Jong-il invited Roh Moo-hyun to Pyongyang. Roh Moo-hyun accepted the invitation<sup>219</sup>. Instead of flying to Pyongyang as Kim Dae-jung did, Roh Moo-hyun decided to travel to Pyongyang in car. To achieve the trip, he was forced to cross the border by foot; something Roh Moo-hyun argued he did as a gesture to a possible Korean reunification<sup>220</sup>. The summit took place on October 2- 4, 2007, and as what is known today, no payments were involved this time. During the summit, a new agreement was made between both leaders, known as the October 4 Declaration. It stated that the agreements made at the 2000 summit should continue be followed, but new agreements were also reached. The October 4 Declaration was more based around peace and reconciliation rather than economic cooperation and improve relations, as the June 15 Declaration was based around. This is a point from the October 4 Declaration that is *de facto* talking about reunification:

“The South and the North have agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of the other and agreed to resolve inter-Korean issues in the spirit of reconciliation, cooperation and reunification.”<sup>221</sup>

With Constructivism, the language of this point is interesting to study. As I stressed about the language in the June 15 Declaration has similarities to North Korea’s Juche ideology, this Declaration has a language with similarities to North Korea’s 10-point programme. To not interfere in the internal affairs of the other state is what the 10-point programme stresses<sup>222</sup>. By so, it can once again be regarded that it was used to justify North Korea’s part in the agreement.

Unfortunately, the October 4 Declaration had a minor impact on North-South Korean relations due to what occurred after Roh Moo-hyun’s presidency was over (this will be analyzed in the next segment). The 2007 summit however had a similar positive impact on the Korean reunification process that the 2000 summit had. Would the agreements made at those two summit been followed by both Koreas, the summits would have had a significant positive impact on the reunification process. But since the agreements have not been followed particularly well, the impact of the summits have to be concluded to been fairly positive on the Korean reunification process. For the Sunshine Policy in general, it has to be considered to

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<sup>218</sup> Cumings, B., (2004)., “*North Korea: Another Country*” The New Press, p. 92 - 100

<sup>219</sup> Declaration on Advancement of South-North Korean Relations, Peace, Prosperity. Pyongyang: October 4, 2007

<sup>220</sup> “South Korea president to cross northern border with North on foot”, *Asia News*, 10/01 2007.

<sup>221</sup> Declaration on Advancement of South-North Korean Relations, Peace, Prosperity. Pyongyang: October 4, 2007

<sup>222</sup> Kim, Il-sung, “10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country” *Korean Friendship Association*, April 6, 1993

have had a very positive impact on the Korean reunification process. I believe so due to the significant steps in the normalization process of the North-South Korean relations that was made during the Sunshine Policy. But this can be argued to only be the fact when looking at it on a short term perspective. The incidents that have occurred since 2006 justifies the criticism towards the Sunshine Policy that North Korea's military will be strengthened by the revenues North Korea earned during the policy. So, it can be argued that the Sunshine Policy have had a devastating impact on the Korean reunification process, when looking at it on a long term perspective. However, at this moment, I still believe the Sunshine Policy had a positive impact on the reunification process.

### **5.3 The era of the MB Doctrine**

When Lee Myung-bak was elected President of South Korea in 2007, the decade long liberal control of South Korea reached its end. South Korea was now heading into a new conservative path based of the MB Doctrine, a political path that is still ongoing today in South Korea. Lee Myung-bak became also the first President of South Korea with a business career prior to his political career<sup>223</sup>. This is important to highlight since it can provide an understanding to why Lee Myung-bak was so keen to change the South Korean politics, and why he introduced the MB Doctrine in South Korea. The importance of the background career can be attested by comparing the decision-making structure of Roh Tae-woo's government (military background) to Kim Dae-jung's government (political background). Due to Kim Dae-jung's political background, he was more interested in improving the North-South Korean relations through mutuality and cooperation<sup>224</sup>, while Roh Tae-woo's military background seem to have made him more interested in finding improved North-South Korean relations through weakening North Korea<sup>225</sup>.

