

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

The tension in Korean Peninsula has already started long ago, ever since the Korean War, which is the struggle to reunite the North and South Korea under each other's ideology. Two global superpowers eventually backed this war of ideology between the two at the time: the United States of America (USA) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). Despite three years of seemingly unending battles, the conflicting parties decided to agree on an armistice, but no formal peace treaty has been signed until today. After the war, as the US participated in another war in Vietnam, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) used this momentum to seek the development of nuclear power. With the help of the USSR in the early stage, DPRK eventually managed to reach the level which allowed themselves to develop nuclear technology independently. However, this "development" was also followed by provocative actions by DPRK towards their oppositions, in this case, the US and Republic of Korea (ROK). These provocations were in the form of assassinations, terrorist acts, attacks on US' and ROK's military facilities & vehicles, arresting of the US' citizens, and more. Despite so, attempts to peacefully unite the two Korea was ever done but failed due to DPRK's withdrawal from the plan.

The focus changed from reuniting Korea to dismantling DPRK's nuclear capability as the world's new concerns were not only about nuclear, but also missile technology that DPRK developed alongside the nuclear program. Thus, the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was established with the US, ROK, and Japan as the Executive Board. The purpose of this plan was to exchange DPRK's nuclear and missile technology with heavy fuel oil aid from KEDO member states. However, KEDO was proven to be a failure as DPRK withdrew from both KEDO and NPT and restarting their nuclear program. The US' officials did not run out of ideas as the US decided to, once again, engage DPRK in

a diplomatic discussion at Six-Party Talks. Despite facing a stubborn state as DPRK, the US finally managed to convince DPRK they would not take invasive action. The US even removed DPRK from their terrorism-sponsoring states' list to make sure that DPRK would eventually cease the nuclear and missile program. However, this plan was proven a failure as later, DPRK withdrew from Six-Party Talks and further restarted the program.

As years went, the US was led by a new president, President Barack Obama, and was later replaced by President Donald Trump. As for DPRK, they were led by Kim Jong-Un, the late Kim Jong - Il's son. In dealing with the crisis in Korean Peninsula, new leaders have their own ways to view the tension in the region, and they chose the more aggressive ways. Kim Jong-Un decided to do the entirely similar plan with his predecessors, but to the extent that he would do it more often and more aggressive. This eventually resulted in rapid improvement in DPRK's nuclear and missile program. Along with it, provocations from DPRK kept coming towards their oppositions and the international community. Those provocations were cyber-attacks, attacks on ships and facilities belonging to the US and ROK, arresting of foreign citizens for trespassing, and rapid missile and nuclear tests, which reached the peak when DPRK blew up their first Hydrogen Bomb (H - bomb). Facing a growing threat from DPRK, Obama administration decided to confront DPRK with "strategic patience" strategy, the combination of military actions, economic sanctions, and monitoring of activities to press DPRK into diplomatic discussions. However, Trump administration viewed Obama administration's "strategic patience" to be useless against DPRK and promised more aggressive actions than before. Actions taken by the US as a part of the strategy were the increase of military exercises and presence in and nearby the region. They also widened the previously implemented economic sanctions towards DPRK's party and officials involved in the nuclear and missile program and froze foreign assets belonging to individuals and firms of DPRK.

Moreover, the US, along with ROK and Japan, shared the intelligence between them regarding DPRK's nuclear and missile program and stated several threatening statements towards DPRK. The most prominent policy of the US was the US-ROK THAAD agreement which became operational in Trump administration.