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## **South Korean security and diplomatic strategy: is our neighboring state moving toward a “Red team (China, North Korea, Russia)”?**

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### **1. Japan - South Korea relations still on the brink of collapse**

In July 2019, the Japanese government imposed controls on exports to South Korea for three chemicals that are used as semiconductors. More than a year has passed since then, and the South Korean government has been touting reinforcements to their export control system, to address deficiencies pointed out by the Japanese.

They have handled this in three specific ways. First, since the export control measures were put in place, there have been more conferences at the section manager level and policy discussions at the bureau director level, promoting dialogue on policy between the relevant government agencies in Japan and South Korea, which were previously stalled for three and a half years. Second, to manage exports of materials that could be used in conventional weapons, the Foreign Trade Act was reformed and the legal basis of the regulations was clarified. Third, staff at the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE) created new organizations led by the Director General for Trade Controls Policy (Trade Controls Policy Division, Export Controls Licensing Division, and Technology Transfers Controls Division), and hired more personnel to run them. This was a response to Japan's suggestion that there were “not enough personnel working in the field of export controls.” (Ref. 1)

According to the South Korean government, since they have made reforms following suggestions of the Japanese representatives, the Japanese must resume their anti-Korean export control to its condition before July 1, 2019. They have placed the ball in Japan's court. (Ref. 2) Subsequently, South Korea unilaterally demanded that the Japanese should respond to these measures by May 2020. However, the Japanese did not respond, and on that pretext the South Koreans resumed a WTO appeal process that had been temporarily withdrawn. On July 29 of the same year, the WTO established a dispute settlement panel.

Despite Japan's praise for South Korea's systemic reforms in security export control, their position is that they need a certain amount of time to ascertain how the amended laws and newly-established systems will be run in practice. Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Kajiyama, has acknowledged that South Korea's unilateral moves to establish a WTO panel “will make it more difficult to have policy discussions going forward,” and that the present conditions are once again exacerbating relations between the two countries' relevant authorities in security export control. (Ref. 3)

It is common knowledge that the “wartime labor” issue is behind this problem. Since this issue has not been properly resolved in South Korea, it has become a source of friction in current Japan-Korea relations. After the Supreme Court of South Korea reached a judgment on October 30, 2018, mandating that reparations be paid, South Korean property was seized from the Japanese companies who were defendants in the case. Despite repeated reminders to cash in the relevant assets, it has not been carried out for about a year and a half. The South Korean government’s response to the Japanese assertion that this issue should be resolved within Korea might involve approaches beyond the justice system. Even if these assets were cashed in, it is extremely likely that the relationship between the two countries could crumble due to further retaliation. Consequently, the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea, which is the foundation on which modern Japanese-Korean relations are built, would exist in name but not in reality.

## **2. How Japan-Korea relations degenerated into a security issue**

At first, President Moon Jae-in followed the same basic diplomatic policy toward Japan that had been in force before he assumed office: a “two track diplomacy” that treated historical issues separately from security and economic issues. This was based on the premise that it would take time to resolve the historical issues, and the intention was to continue working on this in parallel while simultaneously developing a forward-looking, mutually profitable relationship of cooperation in the fields of security and economics.

However, at the time of writing (September 2020) this article, the tension between the two countries had already reached a tipping point; Japan-Korea relations were increasingly bogged down, first by the “Rising Sun Flag issue” in South Korea since September 2018, and then by the “radar lock-on incident” that occurred in December of the same year. Both issues arose between Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces and the Republic of Korea Navy (ROKN). Until then, work in the domain of national security had proceeded in a businesslike manner without being affected by historical problems, and a relationship of mutual trust had been built. However, the Moon administration ran counter to this official diplomatic policy, and the worsening relations gradually eroded the domain of security collaboration.

The wave of worsening relations further reached the economic arena due to the Japanese government’s anti-Korean export controls. Along with this, the Korean government decided, in a standing committee of the National Security Council that opened on August 22 of the same year, to allow the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) to expire without renewing it (GSOMIA had reached the renewal

deadline for an automatic extension on the August 24<sup>th</sup>). This decision was accepted by President Moon.