One of the first changes Lee Myung-bak decided to do as president was to change the decision-making structure of the government, a decision that seems to have been influenced by his business background. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was given a stronger say in the decision-making structure, while at the same time the Ministry of Unification's strong say during the Sunshine Policy was significant weakened. The Ministry of Unification was

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<sup>223</sup> "Profile: Lee Myung-bak", *BBC*, 25 February, 2008.

<sup>224</sup> Han, Yong-Sup & Norman, Levin D. , "Sunshine in Korea: The South Korean Debate over Policies Toward North Korea", *RAND*, 2002

<sup>225</sup> Cherry, Lydia, "S. Korea's 'Northern Policy 'gamble'", *EIR* volume 17, Number 13, March 23, 1990

restructured by Lee Myung-bak, leading to it losing an amount of its workers. Also, the Ministry on Unification was given a new role to educate people about a reunification, rather than working to achieve one. This decision by Lee Myung-bak became criticized in South Korea, due to the fact that the Ministry of Unification had been able to achieve improved North-South Korean relations during the Sunshine Policy. At the same time however, several human rights activists demanded this change, since they felt that the Ministry of Unification was undermining questions such as North Korea's human rights violations, in hope that it will bring improved relations<sup>226</sup>. Constructivism can help to understand why Lee Myung-bak did this change in the structure of the decision-making process. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a strong business interest, and is closely social connected to several of the stronger South Korean corporations<sup>227</sup>. This is different to the Ministry of Unification, which is more socially connected with activists, organizations and politicians with the interest of a Korean reunification<sup>228</sup>. So according to Constructivism, Lee Myung-bak's business background then made him socially connected with the interest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rather than to the interest of the Ministry of Unification. By so, it socially constructed Lee Myung-bak to take the decision to give the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a dominant role in the decision-making structure, while at the same time weaken the Ministry of Unification's role.

The first change Lee Myung-bak's government did was to emphasize the importance to strengthen the U.S.-South Korean alliance<sup>229</sup>. The strong U.S.-South Korean relations had been weakened during the whole era of the Sunshine Policy, especially due to the American criticism towards the policy<sup>230</sup>. Also, some domestic incidents involving American troops occurred in the early 2000s, which led to anti-Americanism feelings being spread around in South Korea<sup>231</sup>. In 2008 however, Lee Myung-bak believed that it was necessary for South Korea to strengthen the U.S.-South Korean alliance, especially due to the fact that South Korea experienced new type of threats to its security. First of all, North Korea's first test detonation of a nuclear bomb in 2006 provided Lee Myung-bak with evidence that the Korean Peninsula was entering a new, dangerous time of high tensions and threats of nuclear warfare. Secondly, Lee Myung-bak considered China's rise as a global power to be a threat towards

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<sup>226</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 23 - 36

<sup>227</sup> "Key Diplomatic Tasks", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, 2013

<sup>228</sup> "Vision: A new Era of Hope and Happiness", *Ministry of Unification*, 2013.

<sup>229</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 35 - 36

<sup>230</sup> Foster-Carter, Aidan, "North-South Korea Relations: A Bumpy Road Ahead?" *Leeds University*, 2003, p.6-7

<sup>231</sup> "The Rise of Anti-Americanism in South Korea", *UCLA International Institute*, March 03, 2003

South Korea's security. China had been a regional power for a long time, but due to its rapid economic growth, China had been able to re-emerge as a global powerhouse. Lastly, South Korea had entered a dispute with Japan over some small islands located in the Sea of Japan<sup>232</sup>. To understand this decision by Lee Myung-bak, it is important to understand that South Korea's security (and somewhat strength in the East Asian region) is much based on their alliance with the United States<sup>233</sup>. By so, Constructivism can help to answer why Lee Myung-bak did strengthen the U.S-South Korean alliance. Lee Myung-bak believed that the increased social connection in improved U.S.-South Korean relations would increase South Korea's social influence in the international society, as well as to strengthen South Korea's say in the different disputes. This constructed Lee Myung-bak to make the decision to strengthen the U.S-South Korea alliance, even though South Korea still experienced strong anti-Americanism feelings in 2008 and 2009<sup>234</sup>.

