

ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA: FROM A SAVIOR TO A TROUBLEMAKER

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Abstract

The role of the United States has been decisive in decolonizing the Korean Peninsula and the creation of two Countries on the Korean Peninsula. The patron-client relations between the United States and South Korea helped the United States to counter the expansion of the communist ideology on the Korean Peninsula and also helped the United States in harnessing its national interest in the entire Northeast Asian region.

On the one side, the proactive engagement of the United States is very significant in the overall development of South Korea. The United States and South Korea share a long history of cooperation based on mutual trust, shared values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, common strategic interests, and an enduring friendship. The two countries work together to combat regional and global threats and strengthen their economies. On the other side, after the emergence of the North Korean nuclear crisis, the dominant engagement of the United States aggravated the situation and was denounced by North Korea and China for its provocative policy. The United States formulated the policies in order to disarm or denuclearize North Korea but further endangered the Korean Peninsula. That's why the United States is also credited as a troublemaker on the Korean Peninsula.

Therefore, the proposed paper will try to inculcate; First, the role of the United States as the savior on the Korean Peninsula, Second, North Korean nuclear crisis and the United States' political initiatives as the denuclearization of North Korea, Third, hawkish and provocative policies of the United States as the troublemaker on the Korean Peninsula.

Keywords: The United States, South Korea, North Korea, Nuclear Weapons Program, Denuclearization

Introduction

In 2010, The General Assembly marked the sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. On this special occasion, the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described the Second World War as the unprecedented hardship, incalculable human's loss and destruction but at the same time he also mentioned that this war opened the door for several countries to get their freedom and liberation. Some countries secured its freedom just after the conclusion of the Second World War like India, but few countries got trapped in the post-Second World War politics like Korea. The strategic location of Korean Peninsula had been very significant in order to harness the national interest in East Asia. Consequently, after the Second World War, the members of the Allied forces struggled for the occupation of the Korean Peninsula even after the conclusion of the Second World War and unfortunately, the fate of the Korean Peninsula was decided by the members of the Allied Forces. Korean Peninsula got divided into two halves as South Korea and North Korea according to their interests.

The United States in order to harness its national interest played a significant developmental role in South Korea. South Korea signed Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States in 1953 in order to check external aggression of North Korea. the United States also wanted to contain the expansion of communism so made its presence on the Korean Peninsula and put all efforts to make South Korea a develop country and proved to be a country-maker. But when North Korean nuclear crisis surfaced on the Korean Peninsula, the United States being as a security alliance, tried to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue unilaterally on several occasion. The unilateral decision to resolve North Korean nuclear issue by the United States and several other incidents proved to be a trouble for South Korea because several experts believe that the United States' hard-line policy including the imposition of sanctions is the sole responsible for North Korea's irrational behavior. Because of this,

North Korea has been testing nuclear weapons one after another and due to an adjacent country, South Korea has always been in trouble.

Rationalization behind the United States' Proactive Engagement on the Korean Peninsula

Although the World War II took place in order to bring peace and stability, but it created a heightened state of tension between the Soviet Union and the United States. Fearing that the Soviet Union intended to export communism to other nations, the United States formulated its foreign policy focusing on the containment of communism in the several parts of the world including the Korean Peninsula. As, the formulation of the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan and the Berlin airlift suggested the grave concern of the United States over the containment of communism in Europe. The United States' containment policy marched ahead to Asia as well. And the Korean War proved to be the first major battle as the part of the United States' containment policy to check the spread of communism in Asia.

The U.S.-Soviet agreement temporarily divided Korea along the 38th parallel, a latitudinal line that bisected the country; this avoided a long-term decision regarding Korea's future. This line became more rigid after 1946, however, when Kim Il Sung organized a communist government in the north – the Democratic People's Republic. Shortly after, nationalist exile Syngman Rhee returned to Korea and set up a rival government in the south –the Republic of Korea (ROK). Each government hoped to reunify the country under its own rule. On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops coordinated an attack at several strategic points along the 38th parallel and headed south toward Seoul. These several attacks were nothing but the attempts to bring South Korea under the influence of communism. At this time, the presence of the United States on the Southern Peninsula managed to check the expansion of communism.

