



South and North Korea's Views on the Unification of the Korean Peninsula and Inter-Korean Relations

Park, Young Ho

(Senior Research Fellow of Korea Institute for National Unification)

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- I . Introduction
 - II . South Korea's View on the Korean Unification
 - III . North Korea's View on the Korean Unification
 - IV . Comparison between South Korea's National Community Unification Formula and North Korea's Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo
 - V . Inter-Korean Relations from the Perspective of Unification Policy
 - VI . Conclusion
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I . Introduction

At the outset of 2014, South and North Korea found themselves in a battle of inter-Korean relations. The North was the instigator. On January 1st, Kim Jong-un announced in his New Years Address that in regards to inter-Korean relations, "new progress must be made for the unification of the motherland," in accordance with the last wishes of Kim Jong-il and Kim Il-Sung. He stated that South Korea and the United States are

* This paper is presented to the 2nd KRIS-Brookings Joint Conference on "Security and Diplomatic Cooperation between ROK and US for the Unification of the Korean Peninsula" on January 21, 2014.

"staging frantic exercises to practice for a nuclear war attack on North Korea and a dangerous environment is brewing in which even a minor military conflict can turn out into an all-out war." In addition, he claimed that efforts must be made to create an atmosphere for improved inter-Korean relations and for South Korea, "to not start a reckless fight with the same race,' and instead take the path to improve inter-Korean relations.

On January 6, President Park Geun-hye held a New Years Press Conference. President Park set 'building the foundation for an era of unification' as one of two state affairs for 2014. President Park stated that Preparations must be made to "break away from inter-Korean confrontation, threats of war, nuclear threats, to open an era of unification," and polices will be promoted to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue, strengthen humanitarian aid for North Korean citizens, and expand civic exchanges. She also proposed holding a reunion for separated families at around the Lunar New Years holiday thereby marking a new start for inter-Korean relations. As a follow up measure to the President's New Years Address, the Ministry of Unification proposed to North Korea on the afternoon of January 6 that Lunar New Year's holidays presents an opportunity to hold North-South Red Cross working level talks on January 10.

On January 9, North Korea stated that if South Korea's proposal was filled with good intentions for inter-Korean relations, it would be welcomed. However, the North rejected the proposal and said it will be discussed at an appropriate time. As reasons for its rejection, North Korea mentioned that South Korea's 'unflinching position', interference in North Korea's internal affairs, continuation of war practices, and the ROK-U.S. joint military exercises. In short, South Korea's 'confrontational position'

has not changed and obstacles have not been removed, and thus the necessary atmosphere has not been formed. The logic behind North Korea's refusal is that, as mentioned in Kim Jong-un's New Year's Address, in order to improve inter-Korean relations, South Korea's 'confrontational policy' must be abandoned and an atmosphere favorable for improving inter-Korean relations needs to be created.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the two Korea's views on unification from a comparative perspective, the basis of which will be used to analyze the current standoff in inter-Korean relations and discuss future prospects. The meaning of 'unification' in the context of this paper refers to the two Korean governments' official unification formula and their views on unification, and does not refer to a North Korea policy as a sub-policy of unification policy.

II. South Korea's View on the Korean Unification

Since the Chang Myon government, the Korean governments of many generations have held the view that unification and the birth of a unitary state shall be realized through general elections based on liberal democracy and the market economy. The Rhee Syngman government also aimed to establish a unitary state based on liberal democracy and a market economy, but also included unification by 'the use of armed forces' as a possible means. However, rather than a realistic option, it was closer to political rhetoric.

Regardless of domestic politics, aims such as improvement in inter-Korean relations through dialogue and exchange, 'peace first, unification after,' in addition to liberal democracy, market economy, and

inter-Korean free general elections were constructed as the unification formula or a unification policy of the Korean government on August 15, 1970 when President Park Jung-hee proposed the 8.15 Declaration, "Methods to build a foundation for peaceful unification." Henceforth, building the foundation for unification became the diplomacy guidelines for the Park Jung-hee government.