The Japan-Korea GSOMIA is an extremely important agreement that facilitates rapid information exchange between not only Japan and Korea, but also with the US, when responding to incidents such as North Korea firing a ballistic missile. The GSOMIA formed the foundation of Japan-Korean defense cooperation, and it has effectively been abandoned due to the previously mentioned decisions. The decision to abandon GSOMIA not only impacts Japan's security; rather, it was a choice that could put a deep dent in the cooperation between Japan, Korea, and the US that has contributed to the stability in Northeast Asia. Hence, after the decision was passed against the wishes of the US, South Korea's most important ally, a considerable number of published articles contended, "could South Korea join the Red Team? (China, North Korea, Russia)" or "should we prepare for the Tsushima Straits becoming our country's front line of defense (as South Korea is becoming our enemy)?"

### **3. Could Korea join the Red Team?**

In hypothetical military strategy exercises, "red team" is a term that refers to the antithesis or enemy, of the "blue team," which represents allies. So, is present-day South Korea really going to say goodbye to the liberal and democratic camp that centers on the US and move toward an alliance with the undemocratic, autocratic nations of China and North Korea?

In addition, many in Japan noted that "South Korea has just been gauging China's mood." Since the dawn of history, the Korean peninsula, which shares a land border with China, has always been hugely influenced by China and strived for an independent existence, despite facing such an overwhelming power. South Korea's current behavior toward China could be succinctly described with the Korean term *Sadaejuui*, a term adopted by nationalists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to criticize subservience in the name of political realism; it would be fair to conclude that 21<sup>st</sup> century South Korea is leaning toward China.

First, the prevailing view is that South Korea clearly exhibits a level of care toward China, which is not shown toward Japan. This could be referred to as "consideration." To take a recent example concerning the restrictions on entering the country following the spread of novel coronavirus, in late February of this year South Koreans entering any part of China were subject to compulsory quarantine measures. The South Korean government was consistently calm in its response to this. However, they reacted furiously to restrictions imposed by the Japanese government regarding South Koreans entering the country, even though about a hundred countries other than Japan had already imposed similar restrictions on the entry of South Koreans by early March.

(Ref. 4)

Moreover, such behavior exhibited by South Korea toward China goes beyond “consideration,” appearing more like the kind of blatant actions that could be referred to as “cozying up” to China. For example, in September 2015, the then-President Park Geun-hye participated in a military parade in Beijing, China. This sent a poor message to both Japan and the US, because South Korea was the only participating country of all the liberal democracies allied with Europe and America. This increasingly intimate diplomatic position toward China was also demonstrated after the change of government in May 2017.

Administrations since Park Geun-hye have become closer to China. The context to such a change is that the Park Geun-hye and Moon Jae-in administrations shared common principles related to the North-South policy. That is, both envisioned a future whereby “the Korean people will determine the future of the Korean peninsula, and North Korea will denuclearize after establishing trust with South Korea. Moreover, the system of economic cooperation in which the Korean peninsula plays a leading role will create a fundamental economic network connecting Northeast Asia with central Asia as well as Europe, leading to prosperity in South Korea” (Ref. 5).

The Park Geun-hye administration’s “Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative” (NAPCI), and the Moon Jae-in administration’s “Northeast Asia Plus Community of Responsibility,” despite operating under different names, not only implement policies on North-South Korean initiatives, but also operate on the position that South Korea will be the driving force in those initiatives. For that reason, cooperation with China has taken on the highest importance.

However, South Korea became keenly aware of its vulnerability due to its domestic economy’s high degree of dependence on the Chinese market in April 2017, consequential to China’s economic retribution when US Forces Korea (USFK) stationed in South Korea deployed Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missiles. At that time, the author of the present paper interviewed people working in various fields in South Korea, and although there was no direct criticism of China in formal settings, a strong resentment toward China’s economic retribution was voiced in one-on-one settings. Despite this, the current administration prefers to achieve cooperation with China to implement a “Korean leadership doctrine” that would make them the driving force in building a structure for peace between North and South Korea.

The best example of consideration toward China is the so-called “3 ‘no’s” principle” (hereinafter “3 ‘no’s”), which emerged in late October 2017. To clear up any anxiety about China’s security due to the THAAD deployed by USFK and improve frosty

relations between the two countries, the South Korean government announced three positions: 1) no more THAADs would be deployed in South Korea, 2) no more missiles would be added to the US missile defense net, and 3) no military alliance would be built with Japan and the US. (Ref. 6)

As a result, since the December 2015 agreement between Japan and South Korea, the South Korean government has poured cold water on the process of strengthening trilateral cooperation with Japan and the US, such as through the November 2016 conclusion of GSOMIA. Thereafter, relations between South Korea and Japan began to break down, leading to the effective nullification of the 2015 agreement, which must be a welcome turn of events for China.