The Second change that Lee Myung-bak's government did was to impose an aggressive South Korean stance towards North Korea again. This was done in accordance with Lee Myung-bak's "Vision 3000". Lee Myung-bak believed that it was essential for South Korea's security to find a way to denuclearize North Korea. This was going to be done by suspending the economic and humanitarian aid shipments inherent in the June 15 Declaration and October 4 Declaration<sup>235</sup>. North Korea had been very dependent on the aid shipments during the 2000s, since they experienced shortages in necessities such as food and healthcare<sup>236</sup>. Critics to the Sunshine Policy believed however that the aid shipments were used by the North Korean regime and military. By so, Lee Myung-bak became keen to suspend the shipments, as long as North Korea does not denuclearize and improve their human rights issues. At the same time, Lee Myung-bak defended his Vision 3000 by stating that if North Korea denuclearizes and improves their human rights issues, Lee Myung-bak's government was willing to continue and even increase the economic cooperation between both Koreas<sup>237</sup>. However, Lee Myung-bak's Vision 3000 sparked a very negative reaction from North Korea, who obviously saw it

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<sup>232</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 35 - 36

<sup>233</sup> Chanlett-Avery, Emma et al., "U.S.-South Korea Relations", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2013

<sup>234</sup> "The Rise of Anti-Americanism in South Korea", *UCLA International Institute*, March 03, 2003

<sup>235</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 30-31

<sup>236</sup> Manyin, Mark E. & Nikitin, Mary Beth, "Foreign Assistance to North Korea", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2009

<sup>237</sup> Suh, Jae Jean., (2009)., "*The Lee Myung-bak Government's North Korea Policy – A Study on its Historical and Theoretical Foundation*" Korea Institute for National Unification, p. 10-13

as a threat. The North Korean regime decided to try to persuade the South Korean population into believing that Lee Myung-bak's Vision 3000 will have devastating effects on the North-South Korean relations. North Korea's regime believed that this persuading could be done by increasing tensions between both Koreas, because then the South Korean public would blame Lee Myung-bak's government for it<sup>238</sup>.

While a North Korean denuclearization was the core component of Vision 3000, Lee Myung-bak was also looking for North Korea to improve their human rights issues<sup>239</sup>. Several South Korean human rights activists had been severely criticizing Roh Moo-hyun's government for not putting emphasis on North Korea's human rights violations. When Roh Moo-hyun decided (deliberately according to the activists) to not discuss the human rights violations at the 2007 summit, a line was crossed which the activist could not accept<sup>240</sup>. According to some experts, this benefited Lee Myung-bak in the 2007 South Korean presidential elections. The human rights activists welcomed Lee Myung-bak's emphasis on North Korea's human rights issues. But, as soon as Lee Myung-bak's government decided to suspend the economic and humanitarian aid shipments, the human rights activists turned against Lee Myung-bak, and demanded the suspension of the shipments to be abolished. Also, this and North Korea's persuading tactics did *de facto* create negative feelings in the South Korean public towards Lee Myung-bak and his policy<sup>241</sup>.

