

Korea's Perspective on the Linkage of Economic and Security Cooperation in Northeast Asia*

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1. Introduction

Korea's interests in terms of cooperation in Northeast Asia on matters of security and economics are as follows. First of all, Korea harbors hopes for multilateral cooperation on security that would complement the existing bilateral alliance for peace in Northeast Asia in the Post Cold War Era. Korea expects this kind of multilateral security cooperation to lessen bilateral conflicts such as those which exist between Japan and China, and the USA and China, and also act as a device that would resolve conflicts within the structure of multilateral cooperation.

Korea wants to resolve the extant issues between North and South Korea within some form of North East Asian cooperative framework. Just as Germany resolved their issues within the framework of the European Union, Korea has high hopes for solving North and South Korean issues and reunification issues within a similar framework for North East Asia. South Korea believes that North Korea could undertake a process of reform and openness, which would help it to reintegrate itself into the international society.

Korea expects that a framework for Northeast Asian economic and security cooperation would form a self fulfilling cycle of optimism. Korea has special interests in railways, cooperation in energy and environment policy; all being areas where a framework for North East Asian Cooperation for Security and Economics could be utilized more. This non-political and non-military strategic type of cooperation can be utilized at an early stage and contribute to the building of trust among the countries concerned. Korea, through this functional cooperation, hopes to institutionalize cooperation in each field.

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2. Resolving issues on the Korean Peninsula and Multilateral Security Cooperation in Northeast Asia

With the Cold War having come to an end, Korea came to realize the importance of multilateral security cooperation and looked into its possibilities from a variety of perspectives. Considering Korea's geographical position, surrounded by other Northeast Asian powers, a multilateral security mechanism could complement the present U.S.-ROK alliance. Korea, in particular, seeks resolutions that could bring Korea a state of peace, prevent conflicts among surrounding powers while it tries to aim for reunification, and secure Korea's own territory in the overarching framework of multilateral security cooperation.

Due to its place in Northeast Asia, Korea has shown more interest in the issue of Northeast Asian cooperation than East Asia cooperation. Korea's view of multilateral security cooperation encompasses not only China, Russia, and Japan, but also the U.S.A. which has a special relationship with Northeast Asia. Korea also actively participates in multilaterally cooperative discussions on security like ARF which is inclusive of all East Asia. In addition, Korea seeks a cooperative relationship with such regional multilateral mechanisms like ASEAN and APEC.

Korea's official stance on Northeast Asia multilateral security cooperation has been brought forward since the end of 1980 and has evolved into many different forms to make its purpose and strategy more concrete. One example, amongst many, are the suggestions Korea made to the 6 Northeast Asian countries at the foundation of the Consultative Conference for Peace in Northeast Asia in the UN General Assembly address made by then President Roh Tae-woo in October of 1988.¹

This suggestion of holding a Consultative Conference for Peace in Northeast Asia has broadened others' perspective on issues of importance to the Korean peninsula. Korea sought through this venue a means of proactively resolving disputes in Northeast Asia. This suggestion was virtually Korea's first official announcement on its stance on Northeast Asian multilateral security cooperation. However, this suggestion of holding a Consultative Conference for Peace in Northeast Asia was actually based not on its potential to be realized but was rather in an effort to react to Gorbachev's proposed framework of Northeast Asia Multilateral Security Cooperation.

¹ Hong Gyu Park, *6-Party Northeast Asia Peace Agreement Community*, Analysis of Key International Issues by the Institute of Foreign Affairs & National Security, 88-86, (1988); Guk Jin Kim, *A Research on the Measures for Realizing Northeast Asia Peace Agreement Community*, Institute of Foreign Affairs & National Security policy research series 89-08, (1989)

This in turn was all part of a broader effort by President Roh Tae-woo's government to better define diplomacy in this area in order to improve Korea's relation with Russia. This suggestion, although welcomed by Japan and Russia, was not realized due to the fact that diplomatic relations between China and Korea had not been normalized, as well as the USA's and China's lukewarm position both of whom only wanted to maintain the status quo in Northeast Asia, as well as the clear opposition of North Korea.