South Korea's basic line of unification is a gradual, step-by-step and peaceful one. It rules out the use of force in achieving unification. One of the primary goals of South Korea's unification policy is to encourage change in North Korea's system. If such change came rapidly and peacefully, it may be all to the good. It is not desirable to attempt to isolate and await the North's sudden collapse. South Korea's official unification formula representing its unification policy is a Three-phase unification approach: 1) a phase of reconciliation and cooperation, 2) a phase of the Korean Commonwealth, and 3) the final phase of unified Korea of one-nation and one-state.

As part of a 'policy on North Korea and unification,' the Park Geun-hye government presented the Trust-building Process on the Korean Peninsula. The reason why it was possible to construe the Trust-building Process as a 'North Korea and unification' policy and not a 'North Korea' policy was because for the first time since the Kim Dae-joong administration, it envisions a unification policy that goes beyond efforts to improve inter-Korean relations. 'Building a foundation for national unification' was set as one of the four major objectives of the Park Geun-hye government, and by doing so has explicitly made 'unification policy' an important state task. 'Building a foundation for national unification' was first mentioned in President Park Jung-hee's statement on "Methods to build the foundation for peaceful unification" on August 15, 1980 (8.15 Declaration). Indeed,

South Korea's state power and international status in early 1970 is markedly different from 2010s. However, in midst of continuing mistrust, confrontation and tension in inter-Korean relations, it has shown much political will to expand the North Korea policy aiming to normalize inter-Korean relations into a unification policy that aims to build the foundation for unification.

Particularly noteworthy is the succession and development of the National Community Unification Formula. On January 6, 2014, President Park Geun-hye stated at a press conference that 'building the foundation for an era of unification' is set as one of the two major tasks of the Park administration in 2014, and in doing so the key state policy task of 'laying a foundation for peaceful unification' will be implemented with specific policies. At the same conference, the President's comment that "unification is like hitting a jackpot (daebak)," invigorating a sudden increase in the unification discourse in the South Korean society.

However, as North Korea's nuclear strategy becomes more conspicuous and the lack of breakthrough in the confrontational inter-Korean relations, it will require much time before these plans bring out a response from North Korea into its eventual fruition.

III. North Korea's View on the Korean Unification

With regards to unification, North Korea has harbored two unchanging perceptions after the division of the Peninsula. The first is that the division was the outcome of external forces, or the 'imperialist forces.' The second is that the issue of unification is a problem of 'realizing the independence of the nation on the whole country.'" Therefore, in order to

achieve unification, the U.S. must be denounced, South Korea must expel anti-unification forces, and grounded on 'the By-Our-Nation-Itself ideal,' (woori minjok-kkiri) 'independence' must be realized.

The 'nation' that North Korea speaks of implies the term used in the 'Chosun Nation First Policy' (Joseon Minjok Cheil Ju-ui), an exclusive, isolated 'nation' imbedded with class connotations. In addition, 'independence' does not refer to the concept in which an individual is granted human dignity. Rather, it refers to a component in group which receives recognition as a 'socio-political life' once it is subject to the 'Supreme Leader', under the Juche ideology.

The North Korean leaders' perception of the political situation is based on the paranoia of having been besieged by imperialists since the Korean War, which ended in 1953, and the greatest imperialist threat comes from the U.S. In the Cold War era, North Korea argued that "there is no place on the earth that is not affected by the evil influence of the U.S. and there is no country that does not feel the menace of aggression [from the U.S.]," and it has maintained that the United States, which had once threatened the North with military assault, is interfering with national reunification. In fact, North Korea has also forecast the collapse of the U.S. empire, representing the fall of imperialism as an objective law of historical development.