However, Lee Myung-bak's government was keen to continue with Vision 3000, and no changes were going to be made until North Korea decided to denuclearize and improve their human rights issues. This is what Lee Myung-bak stated in defense of his vision against the criticism he received:

“...better to move towards true reconciliation and unification by getting off to the right start, even if that is difficult at first, than to arrive at a bad outcome for having been unexact about the North-South relationship.”<sup>242</sup>

This quote clearly indicates that Lee Myung-bak believed that his vision will lead to peace and possibly a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula, even though North Korea

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<sup>238</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, “The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy”, *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 31 - 32

<sup>239</sup> Suh, Jae Jean., (2009)., “*The Lee Myung-bak Government's North Korea Policy – A Study on its Historical and Theoretical Foundation*” Korea Institute for National Unification, p. 15

<sup>240</sup> Suh, Bo-hyuk, “Beyond Silence and Blaming: Revisiting South Korea's Role in North Korean Human Rights”, *Asian Perspective*: January-March 2013, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 77-97.

<sup>241</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, “The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy”, *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 30-32

<sup>242</sup> *IBID*, p. 32

reacted negative towards it. But in fact, it is justified to suggest that Lee Myung-bak's Vision 3000 had a negative impact on the Korean reunification process. It could also be argued that the improved North-South Korean relations during the Sunshine Policy took a step back during Lee Myung-bak's first two years as president.

### **5.3.1 The post-2010 foreign policy of Lee Myung-bak**

The ROKS Cheonan sinking and the shelling of the Yeonpyeong Island are considered to be two of the worst incidents that have ever occurred between North and South Korea<sup>243</sup>. Just after the incidents, tensions between both Koreas were considered to be the highest it been after the Korean War. Also, tensions have continued to stay at critical high levels after 2010, which has led the way to the current 2013 Korean Crisis<sup>244</sup>. With that being a fact, the 2010 incidents clearly had a negative impact on the Korean reunification process. If the beginning of the MB Doctrine led to the improved North-South Korean relations during the Sunshine Policy to take a step back, the 2010 incidents were the incidents that took the North-South Korean relations back to its Cold War stance of high tensions and no relations at all. What is new for this time is that it now involves the threats of nuclear warfare<sup>245</sup>, which was never the case during the Cold War.

Lee Myung-bak's government decided to keep its foreign policy after the 2010 Incidents<sup>246</sup>, even though Lee Myung-bak's Vision 3000 had not been able to persuade North Korea into a denuclearization. This became clear when the ongoing Second Nuclear Crisis entered a new critical situation after North Korea's announcement that they have conducted a second test detonation of a nuclear bomb in 2009<sup>247</sup>. Also, the 2010 Incidents attested that Lee Myung-bak's Vision 3000 had been having a devastating effect on the North-South Korean relations, something that several critics stressed already in 2008<sup>248</sup>. However, Vision 3000 continued throughout the remaining years of Lee Myung-bak's presidency.

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<sup>243</sup> Byun, See-Won & Snyder, Scott, "Cheonan and Yeonpyeong: The Northeast Asian Response to North Korea's Provocations", *The Rusi Journal*, April/May 2011 VOL. 156 NO. 2 pp. 74-81.

<sup>244</sup> Cheon, Seong Whun, "North Korea's Attack on Yeonpyeong and the Choices for South Korea", *Korean Institute for National Unification*, Seoul: 2010-12-02, p. 1-2

<sup>245</sup> "In Focus: North Korea's Nuclear Threats", *The New York Times*, April 16, 2013

<sup>246</sup> Korea Institute for National Unification, "International Journal of Korean Unification Studies", Vol.20, No.1,2011, p. 82

<sup>247</sup> Nikitin, Mary Beth, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Technical Issues", *Congressional Research Service: Report for Congress*, Washington: 2013, p. 15 - 16.