President Kim Young-sam's government made it clear that it would go ahead with the strategic plans of developing Northeast Asia multilateral security cooperation as long as it would not hurt the U.S.A-ROK alliance. President Kim at the opening ceremony of the 26th PBEC held in May of 1993 announced its diplomatic policy that 'Korea will support Northeast Asian multilateral security cooperation and develop and improve the bilateral cooperation with America as the centerpiece of foreign policy at the same time' in order to come up with a framework for permanent peace for the region.²

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Han Sung-joo, pointed out in his speech made at the Diplomatic Conference on May 31, 1993 that a small region based security mechanism is more feasible since it has the asset of regional similarity and allows an easier pulling together of common gains on security as opposed to the larger consultative entities like APEC, and suggested that a miniature CSCE type of North East Asia Multilateral security and cooperation framework should be established.³

Against this backdrop, Korea proposed the notion of a Northeast Asia Security Dialogue (NEASED) at the first ARF- SOM in May of 1994. It was first suggested that the Northeast Asia Security Dialogue could take the form of 6 party talks (in the form of 2+4) by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Han Sung-joo and the Secretary of the State, Christopher, in July 1993, and became the subject of an official announcement. Korea wanted to utilize NEASED to discuss North Korean nuclear weapon and missile development, conflicts between China and Taiwan and military build-ups in Northeast Asia. However, what NEASED suggested was nullified due to the indifference and lack of preparation of the countries concerned. The USA had as her own priorities the bilateral alliances in Northeast Asia and showed a great deal of indifference. China was skep-

² Sang Kyun Lee, "Measure for the Formation of Multilateral Northeast Asian Security Agreement System: EU Experience and South Korea's Choice", *National Strategy*, Spring and Summer 1997, pp.200-201; Kyu Deok Hong, "Outlook and Challenge of Northeast Asia Cooperation for Security during the 21st Century", *Diplomacy*, No. 53 (2000. 4), p.15.

³ Sung-Joo Han, "Fundamentals of Korea's New Diplomacy: New Korea's Diplomacy toward the World and the Future," *Korea and World Affairs*, Vol. 17, No. (Summer 1993), p. 239.

tical of the whole idea of a NEASED which was to be led by Korea.⁴

The Peace and Prosperity Policy of the Roh Moo-hyun government concentrates on cooperation in Northeast Asia. The Peace and Prosperity Policy assumes that peace in Northeast Asia is a prerequisite for stability on the Korean Peninsula. The Peace and Prosperity Policy is a policy for both Northeast Asia and North Korea. The Peace and Prosperity Policy views security cooperation in Northeast Asia as important for the following reasons.

First of all, multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia is essential for the resolution of North Korea's nuclear issue and establishing a peace regime on the Korean peninsula. Additionally, Northeast Asian security cooperation is also expected to bring North Korea into the light of openness and reform. Northeast Asian security cooperation will guarantee the survival of the North Korean regime through the multilateral approach, helping North Korea to conform to international norms.

Secondly, Northeast Asian cooperation could create an environment that is beneficial to resolving issues on the Korean Peninsula through the loosening of tension in Northeast Asia. As competition develops between China and Japan in terms of their respective military build-ups and as tension grows over territorial issues or trade conflicts, Korean security would be at risk, creating unfavorable ground for peace keeping on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, Northeast Asian security cooperation will contribute to peace on the Korean Peninsula by reducing the potential for an arms race among nations and by accelerating dialogues on security.

Thirdly, Northeast Asian security cooperation is needed in order to build cooperation with neighboring countries for the process of Korean reunification. As Northeast Asian security cooperation proceeds, cooperative schemes for the two Korea's reunification could be discussed. Additionally, a framework for Northeast Asian security cooperation can play a key role in furthering stability and development after Korean reunification is achieved.

The Peace and Prosperity Policy's key characteristic is that it seeks to resolve security issues on the Korean peninsula within the context of Northeast Asia. The Peace and Prosperity Policy has as its central focus the creation of an external environment for peace and development by expanding its scope throughout the Northeast Asian region. It also hopes that the Korean peninsula,

⁴Tae Am Eom, "4-Party Talks Vitalization and Measures for the Use of Northeast Asia 6-Party Meeting," *Security Policy Book 2* (Seoul: National Security Council, 2002), pp. 329-331.

which has come to personify conflict and confrontation, will become a key element that would lead to peace and development in Northeast Asia.⁵

On the other hand, South Korea is proactively participating in the existing multilateral security dialogues in East Asia. The multilateral security organization in East Asia that Seoul is most proactively involved in is ARF. ARF derived from ASEAN in 1994 and has as its priority the creation of a cooperative support mechanism for security in the Southeast Asian areas, but having secondary interests in matters related to issues on the Korean Peninsula and North Korea's nuclear issue. Nevertheless, South Korea is accumulating experience of multilateral cooperation by actively participating in ARF. Korea has been taking part in the decision making entity, ARF-FMM as well as ARF-SOM, and ISG that concentrates on issues of trust building. Moreover, South Korea is participating in such workshops as the Conference for Presidents of the University of National Defense, the PKO Seminar, the Linguistics School of National Defense Conference, the Piracy Control Workshop, the Relief Conference, the Preventive Diplomacy Workshop, and the Conference on the security cooperation in the Asia Pacific Region, Drugs/ Intelligence Crime/Money Laundry/Terrorism Workshop.

