

CHAPTER II

SOUTH KOREAN FOREIGN POLICIES TOWARD NORTH KOREA

Foreign Policy is the framework for a nation-state to achieve its national interest which is influenced by several internal and external factors. A foreign policy can be in the form of action and reaction from a nation-state toward international situation and condition. South Korea as a sovereign nation-state has many foreign policies as its action and reaction toward any situation and condition in international sphere. The South Korean foreign policy toward North Korea is always such an interesting issue to be discussed, since these two Koreas had shared many histories together. In this chapter, the writer particularly is going to cover several different foreign policies of South Korea toward North Korea under several presidential administrations. It will include the most influential foreign policy, which was Sunshine Policy.

A. Kim Dae Jung Policy

Kim Dae Jung was a president who ruled South Korea since 1998 until 2003. Under Kim Dae Jung era in 1998, South Korea implemented a brand new foreign policy approach toward North Korea which was known as Sunshine Policy. The philosophy behind Sunshine Policy is taken from Aesop fable “The North Wind and the Sun” (Hoare, 2015). This fable tells a story about how the warm sunshine who succeed to take off a traveler’s cloak using its patient warm sunshine, compare to the wind using its strong blowing. The story is emphasizing on the value of softness way which is better to use compared to harsh and violence way. Using the philosophy from that fable story, Sunshine Policy emerged and was implemented by South Korean government as a foreign policy approach toward North Korea that South Korea would emphasize on using soft ways than on force.

South Korea conducted Sunshine Policy with three main principles. First, South Korea will not tolerate any armed

provocation by North Korea. The second, South Korea will not attempt to absorb North Korea in any ways, this means South Korea will not try to erase North Korean values and ideology. And last, South Korea will actively promote reconciliation and cooperation with North Korea (Chung-In, 2000).

Sunshine Policy as a foreign policy was not aiming to create reunification between two Korea, but more likely to achieve peaceful coexistence between two states in Korean Peninsula. Under Sunshine Policy implementation, the word “reunification” was also not being emphasized that much as South Korean government was more likely emphasizing on “constructive engagement polices” (Levin, 2002). This is related to the fear of North Korea itself to reunification, that one day if it happened South Korea will absorb North Korea. Any values and ideology of North Korea would be eliminated by South Korea, like what happened with East Germany and West Germany.

The government of South Korea also highlighted the separation between politics and economy. It means South Korea will approach North Korea through economic cooperation, it is not depended on the political situation or diplomatic relations of both states. As South’s government believes that good economic relations and also North Korea’s good behavior on economic cooperation would lead to good relations and cooperation in other sector—politics matter.

Sunshine Policy also stresses on the reciprocity between North and South (Levin, 2002). South Korea government expected that a flexible reciprocity can be reached in the relation between North and South. It means that in the “softness” action of Sunshine Policy, North Korea would also showing good reaction in return. The government of South Korea believes that by making effort and giving something first, eventually there will be a good feedback from North Korea. Even though, the feedback might not be directly felt at that moment.

Under Sunshine Policy approach, South Korea succeeded to establish economic cooperation with North Korea, through Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC). This was an industrial

complex built by South Korean government which is located in Kaesong City, North Korea. South Korean government also allowed its business companies and even NGOs entering North Korea through this industrial complex. This joint economic cooperation has created huge economic impact to North Korea as a state and in its society. There were more than 30,000 North Korean citizens who previously unemployed then got jobs and incomes from this economic cooperation (Kwon, 2014). KIC had also created big effect on the economic trade and cooperation between Seoul and Pyeongyang.

Besides through joint industrial complex, the cooperation between South-North in Kim Dae Jung era was also showed with the opening tourism spot in Mt. Kungang which located in North Korea. In that area also was opened a tourist resort built by Hyundai construction company, which is one of the leading company in South Korea. Mt. Kungang tourism spot was opened for South Koreans people to visit. It had made over a million South Korean citizen travelled across to the North (Ahn J. , 2017).

Sunshine Policy at that time also has created an enlightenment for diplomatic relations between the two states. For the first time after Korean War ended, bilateral diplomatic meeting was held between South Korea and North Korea. In the year of 2000, Kim Dae Jung travelled across from Seoul to Pyongyang to attend the Inter Korean Summit. This was a huge step for South-North relations at that time, since it was the first forum where South leader and North leader officially met in post-Korean War.

In the first Inter Korean Summit, international world was able to see two Korean leader greet each other warmly. Kim Dae Jung who was South Korean President at that time arrived at Pyongyang and directly welcomed by Kim Jong Il, the head of state and chairman of National Defense Commission of North Korea. The summit was held in two days in 13th - 15th June 2000. Several issues were discussed between two Korean leaders in the summit. One of the issues discussed was the meeting for separated families caused by Korean War. As

Korean War and its division in 38th parallel had caused many people separated and lost its family member. Another topic discussed was the agenda on reopening rail road line which previously closed in the Korean War period. Through the agenda reopening rail road from South Korea to North Korea would promote better access to trade and business between two states (Historic Deal at North-South Korea Summit, 2000).