#### **4. Indo-Pacific Strategy and New Southern Policy**

Around the time when cracks started to appear in the trilateral cooperation between Japan, South Korea, and the US, Japan built a multilateral framework in the Indo-Pacific region, giving the US a leading role. At the opening session of the August 2016 Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) VI, then-Prime Minister Abe advocated for a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” in his keynote speech.

Attempts to strengthen relations continued, particularly from a security perspective, such as through the conclusion of the reformed Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) (January 2017) with Australia, with whom Japan already shared a close relationship. Relations with India were also strengthened, for example through the “Malabar 2017” collaborative naval exercises in June 2017, wherein Japan participated along with the US and India. This strengthened the relations between the “quad” of Japan, the US, India, and Australia, and further kept China in check.

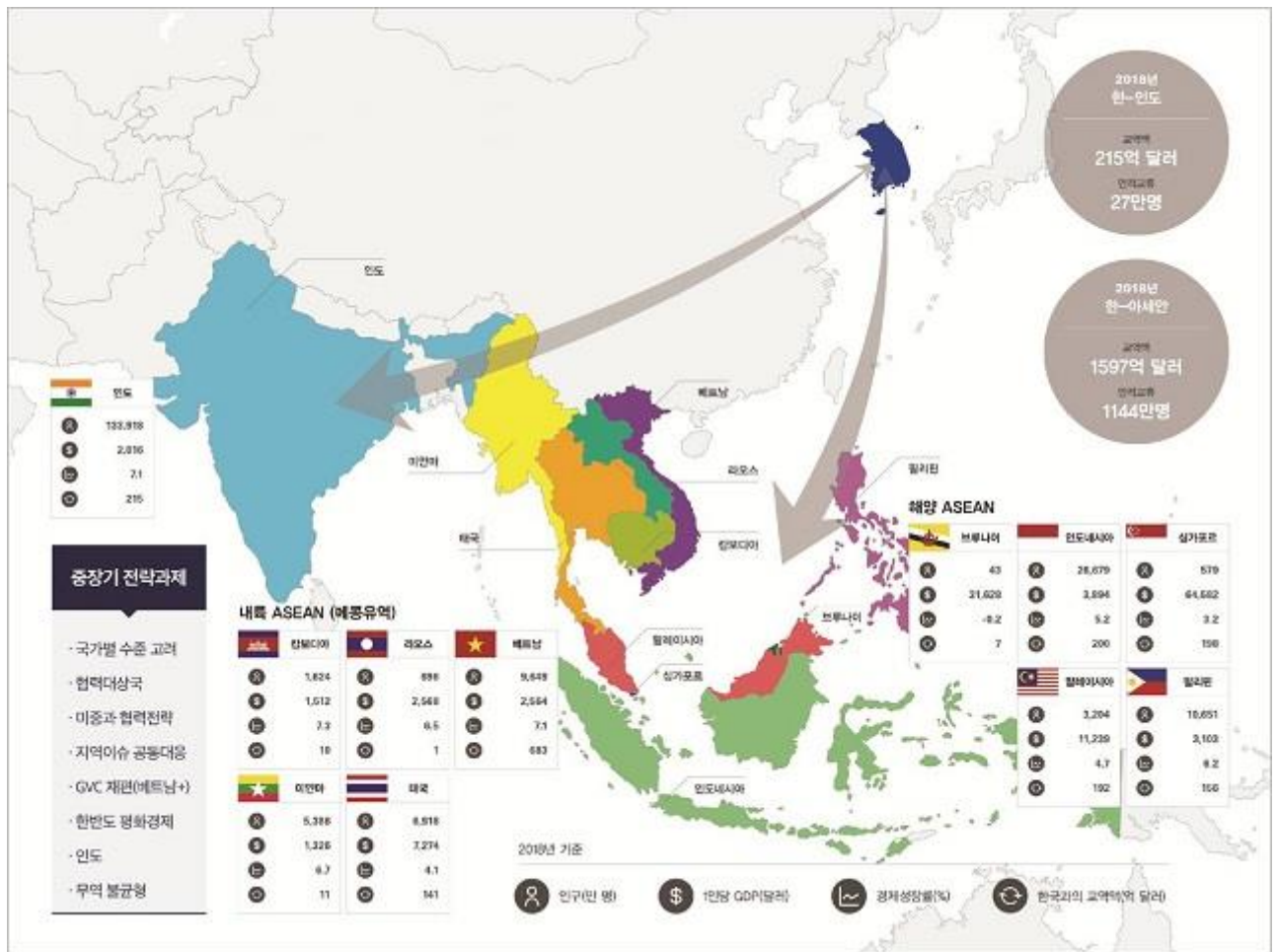
In this regard, South Korea stands in stark contrast to Japan. Like Japan, South Korea is a country that relies on imported resources, but one of its most important sea lanes are the South China Sea and the East China Sea. However, South Korea has been vague about its position on China’s expansion into that area of ocean. Meanwhile, South Korea has also strengthened its relations with ASEAN and India. This is the “New Southern Policy,” weighed in by Moon Jae-in’s administration.