Additionally, Korea is also active as a member of CSCAP, (the Council of Security Collaboration in Asia Pacific), a non- government organization that concentrates on regional security in the Asia Pacific region. The Korean branch of CSCAP was founded in 1994 right after the CSCAP was founded in 1993. Korea also participates in a semi-governmental organization on multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia called NEACD. Officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Unification, and civil scholars take part in NEACD. Korea also participates in a non-governmental conference for eliminating nuclear weapons from Northeast Asia called LNWFZ-NEA.

⁵ Jong-chul Park, "Theoretical Base and System for Peace and Prosperity Policy," Jong-chul Park and others, *Theoretical Base and Issues related to Peace and Prosperity Policy* (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2003), pp. 31-33.

3. South Korea's Peace and Prosperity Policy and Implications for Linkage between Economic and Security Cooperation in Northeast Asia

Northeast Asian countries as well as East Asian countries, in terms of their roles as trading partners are very important to South Korea. South Korea's trade with the USA, Japan and China is well over 40 percent. Trade taking place with Asian regions including Southeast Asia is more than 60 percent of the total trade. What needs particular attention is that China (18.11%) outdid USA (17.65%) as a trading partner in 2003. This is significant considering China's fast growth in her economy and diplomatic advancement in the East Asian region as shown in such mediums as the 6 Party Talks.

South Korea's Roh Moo-hyun government at the outset of its departure actively brought economic cooperation in the Northeast Asian regions into the picture, and pushed forward an 'Economic Hub of Strategy' in order to secure the position of Korea as the hub for economic cooperation in the Northeast Asian region.

South Korea is approaching inter-Korean economic cooperation within the wider framework of economic cooperation in the Northeast Asian region. For North and South Korean economic cooperation to develop, multilateral cooperation among Northeast Asian countries is required. North and South Korean cooperation on the economy can be activated through an organic relationship and economic cooperation among Northeast Asian nations. Additionally, North and South Korean cooperation on the economy could arguably help in mediating the institutional development of Northeast Asian economic cooperation in more general terms. For instance, business projects between North and South Korea can lead to multilateral economic cooperation in Northeast Asia.

South Korea intends to liberalize trade in the Northeast Asian region by signing the bilateral and multilateral FTAs. Presently, joint research is underway regarding FTAs between South Korea, Japan and Singapore. However, talks for the South Korea-Japan FTA are losing momentum due to the nature of the industry structure whereby the FTA is at present unfavorable to South Korea. Moreover, conflicts between South Korea and Japan over such issues as Japan's history textbook revisionism and the territorial dispute over Dokdo Island are roadblocks to the FTA.

As an alternative, South Korea is pursuing a FTA with the US at first. Moving on from this, South Korea plans to develop a comprehensive form of FTA that embraces the Northeast Asian region based on the South Korea-China FTA and the South Korea-China-Japan FTA. Moreover, instead of limiting itself to economic cooperation in Northeast Asian region, it even envisages the formation of an Asian Free Trade Agreement (EAFTA) for East Asia including the South East Asian countries of ASEAN.⁶ Realistically, given that the formation of an FTA in Northeast Asia is not easy, it could be said that it is necessary to first establish summit meetings between South Korea, China and Japan, as well as ministerial level meetings within the framework of ASEAN+3, and to form a South Korea-China-Japan economic cooperation community.⁷

In the process of pursuing a Northeast Asian economic cooperation strategy, however, South Korea began to realize the close linkage between Northeast Asian economic cooperation and security cooperation. Dynamic bilateral relations in the Northeast Asian region such as North Korea-U.S., U.S.-China, and China-Japan relations are external factors that influence the Northeast Asian economic situation. Moreover, the North Korean nuclear issue, territorial disputes, peace on the Korean Peninsula and other security issues influence the direction of Northeast Asian economic cooperation.