North Korea's unification policy has maintained such perspective throughout the Kim Il-sung regime, Kim Jong-il regime, and the present Kim Jong-un regime. On January 1, 2014, Kim Jong-un emphasized in his New Years Address that in order to resolve the problem of unification, "external forces must be denounced and the views of our people ourselves must be firmly adhered to." From this perspective, it can be assessed that North Korea's unification policy has shown consistency since the division up

till the present day.

North Korea has viewed South Korea from the perspective of its linkage with the United States. South Korea has been characterized as "a colony of the U.S. imperialists" and the South Korean government is defined as "a puppet regime" or "an inhuman, reactionary regime." The North has suggested that South Korea create a revolutionary democratic base in order to turn the entire Korean peninsula to a communist country, suggesting two different unification schemes: (a) unification by sheer military force and (b) unification by enlisting the aid of South Korean anti-government activists in revolutionizing the South. The North has also begun to implement double-edged unification tactics; intermittent military provocation, and the pursuance of the "united front" strategy toward unification.

Since the latter half of the 1980's, especially in the wake of the unification of Germany, the North Korean view of national unification has been defensive, rather than offensive. In his New Year message in 1991, Kim Il-sung emphatically stated that he opposed the "way of eating and being eaten" — that is to say, unification by means of absorption — calling for national unification under the so-called Koryo Confederation System. In his New Year message of 1992, however, he said, "it is anachronistic to try to deal with Korean problems from the viewpoint that prevailed during the Cold War era." North Korea, which called for national unification under the communist banner during the Cold War era, has now shifted to a policy of co-existence in order to maintain "Socialism of Our Own Style." The shift is reflected in the "Five-point Guidelines for the Reunification of the Fatherland" (May 1990) and the "Ten-point Guiding principle for All-Korea Unity" (April 1993). Even so, it is difficult to say that North Korea has totally given up the idea of unifying Korea by force of arms. Incessant

military aggression, the upgrading of military forces by both Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il, and Kim Jong-il's propaganda calling for transformation of North Korea into a military giant, all point to a continuation of past hopes. As with the previous South Korean governments, North Korea has defined the current Park Geun-hye government as "a fascist colonial regime" of U.S. imperialists or "a subordinate, fascist and anti-unification regime."

IV. Comparison between South Korea's National Community Unification Formula and North Korea's Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo

1. South Korea's National Community Unification Formula

a. National Community Unification Formula and the Korean Commonwealth as a transitional regime

On September 11, 1989, South Korea presented the Korean National Community Unification Formula (Hanminjokgongdongchae tongilbangan), a unification formula through the formation of a 'national community.' In 1994, President Kim Young-sam declared during his congratulatory address on August 15, the National Community Unification Formula (NCUF) (Minjokgongdongchae tongilbangan), a revised version of the Korean National Community Unification. Since then, it has been maintained as South Korea's official unification formula throughout the Kim Dae-joong, Roh Moo-hyun, Lee Myung-bak, and the current Park Geun-hye administrations.

NCUF affirms liberal democracy as a fundamental philosophy for unification. Liberal democracy is based on respect for human dignity, and is marked by individual liberty, creativity, and considers the manifestation of human dignity as its utmost virtue. Therefore, liberal democracy is people-centric, and in essence carries with it an anti-totalitarian tendency. It presents the values of autonomy, peace, and democracy as principles for unification, and sets a three-stage process for unification: reconciliation and cooperation, the formation of a Korean Commonwealth, and the realization of a unitary state.

The first 'reconciliation and cooperation' stage acknowledges and respects the two Koreas mutual regimes, while clearing the relationship of mistrust and confrontation. It manages the divided status in a peaceful manner, and pursues a peaceful coexistence through the exchange and cooperation in various sectors such as the economy, society or culture. Since the July 7th Declaration, a steady increase has been observed and after the first Inter-Korean Summit, an increase in inter-Korean trade, economic cooperation, social and cultural exchanges have been noted. Economic cooperation and social, cultural exchanges, however, have failed to form political and military trust. Military crises such as the sinking of South Korea's Cheonan, shelling of the Yeonpyeong Island and three nuclear tests reveal the long road ahead in establishing the reconciliation and cooperation stage.