This policy calls for “strengthening relations with ASEAN and India in a wide range of fields, such as government, economics, society, and culture, to a similar level to the four powers in the area (the US, China, Japan, and Russia), to collaborate in bringing peace and prosperity not just to the Korean peninsula and East Asia, but to the whole world.” (Ref. 7). However, in reality, this diplomatic policy aims to develop economic

relations with countries other than China to avoid economic risks due to dependency on China.

To promote the New Southern Policy, a proactive diplomatic agenda was put together, including visits by President Moon to various ASEAN countries. President Moon visited 11 target countries, from his visit to Indonesia in November 2017 until his visit to Laos in September 2019. (Ref. 8) South Korea has almost never undertaken in such diplomacy with Japan as with ASEAN countries and India. Conversely, what often happens in Japan is that South Korea simply keeps up appearances, based on an extremely limited framework of Japan-Korea relations.

A fascinating incident occurred in Autumn of 2018. On October 28 of that year, on an official visit to Japan, Indian Prime Minister Modi was invited to the holiday home of then-Prime Minister Abe in Yamanashi Prefecture, the day before a summit meeting. This was the first time that Prime Minister Abe had invited an important person from a foreign country to his personal holiday home, and the Japanese media reported it widely as “exceptional hospitality.” However, were Japanese people aware that the week after he returned from Japan to India, Prime Minister Modi extended a hearty welcome to President Moon’s wife for making an official visit to India? On November 4 First Lady Kim Jung-sook visited India; it was the only foreign country visit by a first lady of South Korea in 16 years and was treated to the same hospitality as given to a state guest. South Korea also succeeded in developing a personal relationship with Prime Minister Modi.



Source: <http://www.korea.kr/special/policyCurationView.do?newsId=148853887>

## 5. Defense industry collaboration and frontier expansion in the New Southern Policy

From late 2018 onwards, President Moon has expanded the New Southern Policy to Oceania. In December of that year, President Moon made the first ever state visit to New Zealand by a South Korean President in nine years. During the summit meeting, President Moon explained “New Zealand is an essential partner for collaboration on the New Southern Policy that the South Korean government has been implementing.” (Ref. 10) Both countries agreed to revitalize their defense industry cooperation. (Ref. 11)

Australia was encouraged by South Korea’s approach to New Zealand. Although good relations had traditionally been maintained with Australia, recently, those relations had stagnated. (Ref. 12) However, at the summit meeting in September 2019, both countries’ leaders emphasized expansion of defense industry cooperation in addition to the existing developments in the fields of education, investment, and resource infrastructure. (Ref. 13) Later, in December of that same year, at the fourth 2+2 Foreign

and Defense Ministerial Meeting which was held in Canberra, Australia (Ref. 14), Australia's contributions to security in the Korean peninsula (Ref. 15) were mentioned, and it was agreed that common grounds would be established in the fields of diplomacy, security, economy, and development between South Korea's New Southern Policy and Australia's Indo-Pacific strategy. (Ref. 16)

Moreover, before the meeting, between October 29 and 31, collaborative training was carried out by both countries' navies, off the coast of Pohang in South Korea. This was the first time out of six similar practice sessions that Royal Australian Navy's Air Warfare Destroyer "Hobart" with the Aegis combat system had participated and the first time that this practice session had been carried out with the ROKN's destroyers. (Ref. 17) This incident stood in stark contrast to South Korea's attitude since the conclusion of the agreement on North-South military affairs on September 19, 2018. Thereafter, South Korea, in consideration of North Korea, had tried to reduce its large-scale exercises such as those with the combined militaries of the US and South Korea.