Being aware of these connections, South Korea realized the need to approach the question of Northeast Asian economic cooperation together with security cooperation. Within this context, The Presidential Committee on the Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative, an advisory organization for the President, came to include economic cooperation and security cooperation in a more comprehensive manner in July 2004. South Korea's plan for the era of North East Asia is to realize peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia in the post Cold War era, mutual economic reliance, a sense of cultural homogeneity and so forth by solving the North Korean nuclear issue, dealing with the rise of China, competition between the U.S. and China for hegemony, Japan's re-armament, territorial disputes and so forth. South Korea intends to play the role of a bridge and link for the Northeast Asia network, and the hub of logistics in the region, as well as contribute to creating a win-win situation for the Northeast Asian region.⁸

The Roh Moo-hyun government intends to develop a community of prosperity and a com-

⁶ Geun Chan Bae, *Outlook on East Asia Regional Cooperation: Centered on the Outcome of the 7th ASEAN+3 Summit Meeting*, Institute of Foreign Affairs & National Security report on policies, (2003. 12).

⁷ Hyo Seung Ahn, "Outlook on the Pursuit of Northeast Asian FTA," Institute of Foreign Affairs & National Security report on policies (2003. 7)

⁸ Geung Chan Bae, *The Northeast Asian Era and South Korea's Diplomatic Assignment: Centered on Regional Cooperation Strategy*, Institute of Foreign Affairs & National Security, Analysis of Key International Issues (2004. 7).

munity of peace in the Northeast Asia whereby mutually positive effects can be exerted.⁹ South Korea's goal in the longer run is to form a framework for multilateral security talks (an advancement of the 6 party talks, establishment of a Northeast Asia Peace Disarmament Center etc.) to prevent the aggravation of conflicts between the nations in the Northeast Asian region. Meanwhile, it plans to develop the structural means and organizations needed to expand Northeast Asian economic cooperation.

Moreover, South Korea plans to induce the reform of North Korea as well as its entry into the international community through the framework of Northeast Asian cooperation, and to create the global atmosphere needed for the peace and prosperity of the two Koreas. By mitigating North Korea's concerns for its collapse, it intends to induce North Korea to act as a rational actor in the international community, and plans to build mutual trust between the two Koreas. That is, it intends to use the framework of Northeast Asian economic cooperation to support economic advancement in North Korea.

4. Linking Cooperation on the Korean Peninsula and North East Asia

(1) Linking railways on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia's cooperation for Railways.

South Korea sees that cooperation in railways in Northeast Asia is closely connected with the linking of railways on the Korean Peninsula. The initiative to link railways between North and South Korea, along with its symbolic value (of linking divided national land), will upgrade inter-Korean relations, and herald a new era of cooperation among Northeast Asian nations. Just as the railway network in Europe accelerated the formation of the EU by integrating Europe's economy, society and culture, this initiative to link the two Koreas through railways is one of the core projects to lay down an infrastructure of cooperation in the Northeast Asian region. This in turn can lead to a new era of peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia.

South Korea plans to link four railways between South and North including the Gyeongwon and Geumgansan lines after linking the Gyeongui and Donghae lines. Linking of railways be-

⁹The 16th President Mu Hyeon Roh's Inauguration Speech (February 25, 2003).

tween South and North Korea will mitigate uncertainty in the field of inter-Korean economic cooperation in the short term, as well as contribute to the vitalization of the Kaesong Industrial District and Mt. Keumgang tourism. Moreover, linking of railways between South and North Korea will improve investment conditions in the Kaesong Industrial District through logistics cost savings and so forth, and make Mt. Keumgang tourism easier. Moreover, as the South and North Korea trains would traverse the DMZ, military tensions between the two Koreas will be mitigated, leading to confidence building. During the process of linking the railways between the two Koreas, a “peace corridor” of sorts was formed in the DMZ regions along the Gyeongui and Donghae lines to de-mine the region, and telephone lines were established between both militaries, which in turn encouraged trust building.

Railway cooperation between nations in Northeast Asia is mostly focused on the cooperation of Russia. Russia is supportive of the railway project because it anticipates the development of a currently underdeveloped Far East and Siberia and hopes for an increase in the volume of freight coming from South Korea. With these expectations, Russia was most active in the TKR-TSR linking initiative, starting from early 2000. In the South Korea-Russia summit meeting held in Seoul in February 2001, cooperation for TKR-TSR connection was discussed, and both parties agreed to the establishment of a Transport Coordination Board and a Representative Office of Railways to pursue this initiative. In December 2001, South Korea and Russia signed the Korea-Russia Railway Coordination Compact and the Agreement for South Korea-Russia Transport Coordination Board. Moreover, President Roh Moo-hyun and President Putin agreed to joint research on the 3-party railway research during the APEC summit meeting held in 2003.

