

CHAPTER IV DOMESTIC POLITICS, MILITARY CAPABILITY, AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT FACTOR THAT INFLUENCED SOUTH KOREA UNDER MOON JAE IN ADMINISTRATION REORIENTED TO SUNSHINE POLICY

The issues related to South Korea and North Korea is such interesting topic to be discussed in International Relations Studies. As two neighbouring countries that share same ethnics, language, and history, the action and reaction that these two states take are always becoming highlight. Especially, its foreign policy, as foreign policy is a tool of a nation-state to achieve its national interest. South Korea as discussed in the previous chapters, had implemented several different foreign policies toward North Korea.

Sunshine Policy has become one of the most influential foreign policy for South Korea that had been used as foundation for South Korea's action and reaction toward North Korea. After only been implemented on Kim Dae Jung (1998-2003) and Roh Moo Hyun (2003-2008), South Korea did not use Sunshine Policy anymore. In the period of 2008-2013, South Korea implemented Hard-Line Policy or known as "*Vision 3000: Denuclearization and Openness*" which focusing on strengthening military alliance with U.S and Japan and at the same time urge North Korea to denuclearize instead of giving economic aid. At this point, President Lee's foreign policy approach was clearly contrast compared to Sunshine Policy—giving financial help first then pursuing talks. After Lee Myung Bak era, a new foreign policy approach called *Trustpolitik* Policy had been used by South Korea under Park Geun Hye (2013-2017) where South Korea was being flexible that it could be tough and strict toward North Korea yet it would pursue negotiation with North Korea if its needed. Then in 2017, Moon Jae In was elected as a new president of Republic of Korea. This new president stated that in his administration Sunshine Policy would be implemented again.

The phenomenon that President Moon Jae In recalls Sunshine Policy again as a framework for South-North relations, after this policy was not used in several periods, is such an interesting issue to be discussed. The writer of this research is aware that inside a foreign policy there is a decision-making process. There must be many important factors that influence a state under specific administration to implement a certain foreign policy, especially after a long time that certain policy was not being implemented anymore. Thus, this chapter will specifically provide a comprehensive explanation related to the background that influenced Moon Jae In administration on reorienting to implement Sunshine Policy.

Referring to the decision-making process theory by William D. Coplin, the writer generally assumed that there were domestic politics aspect such as the political party where President Moon Jae In came from highly influenced Moon Jae In to reorient to Sunshine Policy. There were also military factor, where South Korea is relatively not very strong and feels threatened by North Korea. Another factor influencing was International Context that North Korea showed positive reaction under Sunshine Policy implementation compared to its behavior on non-Sunshine Policy. The further discussions are explained as follows:

A. Domestic Politics Aspect

On William Coplin's Decision Making Process, the first factor that influence the decision maker is domestic politics factor. Domestic Politics factor is defined as decision-making process in a state which would highly be influenced by cultural actors or human behaviour. The human culture actors as well as human behaviour in this context are the behaviour of whole political system in a state or it can be the behaviour of the head of state itself. Thus, domestic politics aspect is very crucial on influencing decision-making process in a state, since the head of state or president as the highest decision maker is included in the part of domestic politics itself. This means everything that happens in domestic politics will be directly influencing the

decision maker. The domestic politics factor will be explained further below:

1. Democratic Party of Korea as Dominant Party in South Korea

The implementation of Sunshine Policy under Moon Jae In administration can be analysed by looking on South Korea's domestic politics today. South Korea with its Democracy system is like other democratic states, which have dominant party and opposition party. Nowadays, South Korea system is dominated and ruled by liberal democratic party named Democratic Party of Korea or also known as *Deobeuro minjudang* in Hangul. The Democratic Party of Korea succeeded to bring its candidate—Moon Jae In—winning the presidential election in 2017 (McCurry, 2017).

With the new president elected who is coming from this Democratic Party of Korea, it means that this dominant party also is playing a role in decision-making process in South Korea including the decision on foreign policy. Democratic Party of Korea is a party emphasizing on human right values, market-based economy, and, on the stance toward South-North issues, Democratic Party of Korea usually is referring to soft-ways approach. This democratic party is pro to reunification by engaging with North Korea through exchange and cooperation. Supporting and persuading North Korea to denuclearize and establish peace in the peninsula is also included to the main agenda of Democratic Party of Korea. (McCurry, South Korea set to change policy on North as liberal wins election, 2017)

This is very contrast with the values and principles of Conservatives Party in South Korea, such as Grand National Party and Liberty Party (Saenuri Party). Usually emphasizing more on hard-line on approaching North Korea, the conservative mostly implements economic sanction toward North Korea and engages more on

military power and strengthens military alliance with other states (Pike, n.d.).