At the time of writing this article, the defense cooperation between the two countries focused mostly on the sale of defense equipment by South Korea to Australia. As recently as September 4 of this year, in a project to introduce self-propelled artillery to the Australian army, the South Korean-made K-9 was selected as the top preference ahead of negotiations. If this agreement is taken forward, the project is rumored to be worth 1 trillion South Korean Won (about 89.5 billion Japanese Yen, or about 865 million US Dollars) (Ref. 18). Moreover, the remaining final candidates chosen by the Australian Army for the next version of its wheeled armored vehicles are the South Korean-made "AS21 Redback" and the German-made "KF41 Lynx"; a competition is currently underway for that purchase order. Australia's new equipment supply plans for the next decade are rumored to be at the scale of around 20 trillion Yen, and based on this, the South Korean defense industry has proactively developed.

The foundation for national defense cooperation was laid by a network that liaisons on the plans to send United Nations forces to South Korea, which was created by a United Nations Security Council resolution triggered by the Korean War. Seventy years ago, Australia and New Zealand went to war in the Korean peninsula, as countries providing combat support. (Ref. 19) Recently, this has been characterized by its use in defense industry cooperation, which has provided valuable stability for bilateral defense cooperation with many countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

## **6. South Korea approaching the time to pick sides between China and the US**



South Korea's determined diplomatic strategy seems to have moved forward extremely favorably from 2017, when the Moon Jae-in administration was inaugurated until the following year. However, since Spring 2019, South Korea seems to have found itself in a different situation.

In May 2019, an Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau was established through an organizational reshuffle in the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, bringing Australia and India under the same jurisdiction as Japan, which had been moved from the existing Northeast Asian Affairs Bureau. Many observed that with Japan removed, the Northeast Asian Affairs Bureau was effectively the "Chinese Affairs Bureau." What is the significance of putting Japan into the Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau, along with the quad formation of countries that includes Australia and India?

Korea could have found a need to take a stand regarding the Indo-Pacific region because of the US. Since then, amid a summit meeting between the US and South Korea at the end of June 2019, President Moon Jae-in made a statement for the first time, recognizing coordination on the New Southern Policy and Indo-Pacific strategy.

As the antagonism between the US and China intensified in 2020, frank statements from people working on the ground in South Korea became more noticeable. For example, during a meeting run by a South Korean thinktank on May 27, Ko Yon-ju, Director-general of the North American Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated, "South Korea is allied with the US, and has a strong economic relationship with China", clarifying that South Korea was in a tough situation of being caught between the US and China and was finding it difficult to attach itself to one or the other. (Ref. 20) Contrarily, on June 3, South Korean ambassador to the US Lee Soo-hyuck stated "While some are concerned that we will be forced to choose between the United States and China, I am proud that we are now a country that can choose rather than being forced to make a choice". (Ref. 21)

Indeed, South Korea has been attempting to establish its own position alongside the US and China, rather than being swayed by one or the other. A congressional report published by the Trump administration in May this year described "cooperating on mutually coordinated visions and approaches such as Japan's FOIP [...] and South Korea's New Southern Policy," and clarified that South Korea is one of the countries that shares the same values as the US. (Ref. 22)

## **7. Conclusion**

As described above, with intensifying antagonism between the US and China, South Korea is facing fierce overtures from both countries. Thus far, South Korea has

continuously searched for a position that offers the best balance in the space between the US and China, “the US for security, China for economy.” That is, rather than aiming to join the red team, South Korea has been putting its weight behind holding its own ground to avoid leaning toward one or the other.

In addition, South Korea also has to focus on ongoing negotiations to protect its pride and maximize the benefits from its alliance with the US. Diplomacy means smiling and shaking hands above the table, while kicking each other under the table (and vice versa), and South Korean diplomacy is no different. In the end, regarding the GSOMIA between Japan and South Korea, the South Koreans allowed it to quietly come to nothing in 2020 when the renewal date came around (August 24) while saying “we can always back out.”

