THE BACKGROUND OF SOUTH KOREA REORIENTATION TO SUNSHINE POLICY UNDER MOON JAE IN ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

From years to years, South Korean has been adapting several different foreign policies toward North Korea. In the past, South Korea implemented the softway approach named Sunshine Policy. Today, South Korea is under Moon Jae In presidential administration and under his administration, South Korea decided to implement Sunshine Policy again. After under some presidential administration did not implement anymore, Sunshine Policy is being implemented once again on President Moon Jae In era today.

The objective of this research is to analyze the domestic politics aspect, military capability aspect, and international context aspect that influenced South Korea decision under Moon Jae In administration to reoriented on Sunshine Policy implementation based on William D. Coplin's theory of decision-making process. Furthermore, in order to execute this research, the writer was using a qualitative method by using secondary data taken from sources such as books, journal articles, government publications and other literature sources.

This research then revealed several findings that proved the existence of domestic politics, military capability, and international context as factors that influenced South Korea on Moon Jae In administration reorientation to Sunshine Policy. In domestic politics, the decision was influenced by Democratic Party of Korea and the personality of President Moon Jae In. Meanwhile, in military capability aspect influenced by the fact that South Korea has lower military capability compare to North Korea. Moreover, another factor was coming from the international context that influenced by the behaviour of North Korea in the past responding to Sunshine Policy.

Keywords: Foreign Policy, Decision-making Process, Sunshine Policy, Moon Jae-In Administration

Introduction

After World War II era, the war of ideology happened between the United States and the Soviet Union. Even though the war between the US and USSR was called as Cold War–since there was no direct war and arms race only, but proxy war occurred around the globe. A Proxy war is the war in regional states that have a direct confrontation where one state influenced by one superpower state while another state influenced by another superpower states (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1984)

In 1950, Korean War occurred where Korean peninsula divided into two part as South Korea and North Korea on the 38th parallel. Korean War caused huge victims and causalities for both South Korea and North Korea. Korean War started in 1950 and it was ended in 1953. Even though Korean War had ended but the division in the Korean peninsula is still happening. The south part established its independent states as the Republic of Korea with Democratic and Liberal ideology. While the northern one declared independently as Communist state named Democratic People's of Korea.

The hope of creating peaceful situation in post-Korean War has emerged since long time ago, one of the way is done by South Korean government through implementing such a soft-way approach in their foreign policy which named Sunshine Policy. It was first implemented during Kim Dae Jung presidential era in 1998. Sunshine Policy has several basic principles as it initiated by President Kim Dae Jung himself:

"The first principle is non-tolerance of military threat or armed provocation by North Korea. Second, the official abandonment of the idea of unification by absorption and the negation of any other measures to undermine or threaten North Korea. And third, the promotion of exchange and cooperation through resumption of the 1991 Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Exchange and Cooperation." (Chung-In, 2000)

According to President Kim, the right way to response North Korea's aggressive tension of nuclear weapon should not be using a weapon. It should be in a soft way which is done through several cooperations. As the philosophy of Sunshine Policy itself is taken from Aesop's fable "The North Wind and The Sun" which says to softened the stone should not be with throwing back another stone, but it should be with water drop that slowly would change the shape of the stone (Hoare, 2015).

Sunshine Policy also continued to be implemented in another presidential era after Kim Dae Jung, which was on Roh Moo Hyun administration in 2003 to 2008. n 2008, Lee Myung Bak was elected as a new president. Under President Lee's administration, the foreign policy shifted. On his administration Sunshine Policy changed to "Vision 3000: Denuclearization and Openness" or known as *Hardline Policy*, where it emphasizes on pressuring and insisting North Korea to stop its nuclear program in the first place, then South-North would have a reciprocity relations in the term of humanitarian aid and economic assistance (Kim, 2008). South Korea was through a new presidential administration in 2013, under Park Geun Hye. President Park came with a new foreign policy approach called *Trust Politic Policy* which had principles were South Korea would increase military

power and cooperation with its allies yet at the same time flexible negotiation and aid toward North Korea were still be done. (Messerlin, 2013)

In May 2017, Moon Jae In was elected as a new president of South Korea. Along with a new president comes a new foreign policy approach for South Korea. In his inauguration speech, President Moon spoke up that the main agenda on two Korean relation is to create peaceful coexistence in Korean Peninsula area. Arranging meeting with the North Korean leader is highly possible to ease the high tension between North and South (Dong-Hwan, 2017). Under his administration also would concern about soft ways approach related with North Korea issues, such as sending humanitarian aid and restore the economic cooperation between North and South. It shows President Moon's stance orienting again to Sunshine Policy which has been stopped for the past ten years. The reorientation to Sunshine Policy will absolutely change the inter-Korea ties. In short term, reorientation to Sunshine Policy might be as enlightenment for the South-North to approach better relations.