From those facts on the history, the writer analyses that the decision of President Moon to implement Sunshine Policy again is directly influenced by the dominant party in government today as well as the party where Moon Jae In comes from—Democratic Party of Korea. With its soft-ways values and principles, it was not surprising for Moon Jae In believing and adapting the same value and principle on deciding a foreign policy action to North Korea.

Moreover, Democratic Party of Korea was the party where Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun came from (Seong-Hyon, 2017). As we know, Kim Dae Jung was the very first president of South Korea who emerged and implemented Sunshine Policy as a platform for South-North relations. Roh Moo Hyun was also South Korean president who was ever implementing Sunshine Policy and even creating better and closer relations with North Korea. From this point, the writer could see that one of the factor affecting Moon Jae In to implement Sunshine Policy was because the predecessors under the same party were implementing the same foreign policy framework.

2. The Personality of Moon Jae In

Understanding from William D. Coplin's theory that domestic politics also refers to the behaviour of the leader or head of state. Human behaviour is also reflecting human personality itself. In this case, human behaviour is the head of the state's behaviour, which is President Moon Jae In himself. The personality of Moon Jae In—whether directly or indirectly—will affect on how he will make a certain decision. Moon Jae In's background previously was a human right lawyer who was actively advocating human right violation issues. The young Moon Jae In was an activist who joined the mass demonstration and protest against South Korean

dictatorship Park Chung Hee—Park Geun Hye’s father (Suzuki, 2017).

Picture 4.1
Roh Moo Hyun (right) as South Korean President
Shake Hand to Moon Jae In (left) as His Chief
Presidential Secretary in March 2007



Retrieved from (Joo-Jin, 2017)

Moon Jae In also personally had close relationship with one of the Sunshine Policy’s President Roh Moo Hyun. Even the relationship between Moon Jae In and Roh Moo Hyun was very close when Roh Moo Hyun elected as South Korean president, Moon Jae In was chosen as the chief of presidential secretary on Roh his presidential era (Joo-Jin, 2017). The writer believes from those personal backgrounds and experiences of Moon Jae In are affecting his decision today on using Sunshine Policy again.

Domestic Politics aspect is very crucial for decision-making process in a state. Domestic Politics consists of political party and political system where the president himself/herself is the part of the system. Domestic Politics aspect as well includes the human

behaviour or personality of a leader that will influence his/her decision on foreign policy. According to that, the writer could conclude that Domestic Politics factor that affecting Moon Jae In to implement Sunshine Policy was coming from the Democratic Party of Korea as the dominant party and the party where he is coming from, as well as Moon Jae In's personal backgrounds and experiences in the past.

B. Military Capability Aspect

According to Decision-Making Process Theory of William D. Coplin, military capability of one state is highly influencing the process to decide a foreign policy. Since the nature of a state itself is preserving or survival to protect its nation, then military capability is the most important factor influencing decision-making in a state. Military capability is one of determinant factor on how a state would define its national interest. Military capability is related, as well, to how the certain state is able to deal with threat—either internal or external.

In this paper specifically discussed on South Korea once again implementing Sunshine Policy influenced by its military capability. As Sunshine Policy is the South Korean foreign policy toward North Korea, then logically it can be related that South Korea would compare its military capability to North Korea before deciding to implement Sunshine Policy. The further explanation related to South Korea and North Korea is going to be explained as follow:

1. Weaponry

In terms of weaponry, South Korea possesses more modern and sophisticated technology. Especially, since South Korea is close ally of United States, South Korea's weaponry also got big influences from American technology. South Korea military power is including more than 2,000 tanks and approximately 1,500 unit of K1 and K1A1 tanks currently in service, and 4,000 artillery as well. South Korea also possesses high

technology of air force system. Under the Republic of Korea Air Force (ROKAF), South has upgraded its air superiority and attack aircraft repeatedly since the cessation of the Korean War with jet fighter and fighter bomber such as F-5, F-15 and F-16 (Blair, 2015). Moreover, South Korea under its naval system has built six new helicopter-carrying destroyers (DDH), guided missile destroyers (DDG), and six guided missile frigates (FFG) since 2003 (Kalman, 2017).