The second stage, or the creation of the Korean Commonwealth, occupies an intermediary position in the entire process of the unification formula and was devised to perform a certain functional role through the creation of a national community - in particular a economic and social (cultural) community. In effect, the Korean Commonwealth consist of de facto two separate states with their respective rights to its diplomacy, economy, and

security, but at the same time it envisions that the ‘special bond’ fusing the Korean Commonwealth allows the two to discuss and solve pending issues. In sum, the Korean Commonwealth is a transitional system in the process of forming a unitary state.

In order to operate the Korean Commonwealth, mechanisms such as the inter–Korean summit as a supreme deliberative organ, as well as inter–Korean cabinet meetings, inter–Korean council and joint offices should be installed. In the process of establishing the Korean Commonwealth, while forming institutionalized bodies, an economic and social community should be formed, and thereby establishing a joint sphere of living to prepare for unification.

Finally, the inter–Korean council should establish the unification constitution, and holds a general election to inaugurate the unification legislature and government, indicating the completion of the unitary state.

b. Features of the NCUF

The first is the functional feature of the NCUF. It is functional in that it restores the national community through reconciliation and cooperation while at the same time the spillover effects allows the development of political integration. The first step, reconciliation and cooperation, is regarded as a quintessential process in the midst of ongoing inter–Korean confrontation.

Second is the transitional feature of the Korean Commonwealth. In addition to being the transitional stage to complete unification, it is also de facto a confederation, which is mindful of the special intra–national relations. South and North Korea, therefore, remain separate states in accordance with the international law, having their own military and diplomatic initiatives. At the same time, they can claim to be a unitary

state in the non-political areas such as presenting themselves as a unified team in the Olympic Games. In this sense, the Korean commonwealth is different from a pure type of federation but is closer to a confederation. The Korean Commonwealth as a transitional regime is to overcome the problems of state duplicity with consideration to the circumstances in inter-Korean relations, and achieve the status of a unitary state based on the unification constitution.

Third is the setting of a future vision for unification. The future vision is grounded in liberal democracy. From the perspective of North Korea's unification policy it indicates the merge of the two Koreas by South Korea. In the North and South Korea's consultative bodies, both sides have de jure equal representativeness, while the envisioned unification entails characteristics of the South Korean system.

The last feature is the absence of premises, unlike the Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo (DCRK). This is because it is based on a functional approach which anticipates the spillover effects of the respective stages in the process. Nevertheless, it could be stated that the normalization of inter-Korean relations in the stage of reconciliation and cooperation is a functional requisite for the next step, the creation of the Korean Commonwealth. However, this is far from the structural requisites imposed by the DCRK, such as the evacuation of the USFK or the abolition of South Korea's National Security Act.

2. North Korea's Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo

a. The 'Federation' formula

On October 10, 1980, North Korea proposed the Democratic Confederal

Republic of Koryo in the 6th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea. It claimed that "North and South Korea should establish a national unification government with the equal participation from both sides based on mutual tolerance of differences in ideologies and counterparts' systems."

The core content is that first, the Supreme National Confederal Council is composed of the same number of representatives from South and North and overseas Koreans. Second, the permanent confederal committee of the Confederal Council directs affairs pertaining to politics, diplomacy and the military. Third, the two Koreas' regional governments with differing ideologies and systems implement policies under the direction of the Confederal government.