<sup>248</sup> Khamidov, Alisher, "The Lee Myung-bak Revolution: Explaining Continuity and Change in South Korea's Foreign Policy", *SAIS U.S.-Korea Yearbook*, 2008, p. 32

Following the 2010 Incidents, Lee Myung-bak's government became keen to strengthen South Korea's security, as well as to find another path to a North Korean denuclearization. To strengthen South Korea's security, Lee Myung-bak's government decided to further strengthen the U.S. – South Korean alliance. First of all, Lee Myung-bak negotiated a reaffirming by the Obama administration that South Korea is still part of the American nuclear umbrella (i.e. a nuclear weapon state's guarantee to protect its non-nuclear weapon allies). The Obama administration did however not place any American nuclear weapons in South Korea again, even though a majority of South Koreans wanted it. Instead, Barack Obama convinced Lee Myung-bak that a stronger American nuclear umbrella over South Korea, even though without American nuclear warheads in South Korea, will be the best diplomatic defense against North Korea's nuclear weapons. Also, Lee Myung-bak's government decided in their 2011 budget to pay more to keep the American troops stationed in South Korea, thus preventing a de-manning of the American troops in South Korea due to the financial difficulties in the United States<sup>249</sup>. In Constructivist words, Lee Myung-bak's government socially connected with the protection of United States due to the 2010 Incidents, thus socially construct Lee Myung-bak's government to take the decision to strengthen the alliance.

The second contribution that Lee Myung-bak's government did after the 2010 Incidents was to reach out to China, in hope that Beijing could help Lee Myung-bak's government to achieve a North Korean denuclearization<sup>250</sup>. China reacted positive to the reach out, especially since China has always condemned North Korea's desire to possess nuclear weapons<sup>251</sup>. Although China and North Korea are very close allies, China has always seen a nuclear North Korea to be a threat to its security. Also, China has in recent years been keen to keep the East Asian region as safe and calm as possible, especially with the idea that it would weaken the American strength in the region<sup>252</sup>. North Korea's nuclear weapon tests have not only increased tensions between both Koreas to critical high levels; it has also legitimated a strengthened American presence in the region, with the strengthened U.S. – South Korean alliance. By so, it is understandable why the Chinese communist government reacted positive

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<sup>249</sup> Chanlett-Avery, Emma et al., "U.S.-South Korea Relations", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2013, p. 6 - 16

<sup>250</sup> Korea Institute for National Unification, "International Journal of Korean Unification Studies", Vol.20, No.1, 2011, p. 74-78

<sup>251</sup> Byun, See-won & Snyder, Scott, "China-Korean Relations: China's Post-Kim Jong Il Debate", *Comparative Connections*, May 2012.

<sup>252</sup> Manyin, Mark E. & Nanto, Dick K, "China-North Korea Relations", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2010, p. 1 - 5

to Lee Myung-bak's reach out. It has led to improved Chinese-South Korean diplomatic relations, which included more than business relations between both states<sup>253</sup>. However, this effort by Lee Myung-bak's government cannot at this moment be proven if it has led to a changed Chinese policy towards North Korea or not. China is continuing to send huge amounts of financial and energy aid to North Korea, which several experts claim keeps North Korea from a collapse<sup>254</sup>. At the same time however, the fact that China decided to actually vote for sanctions to be imposed on North Korea after their announcement of a third nuclear weapons test in February 2013 might be a first sign of a changed North Korean policy by Beijing due to the effort from Lee Myung-bak's government<sup>255</sup>. In Constructivists viewpoint, the Chinese communist party and Lee Myung-bak's government socially connected via the shared negative feelings towards North Korea's nuclear program, which socially constructed Lee Myung-bak's government to reach out to China.

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<sup>253</sup> Byun, See-won & Snyder, Scott, "China-Korean Relations: China's Post-Kim Jong Il Debate", *Comparative Connections*, May 2012.

<sup>254</sup> Manyin, Mark E. & Nanto, Dick K, "China-North Korea Relations", *Congressional Research Service: Report to Congress*, Washington: 2010,, p. 16 - 17

<sup>255</sup> "New Sanctions On North Korea Pass in Unified U.N. Vote", *The New York Times*, March 7, 2013

## **6. Conclusion**

This paper has provided a partial understanding to why the Korean Peninsula is still to this day separated between two ideological different countries. This is an unfortunate left over of the Cold War, which ended in 1991. This partial understand has been provided by analyzing three significant South Korean foreign policies and their impact on the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula. The analysis has also looked at four significant incidents and their impact on the peaceful reunification process of the Korean Peninsula.