The decision to intervene in Korea, however, grew out of the tense atmosphere that characterized Cold War politics. On the eve of the North Korean invasion, a number of events had made Truman anxious. The Soviet Union exploded an atomic bomb in 1949, ending the United States' monopoly on the weapon. In Europe, Soviet intervention in Greece and Turkey had given rise to the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, which funneled aid to war-torn Europe in the hopes of warding off communist political victories. In early 1950, President Truman directed the National Security Council (NSC) to conduct an analysis of Soviet and American military capabilities. In its report, known as "NSC 68," the Council recommended heavy increases in military funding to help contain the Soviets.

Events in Asia also contributed to an increased sense of insecurity. In 1949 China underwent a revolution that brought Mao Zedong and his Communist party into power. The nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-Shek, had retreated to the island of Formosa (Taiwan) while they continued their war with mainland China. Mao quickly moved to ally himself with the Soviet Union and signed a treaty with the Soviets in 1950. The Truman administration faced criticism from Republicans who claimed he had "lost" China. They criticized him for not providing enough aid to the Chinese nationalists. The suggestion by Secretary of State Dean Acheson that the administration recognize the communist government of China only gave them more ammunition for their attacks.

The Truman administration also faced internal criticism regarding its commitment to anti-communism at home. Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin had recently begun his infamous hunt for communists within the U.S. Government. Although McCarthy was just getting started, the recent trials of Alger Hiss and others for espionage left the Truman administration apprehensive about its anti-communist credentials. Truman and his advisors found themselves under increased domestic pressure not to appear "soft" on communism abroad.

Thus, when North Korean troops invaded the South, the Truman administration seized upon the opportunity to defend a non-communist government from invasion by communist troops. Determined not to "lose" another country to communism, and interested in shoring up its anticommunist credentials, the Truman administration found itself defending a nation a world away from U.S. soil. Yet Truman's response was not merely a response to internal pressure. The invasion

of South Korea made Truman genuinely fearful that the Soviet Union and China intended to expand the sphere of communism throughout Asia.

President Truman released a statement on June 27, 1950, illustrating his concern with communist aggression and expansion. He argued that "communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war." Truman's statement suggests that he believed the attack by North Korea had been part of a larger plan by communist China and, by extension, the Soviet Union. The President believed that the Korean situation was similar to that of Greece in 1947. He informed his advisors that he believed the invasion was "very obviously inspired by the Soviet Union." This gave America a moral imperative to act. "If we don't put up a fight now," Truman observed to his staff, there was "no telling what they'll do."

His concern over the future of anti-communist governments in Asia showed in his public statement. Truman pledged to defend Formosa (Taiwan) from attack and to support French forces in Indochina, a conflict that would eventually escalate into the Vietnam War. Yet Truman had no wish to provoke a full-scale war with the Soviets. By blaming "communism" in the statement, as opposed to the Soviet Union, Dean Acheson later explained, the administration sought to give the Soviets a "graceful exit" and did not provoke open confrontation with Russia.

Truman's statement also reflected a new military order. Although the United States took the lead in the Korean action, it did so under the rubric of the United Nations. Truman made it clear that his actions fell within the measures recommended by the United Nations and reminded "all members of the United Nations" to "consider carefully the consequences of this latest aggression in Korea" and that America "will continue to uphold the rule of law."

Truman's statement was released to newspaper reporters. That afternoon, Truman attended a meeting of the United Nations and proposed a resolution urging all UN member nations to give assistance to South Korea. The meeting had been originally planned for the morning but was postponed accommodating one of its members. Secretary of State Dean Acheson later reflected that the Soviets liked to point out that since the U.N. meeting occurred after the President's statement, Truman could not truthfully claim that his decision to commit forces was influenced by the wishes of the United Nations. When it did meet later that day, the United Nations passed his resolution, although a handful of dissenting countries abstained. Thus, the United States under the coordination of the United Nations decided to help South Korea at any cost.

The United States' security relations with South Korea

Although the United States established its diplomatic relations with Korea in 1882 under the Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation and the first U.S. diplomatic envoy arrived in Korea in 1883. This relationship did not last for long and continued till 1905 when Japan assumed direction over Korean foreign affairs. Then after from 1910, Japan ruled over Korea until Japan surrendered after the United States' bombing over Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War. When the Second World War ended with the surrender of Japan to Allied Forces, all Koreans aspired for a unified independent nation, but Korea fell into trap of the politics of the Post-World War II.