Even though North Korea has a lower national income compare to South Korea, but Pyeongyang's military expenditure is ten times higher compare to Seoul. Influenced by its national ideology called Songun—politics that places military first as priority that has made North Korea possess many military equipment, this country has owned 8,600 artillery pieces, both self-propelled and towed, and roughly 5,500 multiple rocket launch systems and around 4,300 unit of tanks (Kalman, 2017). North Korea is also obsessed to strengthen its military in air force system, the data according to the South Korean Ministry of National Defense in 2016 estimated that the North Korean air force consists of 1,300 aircraft. It also has about 5,500 multiple-rocket launchers, 2,500 armored vehicle, 430 combatant vessels, 250 amphibious vessels and 70 submarines of helicopter carrier and rocket launcher in their naval system. Moreover, North Korea also possesses chemical weapons that include 2,500 to 5,000 tons of sarin gas and mustard gas (Albert & Ratner, 2018).

North Korea also has been developing nuclear weapon for decades. Some nuclear missile test was conducted in several times, the nuclear weapon that had been testing also in various range that describes on the figure bellow:

Figure 4.1
North Korea's Nuclear Test Range



Retrieved from (Kalman, 2017)

As nuclear is the weapon of mass destruction, North Korea with its nuclear ballistic missile system possesses huge power of military that makes North Korea easily deter any security threat to its nation. Possessing this huge power and capability of nuclear weapon has made North Korea is a threat to other countries, especially South Korea. If the worst case and cease-fire happened in Korean peninsula, it is easier for North Korea to destroy the whole South Korea with its nuclear weapon. Therefore, North Korea's position is stronger in term of security and military power compared to South Korea.

2. Army Personnel

Besides its military equipment, the number of human resources as the national army is also important in

a state's security. The Republic of Korea army has total 490,000 active personnel and combined with approximately 28,500 American troops, which currently stay in South Korea (Kalman, 2017). South Korea also has compulsory military program for civilians who are male between ages 18-35 to fulfil military training for two years.

On the other hand, North Korea possesses bigger number of troops that it has around 1.2 million active personnel and 600,000 in reserve. Besides Songun ideology where North Korea government prioritize more on military, North Korea also adopting Juche ideology. This ideology believes that North Korea as a sovereign nation state must be independence and not depended on any other states or international—self-reliance (Albert & Ratner, 2018). This Juche ideology has made any citizen in North Korea is required to serve in military. With this kind of system and ideology, it made the number human resources in the term of army troops in North Korea is bigger compared to South Korea.

The conclusion from those data above, North Korea possesses stronger military capability, which made even clearer that South Korea's military capability is lower or weaker than North Korea. Moreover, South Korea has always been depending on the U.S security umbrella that makes South Korea is somehow incapable to be independent on its military and security. Thus, the writer analyse that President Moon Jae In today re-implement Sunshine Policy was influenced by the fact Seoul's military capability is not better than Pyeongyang. Moreover, if South Korea was still forcing itself to implement hard approach and strengthening military, then North Korea might have react negatively or even worse become aggressive attacking toward Seoul. The writer believes that Moon Jae In must have been considering all of these facts and possibilities from

military aspect, before finally decided to implement Sunshine Policy.

C. International Context Aspect

Understanding from William D. Coplin's decision-making process theory, another factor influencing the decision-making process on foreign policy is coming from international context. International context aspect is the factor that coming from foreign policies of other states in international sphere whether it was in the past, present, future, or even in the prediction. It also can be defined as the influence of other states which relevant or related to the issue.

As international context aspect means the influence from other nation states, a state's national decision, foreign policy, or stance toward a phenomenon can be included as a factor which affecting decision-making process. An action or reaction coming from another state is influencing how this certain state would make a decision in the future. In this case, South Korea's on Moon Jae In's period's decision to implement Sunshine Policy is influenced by North Korea's reaction on previous Sunshine Policy itself. North Korea was showing different behaviour and reaction toward foreign policies that South implemented, especially between Sunshine Policy and Non-Sunshine Policy implementation. The writer is going to try to explain the comparison of North Korea's reaction toward Sunshine Policy and Non-Sunshine Policy, as it explained below:

1. The Behaviour of North Korea Toward Sunshine Policy

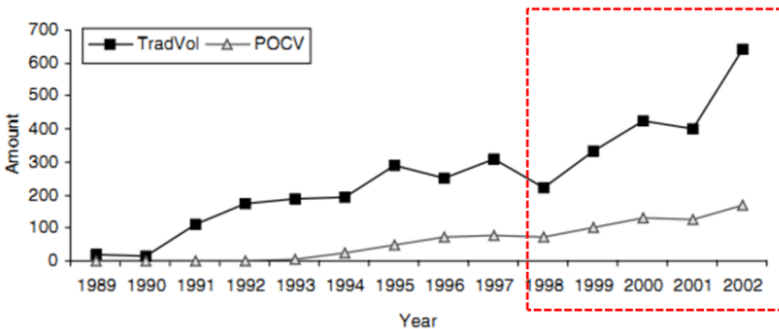
Under Sunshine Policy in two presidential era Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun, North Korea was showing positive and reciprocates reactions toward South Korea. This can be seen from several proofs where South and North had closer relations and even established several cooperation and agreements.

a. Engaging Economic Cooperation through Kaesong Industrial Complex

Under Sunshine Policy implementation, North Korea agreed to establish economic cooperation together with South Korea. Kaesong Industrial Complex was the first joint economic cooperation between this two Koreas, which was established under Kim Dae Jung, and Roh Moo Hyun administration. This was phenomenal step for the relation between South Korea and North Korea at that time.

Furthermore, statistically showed North Korea's economic trade level with South Korea has increased through this joint industrial zone. Under Sunshine Policy Kim Dae Jung era only, North-South economic trade level experienced the highest position level that ever achieved showed on the chart below:

Figure 4.2
North-South Trade Chart (million USD), Ministry of Unification South Korea



Retrieved from (MOU 2003, 2004)

According to the data from Ministry of Unification, compared to the previous years before Sunshine Policy and under Sunshine Policy, North Korea was showing highest level of economic trading with South Korea under Sunshine Policy implementation—Kim Dae Jung administration. This proves a good reaction shown by North Korea where it is willing to have cooperation together with South Korea. By the establishment of Kaesong Industrial Complex it had shown that using Sunshine Policy approach the behaviour of North Korea became more friendly and warm.

b. Opening Mt. Kumgang Tourism Spot

As mentioned on previous chapter, under Sunshine Policy North Korea and South Korea were able to create good relations. Beside the economic cooperation, cultural cooperation also reached by two Koreas. Under Sunshine Policy, North Korea agreed to open Mt. Kumgang as tourism spot, which opened for South Korean citizens.

Over a million South Korean citizen travelled across to the North (Ahn, 2017). From opening up Mt. Kumgang as tourism area for South Koreans it shows that North Korea was willing to and able to open up to outside world, in this case especially South Korea. North Korea became more approachable and friendly toward South Korea under Sunshine Policy implementation.

c. Arranging Inter-Korean Summit

One of the most important event on South and North history happened under Sunshine Policy as well. North Korea was willing to have diplomatic talk with South Korea for the very first time. It was Inter-Korean Summit, which held twice in year 2000 and 2007. The presidents from

both South and North met in Pyongyang and made agreement on several issues related in Korean Peninsula.

In Kim Dae Jung administration, he was able to establish the “June 15th Declaration” with Kim Jong Il where it becomes the main framework used on the whole cooperation and relation between South and North. Roh Moo Hyun’s Sunshine Policy also had achieved an agreement to end the armistice system between North and South after Korean War. Moreover, this second summit was able to resolve nuclear issues where North Korea had agreed to close Yongbyon reactor—one of the North’s main nuclear reactor as the first phase deal (Korean Leader Issue Peace Call, 2007).

The diplomatic summits and many agreements signed between the leaders of two countries had showed that South Korea and North Korea was in such a good relationship at that time. North Korea was showing a positive reaction toward South Korea’s invitation to held diplomatic talks.

2. The Behaviour of North Korea toward Non-Sunshine Policy

On the other hand, under non-Sunshine Policy administration, North-South relation was growing unstable. North Korea showed a contrast reaction toward South Korea, which can be seen from the two administrations post Sunshine Policy, Lee Myung Bak and Park Geun Hye. The explanation of North Korea’s behaviour on Non-Sunshine Policy implementation will be mention below:

a. Shutting Down Kaesong Industrial Complex

Under President Lee Myung Bak administration, South Korea increased military

cooperation with the U.S by joining military exercise and military drill (Kim J. , 2010). This made the tension between Seoul and Pyeongyang had increased, causing North Korea temporarily shut down Kaesong Industrial Complex in 2009 and 2013 (What is the Kaesong Industrial Complex?, 2016). Even it was only shutting down for a few months, but this first joint economic cooperation between South Korea and North Korea was endangered.