Method of Research

Inside the political system of a state, decision-making process is one of the most crucial part of it. This process enables the government to create certain policies and output toward either its domestic or foreign relations as the response of problems or necessity that the state has faced at the moment. There are many decision-making process models and approaches proposed by many scholars, but in this research specifically uses the Decision Making Process theory introduced by William D. Coplin. The decision-making process by William D. Coplin is illustrated in the scheme below:

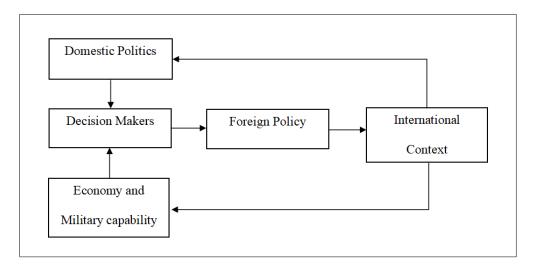


Diagram 1 1.1 William D. Coplin Decision-Making Process (Coplin, 1992)

Based on the theory above the writer finds several factors behind South Korean decision to reorientation to Sunshine Policy as its foreign policy under Moon Jae In administration.

First, domestic politics factor. The domestic politics in South Korea today is related to the strongest party in the government which is Democratic Party of Korea. This party is the party where President Moon Jae In comes from, yet it is the party where Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun—two previous presidents implementing Sunshine Policy (Rahn, 2017) came from. Moreover, the personality of Moon Jae In as a leader in South Korea also takes responsibility in this domestic politics factor.

Second, in the military aspect, South Korea has always been depended to the United States umbrella protection. Without the US, South Korea military would not be as sophisticated as today. Its artillery and troops also are not so many compared to North Korea (Blair, 2015). South Korea's military capability is lower compare to North Korea.

The third aspect is international context, in this term is the influence by North Korea itself as the main target of Sunshine Policy. North Korea showed reciprocates reaction and tended to be more approachable and friendly during Sunshine Policy period. This reaction was in contrast compared to North Korea behavior in non-Sunshine Policy approach. (Breen, 2013).

Factors Influencing South Korea Reorientation to Sunshine Policy under Moon Jae-In Administration

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. The writer of this research is aware that inside a foreign policy there is a decision-making process. Referring to the decision-making process theory by William D. Coplin, the writer generally assumed that there were domestic politics, military capability, and international context factors which influencing this decision. The further discussions are explained as follows:

a. Domestic Politics Aspect

Domestic Politics factor on William D. Coplin 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 of South Korea today reoriented to Sunshine Policy is influenced by the human behavior inside its political system and the personality of the leader itself, as it 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 analyzed by looking on South Korea's domestic politics today. Nowadays, South Korea system is dominated and ruled by liberal democratic party named Democratic Party of Korea which succeeded to bring its candidate—Moon Jae In—winning the presidential election in 2017 (McCurry, 2017).

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, 2017)

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 softways 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 and Roh Moo Hyun were the presidents who implemented Sunhsine Policy on their presidential periods. 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

Domestic politics also refers to the behaviour of the leader or head of state. 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).

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.

b. Military Capability Aspect

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 especially compare to North Korea as the main target of 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). 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 which could easily threaten 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

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). 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.

c. International Context Aspect

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, 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.

1. The Behavior 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.

a. Engaging Economic Cooperation through Keasong 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. 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:

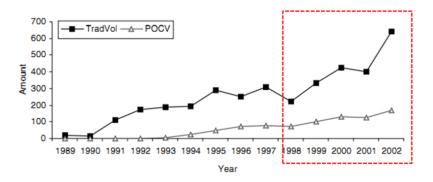


Diagram 1 1.2 North-South Trade Chart (million USD),

Ministry of Unification South Korea

Retrieved from (MOU 2003, 2004)

Showed from the data above, it was proving that North Korea became friendly and approachable where it is willing to have cooperation together with South Korea.

b. Opening Mt. Kumgang Tourism Spot

Under Sunshine Policy, North Korea agreed to open Mt. Kumgang as tourism spot, which opened for South Korean citizens. Since this tourism spot was opened, over a million South Korean citizen was able to travel 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

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. In Kim Dae Jung administration, he was able to establish the "June 15th Declaration" with Kim Jong II 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 Behavior 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.

a. Shutting Down Kaesong Industrial Complex

Under President Lee Myung Bak administration, 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). And in 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, 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.

d. 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 (Kim, 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.

c. 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 victim of Korean War who separated from their family members since the division of 38th parallel. 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, The Lee Myung-Bak Government's North Korea Policy And the Prospects for Inter-Korean Relations, 2008)

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). 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.

Conclusion

The background behind President Moon Jae In implementation on Sunshine Policy again was influenced by several factors. From domestic politics aspect, the decision was affected by the dominant party in South Korea Government today which is Democratic Party of Korea. The domestic politics factor also influenced by the personality of Moon Jae In himself as a leader or president of South Korea. Second aspect is coming from military capability. In the term of military capability, South Korea has lower power in the term of weaponry and army personnel compare to North Korea. Lastly, international context factors determined by the behaviour of North Korea itself toward Sunshine Policy. North Korea was showing reciprocate and friendly reaction toward South Korea under Sunshine Policy implementation. Comparing to its behaviour on Non-Sunhsine Policy implementation, North Korea was more approachable and cooperative with South Korea with Sunshine Policy.

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