Consequently, the federation in the DCRK refers to is one which is consisted of 'one nation, one state, two systems, and two governments.' It claims to be a unitary state, but in effect it can be understood as a modified form of a confederation. North Korea contends that the DCRK is a "rational, realistic, and a feasible" formula for unification although it admits "there is no example in human history where a state has been unified in the form of a confederation and still maintains their distinctive systems."(34. Yoon Geum-chul, Han Nam-chul, Third Charter for the Unification of the Motherland and our People's Tasks (Joguktongilsamdaehunjanggwa woori minjokui gwajae) (Pyongyang: Pyongyang Publication, 2010), pp.73~74. (in Korean))

The DCRK formula assumes first, a national unification and policy negotiation meeting is held among representatives of authorities, political parties and social associations; second, discuss and decide on a formula for unification; and third, declare the Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo. While the federation plan suggested by North Korea before October 1980 was set as a transition for unification, the DCRK formula was

presumed to be the end-point of unification. Kim Il-sung announced in 'the Five Decisions for Unification of the Motherland' in June 23, 1973, that the federation should be realized and admitted to the United Nation under the name of Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo.(35. Kim Tae-young, *Devotion to One's Country and One's People and Unification Measures (Aegukaejokui tongil bangan)* (Pyongyang: Pyongyang Publication, 2001), p.99. (in Korean)) The formula of Koryo Federation, a more detailed form of the Confederal Republic of Koryo, stipulated that the federal government will exercise power on diplomacy and military affairs and the regional governments only exert authority over internal affairs.

b. A 'loose form of federation'

Although the formation of a 'loose form of federation' was officially proposed in the June 15th North-South Joint Declaration, the concept had already been spoken of since the late 1980s. Kim Il-sung stated that "the issue of Korean unification is neither cut-throat nor has unilateral superiority" in his New Year's address on January 1, 1988, emphasizing the coexistence of the two Koreas. North Korea's unification policy took on a defensive tendency, reflecting the changes which had occurred in the socialist blocs during the time.

Kim Il-sung's New Year's Address on January 1, 1991 showed an even more defensive tendency. He announced that "the unification of the motherland must be realized through the federation based on one nation, one state, two systems, and two governments, and not rely on the "to-conquer-or-to-die" principle, and furthermore "unification with a unitary system is infeasible." He also added "In order to come to a national agreement, I have intentions to discuss the issue of achieving unification through granting greater provisional authority to the regional autonomous

government of the confederal republic with the aim of strengthening the functions of the central government.” North Korea’s leniency was reaffirmed by Yun Ki-bok, chairperson of the deliberative committee of unification policy of the Supreme People’s Assembly in the General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) also attended by South Korean participants in the Mansudae Assembly Hall. He stated, “let us establish the unified federal state with the respective South and North Korean systems intact. However, the regional autonomous governments should be granted with provisional authority, including initiatives in diplomacy, military and internal affairs.” The loose form of federation, however, insinuates the intention to attenuate South Korea’s formula of the Korean Commonwealth in order to escape North Korea’s difficult conditions.

c. Characteristics of the ‘loose form of federation’

The first characteristic is its confederal nature. The loose form of federation is closer to a confederation than a federation in a practical sense. North Korea has emphasized that it will respect the ‘two governments and two systems,’ and that regional governments will have the autonomy in handling diplomacy and military affairs as well as the economy and culture.

Secondly, it is a transitional formula for unification. The ‘federation’ North Korea speaks of today is not a final unification formula, but can be seen as a transitional formula intended for the ‘one state, one system.’ When North Korea first put forward the federation formula in 1960, it was considered an alternative. In 1973, the Koryo Federation formula was suggested as a transitional plan for unification. In October 1980, the DCRK was then announced as a final formula, but starting from the late 1980s, it was again presented as a transitional unification formula. In particular,

with regards to achieving unification through ‘one state, one system,’ the periods and methods have not been specified, and have been left unsolved for future generations.

Thirdly, North Korea’s federation formula is a defensive plan for the preservation of its socialistic system in order to prevent South Korea from annexing the North. Thus, it is not an active formula of unification but rather, a formula which is aimed at maintaining the status quo and coexisting on the divided Korean Peninsula at least for the time being.