Since Korean Peninsula's geo-strategic location is very much significant in terms of commanding Northeast Asian region or harnessing political-economic interests in Northeast Asian region. Resultantly, when the Allied Forces defeated the Axis Powers, the U.S. and USSR fought for Korea primarily because of the country's geo-strategic location in the Northeast Asia. And increasing outside interferences led Korea to become battleground for their interests in Northeast Asian region. Consequently, Korea got divided according to their national interests. Further, the United States presented the view that Korea should become a multi-power trusteeship, but it could not be materialized because of the then situation, at that time, Korea was occupied by the Soviet Union and the United States troops and both countries were doubtful of each other's plan and cooperation. At the same time, the United States had to make plans to contain the threats of communism, so the United States also searched for the alternatives which included the United Nations' permission in order to conduct the election on Korea. The Soviet Union's unwillingness to conduct election on the entire Korean Peninsula compelled the United States to conduct the general election only on the

southern part of the Korean Peninsula. The United Nations also allocated the limited funds for the economic and military activities for that. At the same time, the United States realized that Korean Peninsula is much more important for harnessing its national interests in Northeast Asian region and also to contain the global influence of the communism. In 1949, the United States established diplomatic relations with South Korea. On June 25, 1950, the UN-sponsored South Korea faced a military attack from North Korea. At this juncture, the United States along with the support of the United Nations and a coalition of 16 countries came forward to defend South Korea from the invasion of North Korea. On July 27, 1953, an Armistice Treaty was signed in order to stop the war. At the conclusion of the Korean War, the United States and South Korea signed a Mutual Defense Treaty, the foundation of a comprehensive alliance that endures today. They also resolved to support South Korea regardless of the cost and make it a prosperous nation.

The developmental role of the United States in South Korea

In March 1961, New York Times reporter A.M. Rosenthal did a series on South Korea. It concluded with an article titled “Outlook Dreary for South Korea.” “South Korea,” the author wrote, “the poorer half of one of the poorest countries in the world, is trying to exist as a nation with too many people and too few resources. No one knows the answers to the country’s economic woes. He reported that South Korea’s future is fully dependent upon the charity of the United States. This was not an unusually pessimistic assessment; for most observers, South Korea’s prospects for the future looked grim. Foreign visitors commented on the poverty and the Seoul streets chaotic with panhandlers, prostitutes, and children selling gum. Overcrowded, possessing few natural resources, artificially severed in half, cut off from the more industrial and developed North Korea, riddled with official corruption and political instability. South Korea seemed to be unable for economic takeoff. South Korea’s “rags-to-riches” development is often cited as a “man-made” miracle. It is a miracle in the sense that in the span of the past three decades the country could achieve the kind of structural transformation (from a subsistence, agrarian economy to a modern industrial power) that today’s industrialized countries took almost a century to achieve. In 1953, both North and South Korea were shattered by the destructive three-year Korean War that left upward of two million dead and cities and towns in ruin. Already poor prior to the war, neither country had very promising prospects for the future. However, in the first eight years after the conflict, North Korea carried out an impressive recovery under a highly organized, purposeful government that appeared to be laying the foundations for a modern industrial society. By contrast, South Korea during this time was characterized by political corruption and turmoil, sluggish economic growth, and dependency on massive aid from the United States. Syngman Rhee, the first president who had served since 1948, governed in an authoritarian manner but was unable to provide the effective leadership that South Korea needed to create a stable political system and pull itself out of poverty. In the shadow of dismay or amidst of political turbulence, a group of army officers led by General Park Chung-hee seized the power on May 16, 1961, and it is said that Park Chung-hee government laid the foundation of modern Korea. At that moment of time, South Korea was not able to promulgate any developmental policies without the aid assistance of the United States. South Korea’s most of the modest growth needed massive amount of aid which was fulfilled by the United States. The United States financed most of the South Korea’s operating budget, paying the entire cost of its large military. From 1946 to 1976, the United States provided \$12.6 billion in economic assistance which helped South Korea’s larger population to meet food and daily necessities. Such assistance also helped in reconstruction or structural development. With such aids, the basic infrastructure was largely rebuilt by the late 1950s, bringing South Korea back up to its prewar level.