Until 2016, during Park Geun Hye presidential period, Kaesong Industrial Complex was officially shut down (Sang-Hun, 2016). This was because Park Geun Hye's foreign policy was more focused on strengthening military power rather than using soft-ways approach. Park Geun Hye at that time had signed agreement with Barack Obama on establishing Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), which created threat and more tension to North Korea. As the impact, the first joint economic site Kaesong Industrial Complex was closed down.

b. Shutting Down Mt. Kumgang Tourism Spot

During Lee Myung Bak administration, Sunshine Policy was not implemented anymore. On the period of 2008-2013, several policies from Sunshine Policy had been stopped and replaced with new policies. In 2008, Lee Myung Bak administration stopped sending economic aid to North Korea (Ahn C. , 2011). Thus, affecting the relations between North and South until the moment when North Korea forcedly shut down Mt. Kumgang site in 2011 (Li-Sun, 2011). As it explained before, Mt. Kumgang is the tourism spot, which located in North Korea that finally opened for South Korean citizens as the sign of

peace relation between South and North. Under Lee Myung Bak administration it finally closed down.

c. Failure on Arranging Inter-Korean Summit

On the previous president of Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun, South Korea and North Korea succeeded to hold Inter-Korean Summit twice. In contrast, Inter-Korean Summit could not be held anymore during Lee Myung Bak administration. North Korea reportedly responded cold toward Seoul's invitation on holding this diplomatic summit (Kim H. N., *The Lee Myung-Bak Government's North Korea Policy And the Prospects for Inter-Korean Relations*, 2008). Moreover, Park Geun Hye era also could not able to hold Inter-Korean Summit (North Korea Rejects South's Call for Talks, 2015). The diplomatic relations between South Korea and North Korea remained far away and cold.

d. Failure on Arranging Reunification Meeting for Separated Families

Sunshine Policy had also made South Korea and North Korea succeeded to establish meeting for separated families. Those people are the victim of Korean War who separated from their family members since the division of 38th parallel between South Korea and North Korea. On President Lee Myung Bak period, this meeting for separated families was not able to be held. The reunification meeting for separated families victim of Korean War could not be held (Kim H. N., *The Lee Myung-Bak Government's North Korea Policy And the Prospects for Inter-Korean Relations*, 2008). The direct impact was felt the most by South Korean and North Korean citizens who could not meet their family members if the

relations between these two Koreas were not harmonious.

Moreover, North Korea's behaviour during President Park Geun Hye administration was also similar. North Korea rejected South Korea's proposal on reunification meeting for Korean War victims (Snyder, 2014). In the impact, thousands separated families in South Korea and North Korea could not see each other.

Besides, North Korea had showed aggressive behaviour related on their nuclear program under non-Sunshine Policy era. During Lee Myung Bak period only, North Korea had been conducting nuclear tests twice. The first time was in May 25th 2009 where North Korea government official stated that its nuclear strength was as powerful as Hiroshima bomb (McCurry, 2009). In 2013, another nuclear test also arranged as its protest reaction for sanction that had been imposed by UN to North Korea (Branigan, 2013). Moreover, direct confrontation also occurred between two Koreas when North Korea fired torpedo and sank South Korean navy ships. North Korea also attacked Yeongpyeon Island area in South Korea, which was causing some casualties to the civilians (Sinha, 2014). Under Park Geun Hye era, especially in January 2016, a bigger and stronger nuclear program had been arranged by North Korea where it succeeded to conduct hydrogen bomb test. Hydrogen bomb is a nuclear bomb which is more powerful than basic atom bomb and could reach further range (Safi, 2016). North Korea at that time also actively and openly developed Yongbon nuclear complex as its main basecamp for nuclear program. Thus, showing North Korea had aggressive behaviour on its

nuclear program development during non-Sunshine Policy implementation.

According to the writer's analyzes, with those previous experiences and history from the behavior of North Korea responding on Sunshine Policy and non-Sunshine Policy administration had been affecting on how the government today made the foreign policy. President Moon Jae In as the highest decision maker must have learn from the previous administration, which kind of policies that would bring South Korea and North Korea into better relations. Implementing foreign policy approach which emphasize more on military or security will only put Seoul and Pyeongyang into arm race which leads to security dilemma. Instead, Moon Jae In takes a look on the implementation of soft-ways principles from Sunshine Policy in Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun era which able to create closer and better relations with North Korea, in order to make peaceful coexistence in Korean peninsula. Thus, the behavior of North Korea can be concluded as one of the international context aspect which definitely directly or indirectly affecting South Korean government under Moon Jae In today reoriented to implement Sunshine Policy.