South Korea may struggle to continue maintaining a balance between the US and China, but the networks it has built with countries worldwide and the support enlisted from many countries will benefit its survival. Apart from the previously mentioned South Korean framework for UN forces, currently, South Korea has just under 300 soldiers stationed in the UN Peace Keeping Operation (PKO) in South Sudan. Including other PKOs and international cooperation activities, South Korea contributes around 1000 soldiers internationally.

We must not forget that South Korea has a remarkable presence in the international community. Regardless of the sound arguments we may develop along the lines of “one should stand by one’s international agreements” and “it was disgraceful of South Korea to try to tear up the GSOMIA,” this will not necessarily elicit the reaction we expect from the international community.

We should recognize that South Korea does not have a binary choice between red team or blue team. Opinions and trends in South Korea are gradually moving toward the stance that to achieve freedom from the interference of nearby powers such as Japan, the US, China, and Russia, for the first time in history, they need to build a strong military. Since 2017, the rumored introduction of nuclear submarines has been approaching a hard reality, with the launch apparatus of Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) reaching completion. (Ref. 23) “Planning nuclear arms” with the aim of “achieving real independence” should be considered as another possible choice available to South Korea.

Viewed through the prism of South Korean diplomacy, policies on Japan-Korea relations, or on the trilateral relations between South Korea, the US, and Japan, the spectrum of diplomatic policies that have been established is rather

monochromatic, perhaps refracting into only one or two colors. Japan may find it easy to become emotional about the historical issues with its neighbor South Korea, but such a view can be short-sighted. To build stable relations with its neighbor that truly protect its national interest, Japan must maintain a calm and level-headed position, even if it is unfavorable.

Amid the current upheaval in the region, the time has come to neither overestimate nor underestimate South Korea's strength and to bring facts and data to wrap our heads around the relationship with our neighbor.

Ref. 1) ["Kankoku Seifu Ga Bōeki Anpo No Senmon Soshiki Shinsetsu - Nippon No Yushutsu Kisei Kyōka Uke \(South Korean government establishes new, enhanced specialist organizations, strengthening Japan's export trade security control\)", Yonhap News \(in Japanese\) April 28<sup>th</sup> 2020](#)

Ref. 2) ["Kankoku Kakuryō 'Nippon Ga Ageta Riyū O Subete Kaishō' Yushutsu Kisei Kyōka No Tekkai Unagasu \(The Korean cabinet urges withdrawal of tightened export restrictions: 'all matters raised by Japan have been resolved\)', Yonhap News \(Japanese version\) March 6<sup>th</sup> 2020](#)

Ref. 3) ["Kajiyama Keisanshō 'Nikkan No Seisaku Taiwa Kaisai Konnan Ni' WTO No Shō Īnkai Secchi De \(Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Kajiyama on the establishment of a WTO subcommittee: 'Policy dialogue between Japan and South Korea has become difficult'\)", NHK NEWSWEB, July 31<sup>st</sup> 2020](#)

Ref. 4) ["Kankoku Seifu, '860 Nin Kakuri' No Chūgoku Ni Wa Taiō Sezu Nippon Ni Gekkō Suru Riyū Wa? \(Why is the South Korean government reacting so strongly to Japan, while it hasn't reacted to China's isolation of 860 people?\)" JoongAng Daily \(Japanese version\) March 6<sup>th</sup> 2020](#)

Ref. 5) For more detail on these principles, see "Moon Jae In-ui Hanbando Jeongchaeg Pyeonghwawa Beon-yeong-ui Hanbando (Unification for prosperity and peace in the Korean Peninsula policy of Moon Jae-in)"Ministry of Unification, Pp. 31-32, 2017

Ref. 6) For details, see Kohtaro Ito, "[Chūgoku to no kankei ni kuryo suru Kankoku - Tainaka 3 NO gensoku no genzai \(Korea struggling with relations with China - Current status of the 3 'no's principle for China\)](#)", [kokusai jōhō nettowāku bunseki IINA \(International Information Networks Analysis, IINA\)](#) Sasakawa Peace Foundation, May 30, 2019

Ref. 7) "[Sin Nambang Jeongchaeg-ilan \(What is the New Southern Policy?\)](#) Policywiki, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

Ref. 8) Same as above

Ref. 9) "[Kim Jung-sook Yeosa, 16nyeon Man-e Daetonglyeong Bu-in Dandog Haeoe Bangmun](#)