The first Inter-Korean Summit resulted North-South Joint Declaration which known as 15th June Joint Declaration. Both Korean leaders recognized that the summit was a great significance to promote mutual understanding and developing relations and cooperation. Here are the points of 15th June North-South Joint Declaration which signed by Kim Dae Jung and Kim Jong Il (15th June Joint Declaration) :

1. South Korea and North Korea both agreed to resolve reunification issues independently through joint effort of Korean people.
2. For the achievement of reunification, South and North have agreed that there is a common element in the South's concept of a confederation and the North's formula for a loose form of federation. The South and the North agreed to promote reunification in that direction.
3. The South and the North have agreed to resolve humanitarian issues such as exchange visits by separated family members and relatives on the occasion of the August 15 National Liberation Day.
4. The South and the North have agreed to consolidate mutual trust by promoting balanced development of the national economy through economic cooperation and by stimulating cooperation and exchanges in civic, cultural, sports, health, environmental and all other fields.
5. The South and the North have agreed to hold a dialogue between relevant authorities in the near

future to implement the above agreements expeditiously.

Under Kim's Sunshine Policy, South Korea and North Korea also was able to hold several ministries talk. Kim Dae Jung also made effort to resolve humanitarian issues in North Korea by sending numbers of humanitarian aid. From those several efforts Kim Dae Jung done, President Kim himself accepting Nobel Prize Award for his work for democracy and human rights in South Korea and in East Asia and also for his effort on peace and reconciliation with North Korea (Kim Dae Jung Fact, 2000). Kim Dae Jung also known as Korea's Nelson Mandela as he is one of the influencing figure in Korea.

B. Roh Moo Hyun Policy

In the year 2003-2008, South Korea was led under a president named Roh Moo Hyun who was also continuing to implement Sunshine Policy in his administration. On his inauguration ceremony in February 2003, Roh Moo Hyun declared South Korea stance on foreign policy toward North Korea was using his predecessor's Sunshine Policy frame work. Even though, implementing the same basic foreign policy Roh Moo Hyun also introduced new terms along which was called the "peace and prosperity policy" (Choong Nam Kim, 2005).

Sunshine Policy under Roh Moo Hyun administration also emphasizing on reciprocity and mutual trust to be achieved in the relation of South and North. The soft ways such as dialogue on conflict resolution was being highlighted. Also, seeking for cooperation from South Korea to North Korea was become major agenda on Roh's era.

As it was a continuation from the previous Sunshine, Roh Moo Hyun prioritized on the economic cooperation with North Korea. First, under Roh Moo Hyun's Sunshine Policy the Kaesong Industrial Complex had grown bigger than before. At that time, around fifteen South Korea big companies operated in KIC area. There were more than 6,500 North Korean workers got salaries on Kaesong Industrial Complex under Roh Moo Hyun, which is expected to be increasing year by year. Kaesong

Industrial Complex is combining the South Korean capital and technology with North Korea's cheap labors and land which makes a "win-win" solution for both sides. This makes the South Korea as the second biggest trade partner for North Korea which directly would affect two states relations. (Hong Nack Kim, South-North Korean Relations Under The Roh Moo Hyun Government, 2006).

Besides that, Sunshine Policy under Roh Moo Hyun administration also continued on maintaining Mt. Kumgang tourism spot as the pioneer of inter-Korean cooperative venture. The Mt. Kumgang tourism once experienced stagnancy due to the decreasing popularity and demand on the tour program. Roh Moo Hyun government helped Hyundai Asan as the MNC to revitalize that area and at the same time made North Korean government agreed on providing more secure area for tourists. (Hong Nack Kim, South-North Korean Relations Under The Roh Moo-Hyun Government, 2006)

One of the agenda of Sunshine Policy in Roh Moo Hyun period was reconnecting railways and roads between South and North. South Korean government was also focusing on building railroads and parallel roads linking several prominent area with North. In 2003, the government completed on building railways and parallel roads from Dorasan Station (in South) and Kaesong station (in North). Also in 2004, connecting from Ongjin in South and Jeojin in North (Hong Nack Kim, South-North Korean Relations Under The Roh Moo Hyun Government, 2006). By reconnecting several spots from South to North it was able to make South Korean tourist travel well to Mt. Kumgang and also for South Korean workers come to work easily to Kaesong Industrial Complex.

Roh Moo Hyun with his Sunshine Policy was also able to hold 2nd Inter Korean Summit after the first meeting was held by Kim Dae Jung. In 2007, for the second time Inter Korean Summit was held again in Pyongyang. The Summit was discussing things related to several issues including reuniting separated families, agreement to create joint fishing zone, also the idea on signing agreement to end the armistice system

between North and South after Korean War. Between Roh Moo Hyun and Kim Jong Il also agreed to reemphasized on the result of 15th June Joint Declaration which had established in the first Inter Korean Summit.