Fourthly, the formula includes prerequisites such as the evacuation of the USFK from South Korea. More important than North Korea’s ‘federation’ is the prerequisites that have been presented alongside the unification formula. North Korea has contended that the so-called ‘fundamental problems’ must be resolved prior to unification. In other words, the United States is responsible for the divided status of the Korean Peninsula, and in order to resolve the division, the USFK must be removed from Korea.

V. Inter-Korean Relations from the Perspective of Unification Policy

Since the first contact in 1971 till the end of 2012, the two Koreas have carried out more than 600 meetings, talks, and negotiations. However, it can be said that the only occasion in which discussions on unification plans were held was during the 1st Inter-Korean Summit, and for a very short time at that. As explained above, North and South Korea had differing attitudes on inter-Korean relations. South Korea sought a gradual change in North Korea through inter-Korean talks, meetings, and exchange and cooperation in regards to establishing a unified state rooted in liberal

democracy and market economy. The Kim Dae-Joong and Roh Moo-Hyun administrations were not against this stance but both administrations considered the coexistence of the two Koreas to be of more importance.

North Korea, on the other hand, adopted an offensive policy until the end of 1980s aiming to communize the Korean Peninsula as a whole. However, around 1990, although such objective did not undergo a fundamental shift, North Korea witnessed the increasing the power difference between North and South Korea and the collapse of the socialist camp. Thus reflecting these changes, it appears that North Korea has been pursuing a unification policy that aims to secure the survival of the North Korean regime. Amidst such circumstances, North Korea has consistently created a favorable environment by assuming a united front.

North and South Korea's stances on unification are fundamentally different and the difficulty of bridging the differences has become evident after witnessing the development of inter-Korean relations after the North-South meetings and talks in the early 1970s. Until the late 1980s, it was also difficult to make a significant breakthrough in inter-Korean relations due to the two sides' confrontational unification policies.

Amidst the changes occurring in the socialist bloc, inter-Korean relations experienced a breakthrough as the South Korean government began to push forward a policy of Nordpolitik, actively seeking to improve its relations with the North. Personnel and material exchanges began in 1988 as the Roh Tae-Woo administration proclaimed 'the July 7th Declaration.' In 1989, personnel exchange was merely one person and material exchange amounted to 19 million U.S. dollars. 20 years later in 2012, personnel exchange increased to around 120 thousand people and trade reached 1,971 billion U.S. dollars. Statistical data show a large increase in the qualitative aspect of personnel and material exchanges. Since the early 1990s, after North

Korea's nuclear problem first emerged, exchanges have increased and are still continuing to increase to this day. There were times when exchanges have temporarily decreased due to crises on the Korean Peninsula, such as the DPRK's withdrawal from the NPT in 1993, suspicious underground facility in Geumchang-ri in the late 1990s, the Second Battle of Yeonpyeong in June 2000, uranium enrichment program in October 2002, three nuclear tests and launching of a long-range missile after the North's first nuclear test in October 2006, and the sinking of the Cheonan warship and the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. However, such temporal decrease did not have much effect on overall exchanges between the two Koreas.

However, these circumstances do not mean that current inter-Korean relations have entered a stage of 'reconciliation and cooperation' according to the National Community Unification Formula. North Korea's 'loose federation' stage is not even worth mentioning. The quantitative increase in personnel and material exchange did not eventually bring any qualitative change in inter-Korean relations. Nevertheless, South Korea's unification policy gave some leeway to North Korea. Also, as it allowed North Korea to somewhat loosen its offensive policy toward South Korea; it was possible to seek a compromise between North and South Korea's unification policies. Nevertheless, a point of agreement in the two Koreas unification policy had not been reached. North Korea only developed its policy when South Korea's unification policy was lessened to a North Korea policy centered on exchange and cooperation. Thus, it can be said that inter-Korean relations took on a unilateral dimension rather than a bilateral one. North Korea was especially active in propping its unification front when the South Korean government displayed a 'conciliatory' gesture. On the other hand, when the South showed a firm response, North Korea initially took a firm stance but later adopted a policy of appeasement in order to break the deadlock.