The economic policies pursued by the Rhee regime were not conducive to rapid development. Rhee’s government followed an import substitution industrialization policy in which imports were blocked in order to protect and encourage the development of domestic industries. While import substitution policies were pursued by many postcolonial states after World War II, this was not a practical policy for South Korea because it lacked natural resources and a large internal market. As a result, there was little industrial development. The economy instead relied on imported goods

purchased with US aid funds, money spent by American soldiers in the country, and a flourishing black market in goods intended for the US forces stationed in the country. The United States encouraged Seoul to establish trade relations with Tokyo through rice and seaweed exports and attempted to interest the Japanese in investing in the country. But Rhee would not sign a peace treaty or establish diplomatic relations with his country's former enemy. His anti-Japanese sentiments, while shared by most Koreans, went to extremes, including frequent clashes with Japanese fishing vessels and a constant state of tension with the country's former colonial master. Rhee's policies, considered "irrational" by the Americans, nonetheless reflected genuine fears that opening up South Korea to trade and investment with Japan would recreate the economic structure of the colonial period, thereby reducing the country to an economic colony.

Rather than develop a constructive development strategy, the Rhee regime relied on US aid and an overvalued currency to keep the country economically afloat. American aid at one point in the mid-1950s accounted for nearly 80 percent of all government revenues and a substantial portion of South Korea's entire GNP. The government used this aid to accumulate US dollars. It then gave out import licenses to favored businessmen, which enabled them to buy these dollars at the official exchange rate. In such way, a small group of conglomerates (wealthy businessmen) flourished in South Korea. South Korean government received huge US aid funds and allocated these resources to these conglomerates for the overall development of the country. By the 1950s, almost half of the South Korean budget was fulfilled with the help of the United States' aid funds. In 1958, the Rhee administration established Economic Development Council which was responsible for making plans for long-term economic development.

In the late 1960s, with the US assistance, thousands of South Korean people came back to the country after receiving the education from the United States. They were trained in the field of engineering, economics, education, finance and industrial training etc. they were employed as the technocrats, skilled professionals, bureaucrats, economic advisors in public sectors as well as government sectors. Thus, this period saw the emergence of entrepreneurs who would provide a pool of talent from which helped South Korea to dream about economic takeoff. South Korea's economy also registered several huge business conglomerates called Chaebol. Among the entrepreneurs that emerged in this period were Chung Ju-young (Chong Chu-yong), the founder of Hyundai; Koo In-hwoi (Ku In-hoe), whose Lucky Chemical Company became the electronics giant LG; Kim Sung Kon (Kim Song-gon), the founder of SsangYong, who prospered in the cement business; and the most successful entrepreneur, Lee Byung-chull, the richest man in Korea in 1961, whose enterprises evolved into the Samsung chaebol. The United States also transfer the technology to the South Korean companies which also made possible for South Korean companies to take initiatives of their own. Apart from these, South Korea's economic transformation was also accompanied by the then social transformation. South Korea's all economic initiatives worked well under the security umbrella of the United States because in 1953, both countries signed Mutual Defense Treaty. The overall development was secured from the external invasions. This period laid the foundation of economic prosperity and decade after decade; South Korea continued to become economic giants.

Inception of North Korean Nuclear crisis and Strategic Engagement of the United States

Located in the heart of Northeast Asia and with the strong affinity for self-reliance, North Korea's clandestine nuclear project has always been a part of vicious cycle of crises and tentative settlement. It has laid the entire world countries into serious unended suspicions. In view of the magnitude of the problem, as well as the potential implications for the regional as well as global security, the major powers independently or jointly with each other have endeavored to address this issue. The countries that had stake in the stability of Korean Peninsula have advocated for the denuclearisation of North Korea in order to serve the sectarian interests. Citing the implications of nuclear arms race and regional stability in the entire Northeast Asian region, the argument of the major powers in some ways satisfies the demands for the regional stability, peace and security. For the major powers, North Korea's nuclear program has been one of the greatest challenges to the global strategy program of

nuclear non-proliferation. It has also posed a challenge to the regional security and global peace initiatives. The countries like the United States, Japan, South Korea, China and Russia that had stakes in the stability of the Korean Peninsula have adopted various means to mitigate the impact of North Korean nuclear program. But due to be an adjacent country, South Korea had a prime national security concern which was caused by North Korean nuclear weapon program. South Korea always required exceptional strategic calculations in order to address foreign policy towards North Korea primarily because of the recurrence and high magnitude nature of North Korean nuclear issue. Since 1953, South Korea has been receiving the security umbrella of the United States, so any disruption in security mechanism made by North Korea receives the reaction of South Korea as well as the United States.