Under Roh Moo Hyun administration, South Korea had increased amount of economic and humanitarian aid to North, from 2003 in 1,888 million won to total in 2005, around 2,138 million won (Hong Nack Kim, South-North Korean Relations Under The Roh Moo Hyun Government, 2006). This was bigger number compared to economic and humanitarian aid sent on Kim Dae Jung from 1998-2002. Moreover, in 2005 more than 10,000 members of separated families had reunited with their families after separated for many years as the cause of Korean War. Under Roh, Sunshine also had increased cultural exchange between South and North, as huge numbers of South citizen allowed to travel to North and vice versa.

C. Lee Myung Bak Policy

Under Lee Myung Bak's administration in 2008-2013, South Korea stopped the implementation of Sunshine Policy as its foreign policy approach to North Korea. Instead, President Lee used a new foreign policy called Hard-Line Policy or also known as "Vision 3000: Denuclearization and Openness". Lee Myung Bak was coming from The Grand Korea Party, which was the conservative party and it was the major opposition party in Roh Moo Hyun administration presidential period. As coming from the opposition party, and then won the presidential election, President Lee had criticized Sunshine Policy under Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun as ineffective foreign policy approach toward North Korea. Like other conservatives perspective, Lee Myung Bak believes that Sunshine Policy was such a naïve, unrealistic, and wishful perception, which did not suitable with the nature of North Korea on Kim Jong Il regime (Kim H. N., The Lee Myung-Bak Government's North Korea Policy And the Prospects for Inter-Korean Relations, 2008).

President Lee Myung Bak came with a new tougher foreign policy. There are several main principles that

highlighted on “Vision 3000: Denuclearization and Openness” or Hard Line policy. The words “Vision 3000” and “Denuclearization” were actually a strategic plan by Lee’s government that South Korea would likely help North Korea increasing its GDP to \$3,000 within ten years under one condition; if North Korea willing to abandon its nuclear program (Duk-Min, 2008). In another word, South Korea would not give economic aid, if North Korea did not want to stop its nuclear. That is why, the main objective of Lee’s hard line policy is to insist stopping North Korea’s nuclear program or denuclearization. The “Openness” in this foreign policy means that South Korea would be willing to lead on bringing peaceful reunification, which based on Democracy and market-economy. In this case, “Vision 3000 Denuclearization and Openness” would urge North Korea to reform its political system, and opening itself to the outside world.

Lee Myung Bak’s foreign policy approaches also known as Hard Line Policy because President Lee aimed to strengthen alliance with major international power. It means to establish stronger relations with the U.S and Japan in order to secure national security and to create peace in Korean peninsula. President Lee emphasized that creating triangle military alliance with US and Japan would ensure South Korea’s ability to deter any military and security threat by North Korea.

D. Park Geun Hye Policy

Park Geun Hye is the daughter of Park Chung Hee – South Korean 3rd president who ruled the country for sixteen years, that became a first female president of Republic of Korea. Park Geun Hye is coming from another conservative party in South Korea named Saenuri Party and then get elected as a president in 2013. Under Park Geun Hye administration, South Korea’s foreign policy had shifted and changed into a new one. President Park came with Trustpolitik foreign policy, as a framework of South Korea toward North Korea. The concept of trustpolitik is not a middle foreign policy approach between Hard-Line Policy and Sunshine Policy, but it rather as a

combination between them where South Korea strengthen inter-Korea relation through “modest form of reunification” and non-tolerance to provocation and belligerence. Furthermore, President Park herself mentioned the definition of trustpolitik policy:

“First, that North Korea must keep its agreements made with South Korea and the international community to establish a minimum level of trust, and second, that there must be assured consequences for actions that breach the peace.” (Geun-Hye, 2011)

From that statement, it means that the trustpolitik would be such a flexible approach from South to North. South Korea would draw a tough line against North Korea and other times would pursue open negotiation toward North Korea.

South Korea under Park Geun Hye administration decided to strengthen its national security. President Park agreed to establish defense program with the U.S, which was under Barack Obama that time in 2017 (Sang-Hun, U.S. Antimissile System Goes Live in South Korea, 2017). The Terminal High Altitude Area Defense program or also known as THAAD is an agreement to deploy advanced American missile system in Korean land. This THAAD program was created in order to protect East Asia region and particularly South Korea and United States military region from North Korea’s nuclear capability. Through establishing THAAD together with the U.S, it showed that Park Geun Hye administration was more on emphasizing military strength either to secure its nation or to deter from outside threat.

Park Geun Hye could not finish her five years presidential period when in 2017 Korean people demanded her to be impeached. Massive demonstration where hundreds of thousands Koreans walked down to street and protested to impeach of Park Geun Hye related to her corruption scandal. This first female president of Korea proved guilty violating her presidential power by accepting bribery from several biggest

companies in Korea—Samsung Electronics Company was one of them. South Korean parliament voted to topple her down and then on March 2017, Constitutional Court finally sentenced impeachment on Park Geun Hye and got her arrested. (Sang-Hun, 2017).