In March 2006, a three-party meeting for railway managers was held in Vladivostok for the TKR-TSR operation between South Korea, North Korea and Russia. This meeting was meaningful since it was the first meeting between the three presidents of the railway cooperatives. Russia’s railway cooperative announced that it was ready to start construction for the Najin-Hasan line, and North Korea emphasized that it is necessary to attract investment for the construction of the TKR. The three parties agreed with the need to conduct additional studies for the competitiveness of the TKR-TSR, and agreed to continue holding talks at the working level to discuss details on this project.

Three party cooperation between Russia, North and South Korea is important. In particular, if and when the construction initiative for the Najin-Hasan region is pursued, it can be a pilot for the TKR-TSR initiative. Moreover, it is expected to add significant momentum to the future talks on the modernization of the railway system in North Korea. North Korea can expect real benefits

from this initiative such as the redevelopment of antiquated railways, vitalization of the economy in the Naeon region, reinforcement of North Korea and Russia cooperation and so forth. Russia is expected to derive benefits by developing Far East area. Through these railway project initiatives, South Korea will pursue actual cooperation between South Korea, North Korea and Russia. A positive synergy effect is expected for both South and North Korea economic cooperation.¹⁰

(2) Energy Cooperation in Northeast Asia and Inter-Korean Energy Cooperation

Despite the security instability in Northeast Asia, the levels of bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation between the North East Asian nations' are on the rise. In particular, the ability to supply energy in a stable manner does not merely affect the economy, but security as well. As the size of the Northeast Asian economy expands, energy supply is expected to be a great concern.

The North East Asian region took up 20% of world energy consumption in 2004, and this figure is expected to rise to 30% in 2020. However, this region is particularly vulnerable when it comes to the supply of petroleum since there is no stable petroleum market in the region, which in turn leads to unstable supplies. Moreover, the supply of energy in the Northeast Asian region is expected to be aggravated significantly by China's greater demand for energy following its rapid growth. Northeast Asian nations' high reliance on Middle East oil is a major problem of the energy security of this region. While Western Europe and the U.S. respectively rely on 22% and 23% of their oil needs coming from the Middle East, South Korea and Japan respectively rely on this region for 74% and 87% of the oil needs.

North East Asian region's energy cooperation can be divided into two fields; firstly, whereby individual issues are addressed and secondly, into the field where multilateral issues are related. First, cooperation for energy that is centered on individual issues pertains mostly to Russia's gas and oil. In particular, the report "Russia's Energy Strategy 2020" includes details that are important for the Northeast Asian nations. This plan entails building a transportation network to transfer petroleum and gas of East Siberia and Far East regions. Here, construction of a petroleum pipe line network, gas pipe line network, power network, and transportation network that includes

¹⁰ Hee Seung Na(Presidential Committee on Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative) Interview, 2006. 6. 13.

the Siberia railway, are included. However, roadblocks include Russia's increasing control over its resources, regulation on foreign investments, and preference for bilateral cooperation with Northeast Asian nations.

Second, the Senior Officials Committee on Energy Cooperation in Northeast Asia, convened by the UN ESCAP, serves as a multilateral energy cooperation framework. This committee intends to pursue a diverse set of initiatives to strengthen cooperation for energy in the Northeast Asian region such as sharing of information related to energy, increased investment and trade and so forth.

However, roadblocks for multilateral cooperation for energy in Northeast Asia include Japan and China's lukewarm reaction, and the lack of trust between China and Japan. Moreover, South Korea, China, Russia and other actors in Northeast Asia have different policies for energy cooperation. South Korea prefers cooperation based on the involvement of the six Northeast Asian nations while Japan prefers the ASEAN + 3 cooperation framework. Meanwhile, it pursues energy policy on a bilateral, regional and global level. Russia prefers bilateral cooperation which is favorable for the development of its own energy resources.

Accordingly, it is necessary for related nations to narrow these gaps, and to reach some kind of agreement on the target, scope of and details related to cooperation for energy. By suggesting clear goals and expected gains of economic cooperation, it is necessary to induce the participation of related nations, and to form an energy cooperation consultation committee to ensure effective resource development and transport of energy in Northeast Asia.