Although North Korea's nuclear development program is dated back to early 1960s but the early 1990s saw quick actions of North Korea in developing nuclear weapons. The year of 1991 witnessed several unusual developments in South-North relations and in North Korea's relations with the United States. It seemed to be rekindling phase of conciliation of alignment between two Koreas. From economic and political perspective, the year does not prove to be a good year for North Korea. North Korea estrangement from Soviet Union cost them an important and crucial leader and faced food shortage and economic problems. In the spring of 1991, North Korea's other important partner; China helped South Korea in being the permanent member of United Nations while keeping the long-committed promise aside of not being the potential partner of South Korea. China not only established the diplomatic relationship with South Korea but also shifted its stance towards creating conducive environment for the promotion of trade and investment between two countries.

Meanwhile, during the last year of South Korean Roh Tae-woo government, its "Nordpolitik" postulated as more conciliatory steps with northern countries like China, Soviet Union and North Korea. South Korea's strengthening cozy relation with northern countries created vacuum in North Korean foreign policy. Kim Il sung tried to control the damage. He visited China in October, but he was advised there that North Korea now must open up economically as China has undertaken rapid settlement with South Korea in order to establish peace and stability in Northeast Asian region. The Roh government also wanted to improve Inter-Korean relations and for that he expressed his desire for a summit meeting as a step to improve the relations between two countries. Starting with the October 22-25, 1991, rapid progress was made between two countries through prime ministerial meeting in Pyongyang. After that several rounds of meetings were also held at different levels. Finally, January 20, 1992, both Koreas signed an agreement and "A Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of Korean Peninsula" was announced officially. Under the Joint Declaration, Both Koreas pledged not to test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons, as well as not to possess nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities. But on the other side, North Korea continuously indulged in developing nuclear weapons. The enthusiasm that had accompanied the opening of North Korea's nuclear program to international inspection in the last half of 1992 and the early months of 1993 gave way to mistrust, animosity, and, eventually, crisis. Thus North Korea failed to achieve rewards from international community for allowing inspectors to inspect the nuclear sites. On the contrary, North Korea faced allegations of cheating and dissatisfaction. Along with mounted international pressure of international community, North Korea announced to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty on March 12, 1993. Later, United States and South Korea made a deal with North Korea regarding if North Korea agrees to follow the guidelines and allow the inspectors to the nuclear sites for inspection then we would facilitate North Korea two standard Light Water Reactors with enough capacity to produce 2000 megawatts. Later, neither North Korea complied with such proposal, nor such proposal came into existence. Both sides accused each other for not fulfilling each other's promises. The negotiations to persuade North Korea for allowing IAEA inspectors to the nuclear sites and for not withdrawing from the NPT did not reach to any conclusion. Even the talks for denuclearization of North Korea seemed to be not taking place and denuclearization of North Korea is going to be a contentious issue because of the persistent political deception led by various countries that had stake on the Korean Peninsula. Finally, all means to resolve nuclear stalemate went in vain. The negotiations between two countries had broken

down and amid the pressure, the International Atomic Energy Agency touched off the crisis by publicly declaring that North Korea is in serious violation of its international obligations. The problem was exacerbated by intense military clashes in the spring of 1994. United States and its allies raised this nuclear crisis in United Nations and pushed for Security Council sanctions against North Korea. On the other side, North Korea repeatedly made announcements that any kind of sanctions would be the declaration of war. Amid the war cloud, North Korean negotiator Park Yong Su threatened his southern counterpart, Song Young dae that Seoul is not very far from the North Korea, if a war breaks out. Southern part of Korean Peninsula will be made of a sea of fire and it would probably be difficult to survive. After such remarks, the South Korean president called for an emergency meeting and ordered the deployment of missiles and suddenly Korean Peninsula was headed towards a new downward spiral with potentially calamitous consequences.