[\(Kim Jung-sook makes first solo overseas visit of a first lady in 16 years\)" JoongAng Daily \(Korean version\) November 5<sup>th</sup> 2018](#)

Ref. 10) ["Moon Jae In Daetonglyeong, Nyujillaendeu Chongli Wa Jeongsang Hoedam \(Summit between President Moon Jae-in and Prime Minister of New Zealand\)" Korean Embassy in New Zealand, December 19<sup>th</sup> 2018](#)

Ref. 11) ["Kankoku Nyūjirando Shunō Kaidan ... Bōei Sangyō Nankyoku Kenkyū Nado No Kyōryoku O Kyōka \(South Korea and New Zealand summit ... strengthening cooperation in areas such as defense industry and Antarctic research\)" Kankoku Keizai, December 4<sup>th</sup> 2018](#)

Ref. 12) Tom Corben, ["Course Correction: Promising Signs for Australia-South Korea Relations"](#), The Diplomat, October 12, 2019

Ref. 13) ["Han-Hoju Jeongsang Hoedam Gwanlyeon Seomyeon Beuliping \(Written briefing about the South Korea-Australia summit\)"](#) The Blue House, September 24, 2019

Ref. 14) Since 2013, Australia has been the only country aside from the US with whom South Korea has 2+2 ministerial meetings on foreign defense (held every other year)

Ref. 15) In July 2019, a Lieutenant General of the Australian Navy was appointed Deputy Commander of the UN Forces in South Korea. The Australian Air Force has previously commanded the UN Forces at Yokota Air Base in Japan, and the Australian Army's profile is second only to the US army.

Ref. 16) Regarding the results of the South Korea – Australia 2+2 meeting, see the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs ["Je 4 Cha Han-Hoju Oegyo Gugbang\(2+2\) Jang-Gwan Hoeui Gaechoe \(4th Korea-Australia Diplomacy and Defense \(2 + 2\) Secretary Meeting Held\)"](#) (Japanese version) December 10, 2019, and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, ["Joint Statement: Australia-Republic of Korea Foreign and Defence Ministers' 2+2 Meeting 2019"](#)

Ref. 17) ["Hoju, Hangugg Wa Hunlyeon-e Cheoem Ijiseu Guchugham Pagyeon \(Australia dispatches Aegis destroyers for training with the Republic of Korea for the first time\)" JoongAng Daily \(Korean version\) October 19, 2019](#)

According to this article, from 2021 the South Korean Marine Corps plans to participate in "Talisman Saber," a joint exercise with the US military in Australia.

Ref. 18) ["Ōsutoraria Rikugun, Kankokusei Kei 9 Jisōhō Wo Yunyū ... Sekai De 1700 Dai Unyō Chū \(Australian army to import Korean-made K9 self-propelled artillery ... 1700 units in operation around the world\)" JoongAng Daily \(Japanese version\), September 3, 2020](#)

Ref. 19) Among other countries subject to the New Southern Policy, the Philippines and Thailand have provided combat support to South Korea, and India has provided medical support.

Ref. 20) ["Kankoku Gaikōbu 'Beikoku Wa Dōmei, Chūgoku Wa Keizai Teki Tsunagari' ... Bei Chū Shōtotsu De Tsunawatari Gaikō Ni 'Kushin' \(South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs 'struggling' to walk a tightrope due to the US-China conflict. "The United States is our ally. China is an economic connection\)" JoongAng Daily \(Japanese version\)" May 27, 2020](#)

Ref. 21) ["Chū Bei Kankoku Taishi " Kankoku, Bei Chūkan No Sentaku O Kyōyō De Wa Naku Sentaku Dekiru Kuni \(South Korean Ambassador to the United States: 'Rather than being forced to make a choice, South Korea is a country that can make choices'\)" JoongAng Daily \(Japanese version\) June 4, 2020](#)

Ref. 22) ["United States Strategic Approach to The People's Republic of China," May 20, 2020, p.2](#)

Ref. 23) For more on the movement to strengthen South Korea's defense capacity, see Kohtaro Ito, ["Kankoku no kokubō-hi zōgaku keikō o dō yomu ka \(How to read South Korea's increased defense expenditure\)" Kokusai jōhō nettowāku bunseki IINA \(International Information Networks Analysis, IINA\)](#) The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, February 4, 2019