The research questions asked in this paper were these five:

1. How did South Korea's foreign relations change with Nordpolitik?
2. What impact on the relations between North Korea and South Korea has the Sunshine Policy had?
- 3: How did the MB Doctrine change the North Korean and South Korean relations?
4. How has South Korea's foreign policy changed due the 2010 Incidents?
5. How did South Korea react to the two Korean Nuclear Crises?

These questions have been answered by an in-depth analysis of each foreign policy, and each of the incidents asked about. This in-depth analysis has been conducted with the help of the theoretical framework of Social Constructivism.

To summarize the answers to these five research questions: First, Nordpolitik changed South Korea's relations with the communist countries. The Cold War stance of no relations at all between the communist countries and South Korea ended in 1988, and South Korea developed diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and China. The Chinese-South Korean relations were more strained than the South Korean-Soviet relations, but trading between China and South Korea increased significantly during the era of Nordpolitik. The North-South Korean relations never really improved during Nordpolitik, except from the two agreements made at the 1990 high-official meeting in Seoul.

Second, the Sunshine Policy had a positive impact on the North-South Korean relations. Not only did two inter-Korean summits become a reality during the era of the Sunshine Policy, both Koreas entered cooperation with each other. At mount Kumgang, South Koreans were for the first time allowed to visit North Korea as tourists, which is a significant step in the normalization process of the North-South Korean relations. At the Kaesong Industrial Complex, North and South Korean workers could for the first time work side by side. Also,

South Korean corporations became approved to invest in North Korea during the Sunshine Policy, which was an essential component of the Sunshine Policy.

Third, the MB Doctrine made the North-South Korean relations to take a step back to a harsher stance. North Korea reacted negative towards Lee Myung-bak's Vision 3000, which increased tensions at the Korean Peninsula once again.

Fourth, South Korea's foreign policy did not change any significant after the 2010 incidents. South Korea did strengthen the U.S.-South Korean alliance, and got a reaffirm from the United States that South Korea will be protected against the North Korea's nuclear program. South Korea also reached out to China, in hope that China could help them with the denuclearization of North Korea. China reacted positive towards this, which created improved Chinese-South Korean relations.

And last, South Korea reacted similar to the First and the Second Nuclear Crisis. Kim Young-sam's government of South Korea decided at first that the First Nuclear Crisis could be solved bilateral between North and South Korea. But, following the "sea of fire" threat, Kim Young-sam's government took a more aggressive stance, by using a more aggressive tone while talking about the crisis. After Jimmy Carter's visit to Pyongyang, Kim Young-sam's government once again believed the crisis could be solved bilaterally via an inter-Korean summit. Roh Moo-hyun's government did also at first believe that the Second Nuclear Crisis could be solved bilateral between North and South Korea. But, following the Bush administration's proposal about the Six-party talks, Roh Moo-hyun's government changed their view, and started to support Bush's idea of solving the crisis multilateral between the key actors in the Korean dispute.

I would like to finish off with a few thoughts on the future of the Korean Peninsula. By looking at what have occurred after the 2010 incidents, it is difficult to argue that the near future looks any positive on the Korean Peninsula. Park Geun-hye will most likely continue with the MB Doctrine for five more years, as well as Kim Jong-un continue with his aggressive tone towards South Korea and its allies. However, it did take 4 – 5 years for Kim Jong-il to change North Korea's stance of isolation. So, it might need to take a similar time for Kim Jong-un to change his aggressive stance, even though it is hard to believe that at this moment. Also, due to the increased American-Chinese encounter in the region, their impact on the Korean reunification process cannot be forgotten. This impact is often negative for the inter-Korean relations.

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