The nuclear crisis with North Korea in June 1994 was a watershed moment in US nuclear diplomacy. The United States tried for over three years, beginning in late 1991, to persuade Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear weapons program, but failed. Then it attempted and succeeded in cooperating. In the end, it was former President Jimmy Carter's high-level diplomatic intervention that alleviated the immediate crisis and allowed Washington and Pyongyang to peacefully resolve their nuclear standoff. In Geneva, the United States and North Korea sign the Agreed Framework in order to resolve the nuclear crisis, in which North Korea promises to suspend nuclear reactor construction and freezing its illicit plutonium weapons program. The US agreed to deliver sanctions relief, aid, oil, and two light-water reactors for civilian use in exchange and thus the nuclear crisis which surfaced on the Korean Peninsula was somehow managed to avert. At that time, the situation was very different from as of now. The 1990s was the just ended Cold War period and the United States was the sole player in putting pressure on North Korea for dismantling nuclear weapons program. The United States has a larger stake on the Korean Peninsula and following the security relations with South Korea, it become quite obvious that the United States would get worry in order to secure its Northeast Asian interests. So from early 1990s to till now, whenever North Korean nuclear issue surfaced on the Korean Peninsula, the United States took the initiatives to quell the nuclear crisis like warning of military actions, deployment of THAAD, imposition of sanctions, calls for bilateral summit, multilateral dialogues etc.

The United States on the Korean Peninsula as a Troublemaker

Although the United State played a crucial role in the overall development of South Korea but at the same time, the hard-line policy of the United States has also put South Korea into trouble. It has also been observed that the United States has developed the mechanism on the Korean Peninsula according to its own choice. The country has also bypassed the South Korean government in several cases.

When the first North Korea nuclear crisis surfaced in 1994, so in order to mitigate the crisis, the Agreed Framework was concluded between the United States and North Korea. Such actions of the United States created anti-US sentiments among the South Korean people. When the progressive leader like Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun came into power, the anti-US sentiments got strengthened. In Yangju training accident, the United States army killed two 14 years old school students and they were not found guilty in the court martial which inflamed anti-US sentiments in South Korea. Sometimes, The United States' military presence was criticized on the ground of independent sovereignty. This is the reason; two sides always talk about the transfer of wartime operational control (OPCON) in Security Consultative Meeting (SCM).

The United States is considered as a troublemaker on the Korean Peninsula, because several experts believe that the United States' hard-line policy is the sole responsible for the North Korea's irrational behavior. A prime example is the issue of deploying ground-based Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) and in this regard, the United States made an official statement. However, on the issue of vehemently opposing by China, South Korea claimed that there have been no discussions with the United States regarding the deployment of THAAD. The deployment of THAAD increased the heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Apart from these, the United States has also imposed several kinds of sanctions on North Korea for its nuclear weapons. The Singapore Summit in 2018 and Vietnam summit in 2019 between the United States and North Korea bypassed the involvement of South Korea which worried the South Korean policy-makers. Thus, the unilateral decisions taken by the United States have distrusted the United States-South Korea relations. These summits did not meet any satisfactory conclusion and the relationship between two Koreas remained the same of high-intensified. Such acts of the United States always carry high chances of adversarial situations and that represents a high opportunity for North Korea to create instability on the Korean Peninsula.

Conclusion

The role of the United States has been decisive in the Korean Peninsula. The decisive role of the United States during the World War II in dismantling Japanese colonialism over Korean Peninsula ascertained the United States' assertive role in East Asian region and remained as one of the most preferred strategic partners in this region. The United States-South Korea Mutual Defense Treaty, signed in 1953 provided much space to the United States in being a long-term crucial player in East Asian region. The supports given by the United States to the South Korea during the Korean Civil War boosted the bilateral relationship between the United States and South Korea. In the Post-Korean Civil War, the dependency of South Korea on the United States' economic assistance and technology for the infrastructural development provided more opportunity for the United States to harness its national interest in entire Northeast Asian region.

Indeed, the United States played a crucial role in the overall development of South Korea. The United States provided much needed economic aids, technological assistance, trained skilled professionals etc. With the help of such assistance provided by the United States, South Korea became one of the Asian economic power houses and at present, as the 11th largest economic giant. But at the same time, North Korean nuclear issue created a serious turmoil on the Korean Peninsula. The United States, being a security alliance of South Korea, tried to resolve North Korean nuclear issue sometimes unilaterally which created troublesome on the Korean Peninsula. In that way, the United States is also considered as the troublemaker on the Korean Peninsula.

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