In the first stage, it is necessary to execute practical projects and discover partners for cooperation for each business project. Through this, sharing the potential gain of cooperation and trust between related parties will be accumulated. In the second stage, it is necessary to strengthen actual cooperation measures such as cooperation on the petroleum logistics facilities between South Korea, China and Japan, development of a joint oil price system in the oil market among South Korea, China and Japan, the formation of a Northeast Asia energy cooperation consultation committee and so forth. In the third stage, it is necessary to establish a Northeast Asian energy cooperation organization, and to lay down the details on a framework for Northeast Asia cooperation for energy such as its organizational structure, operating methods, fund raising and so forth.¹¹

¹¹ Jae Young Lee(Korea Institute for International Economic Policy) Interview. 2006. 6. 14.

South Korea approaches inter-Korean energy cooperation from the perspective of Northeast Asia energy cooperation. That is, it intends to mitigate energy shortages in North Korea, to connect multi-tier energy cooperation in Northeast Asia, and promote inter-Korean energy cooperation. In particular, the initiative for the traversing of the Siberia oil and gas pipeline into North Korea is one of the main initiatives. This initiative will not only mitigate the energy shortage in North Korea, but also deepen inter-Korean cooperation.

(3) Environment Cooperation in Northeast Asia and Inter-Korean Cooperation

Environmental issues in the Northeast Asian region are becoming a main issue in relation to the development of the economy in the Northeast Asian region. Due to differences in the pace of development amongst the Northeast Asian nations and in their industrial policies, the levels of interest in environment issues and ensuing measures amongst individual nations are also different. Despite this, however, joint counter-measures on the regional level are necessary since environmental problems affect all of the region without regard to national borders.

Among the environmental issues of importance to the Northeast Asian region, air pollution, water pollution, and natural calamities are the most serious. Firstly, air pollution in the Northeast Asian region is a serious environmental problem that significantly affects the entire region. The yellow dust originating from China's Takla Makan Desert and Gobi Desert continues to negatively influence economies and health, worsening every year. Moreover, acid rain is a formidable issue. Acid rain, resulting from China's use of low quality carbon influences the entire region.

The Northeast Asian region's water pollution and water shortages are also bound to cause conflict. Water pollution in the Abrok River and Tumen River that traverse the boundaries of China and North Korea and the question of managing water resources pose sensitive issues for the two nations. Moreover, management of river ways that traverse the border areas of the two Koreas such as the North Korea River and Imjin River and their joint use demand some form of cooperation.

Marine pollution and water resource issues are also key issues in the Northeast Asian region. Pollution in the East Sea, Yellow Sea, East China Sea and South China Sea, and the destruction of the marine ecosystem are becoming increasingly serious every year. The Northeast Asian region has the world's largest continental shelf, and the number of fish types that are captured for

commercial ends amounts to 100. However, all types of waste water and pollutants stemming from China flow into the ocean of this region, causing serious damage. Moreover, joint measures are needed when it comes to the damage to the region's marine resources, caused by over-fishing and marine pollution and so forth.

Meanwhile, natural calamities in the Northeast Asian region resulting from the green house effect, destruction of the o-zone layer, and the decreased diversity of plants are also major problems. Increase in the demands for fossil fuels resulting from fast economic growth in the Northeast Asian region is adversely affecting climate change.¹²

It is argued that the formation of a Northeast Asia environment committee at the government level, together with cooperation among private organizations, and cooperation between South and North Korea are needed to address these environmental issues. First, the formation of a consultation committee conferring on environmental issues at the government level is necessary. Understanding the realities of the environmental problems in the Northeast Asian region and pursuing joint counter-measures should be the main roles of this multilateral committee. Through this committee in Northeast Asia, the most urgent initiatives should be selected, and should be the subject of pilot studies at first instance, with further action as needed.

Moreover, it is necessary to form a private environment protection committee comprised of NGOs, private companies and research groups in the Northeast Asian region. This committee should attempt to form consensus and build awareness of the environmental issues, and play the role of suggesting policy alternatives for government level cooperation. Moreover, it could indeed play a role in pursuing pilot initiatives along with NGOs and private companies.

South and North Korea should consider environmental issues within the process of pursuing inter-Korean economic cooperation. In particular, because North Korea has been largely negligent of environment issues until now, effort is required to increase its interest in this matter. To move forward here, it is necessary to design a comprehensive development strategy reviewing both economic efficiency and environmental elements in North Korea's economic development and in the wider context of inter-Korean economic cooperation.

¹² Hee Sung Chung, "The Question of East Asian Environment Resource and State of Affairs in the Korean Peninsula," *Peace Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2006), pp. 4-19.