Such attitude was explicitly shown in North Korea's response to the Lee Myung-bak administration's policy after 2008 and to the Park Geun-hye administration's policy after the unilateral shutdown of the Kaesong Industrial Complex in 2013. Banishing a South Korean official at the Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation Office in Kaeseong in March 2008 not long after the inauguration of the Lee administration, North Korea began to increase its provocations. In July of that year, a South Korean tourist at Mt. Geumgang was shot to death by a North Korean soldier. In 2009, South Koreans in the Kaeseong Industrial Complex were detained. With the sinking of the Cheonan warship in March 2010 and the attacks on the Yeonpyeong Island in November of that year, inter-Korean relations became even more strained. The nuclear issue was also aggravated. The Six Party Talks ceased as the verification agreement of December in 2008 failed to be adopted. In April, 2009, North Korea launched a long-range missile targeting the Obama administration in the United States and in May, carried out its second nuclear test. In November, 2010, the North revealed its uranium enrichment program (UEP).

In response to North Korea's military provocations, the then South Korean President Lee announced the "May 24th Measure" on May 24, 2010. It declared that North Korea should give an apology and punish those involved, and that it will respond to North Korea's military provocations with sternness. It called for a ban in the sailing of North Korea's ships, stop inter-Korean trade, did not authorize trips to North Korea as well as imposed limitations in coming into contact with North Korean people, did not authorize new investments and limited the number of people residing in the Kaesong Industrial Complex, postponed aid to North Korea with the exception of the youth and the vulnerable. It also henceforth banned inter-Korean trade and investment, as well as banned North Korean ships

from sailing in South Korean territory. It was to show a firm stance against the North's attacks and to develop 'appropriate' inter-Korean relations. While efforts have been made to mend the strained ties, it was difficult to turn the tension and conflict into a relationship of active talks and meaningful cooperation. Against such backdrop, Kim Jong-Il passed away and was succeeded by his son, Kim Jong-un, accomplishing the third generational power succession. In addition to the launching of a long-range missile in December, 2012, the third nuclear test took place in February, 2013. The fact that inter-Korean relations remained in a state of tension and conflict until the end of President Lee's term necessitated the swift consolidation of its power succession.

Tensions were raised on December 12, 2012, a week from South Korea's presidential election as North Korea launched a long-range missile. On February 12, 2013, Pyongyang carried out its third nuclear test, a strong offensive targeting the second term of the Obama administration and South Korea's Park Geun-hye administration.

The Park administration put forth the Trust-building Process on the Korean Peninsula which, while based on strong deterrence, aims to build trust to improve inter-Korean relations, bring a stable peace, and create the foundation for a peaceful unification. North Korea maintained its offensive stance and in April 2013 unilaterally took measures to shut down the Kaeseong Industrial Complex. The central basis of the Park administration's North Korea and unification policy is a strong national security North Korea misjudged the true will of the policy. If North Korea had presumed that its hard-line policy would induce the Park administration's policy to change, it would have been a tactical mistake. At any rate, North Korea tested the Park administration's policy and the response from South Korea stood faithful to its principle and basis. The

Park administration's principled response and efforts made at the inter-Korean meetings eventually brought the two sides to a working-level talks. The reactivation of the Kaeseong Industrial Complex was not merely the re-starting of operations, but took the form of a promotion of 'developmental efforts for normalization.'

The Park administration's task of 'normalizing inter-Korean relations' is not much different from what the former Lee administration envisioned, which was the 'normal development of inter-Korean relations.' However, while the Lee administration imposed constraints on the flexibility of policy enforcement as it adjusted its policy focus on North Korea's denuclearization, the Park administration has not put denuclearization as a precondition, though it is not neglecting it either.

VI. Conclusion

On the unification policy level, it is very difficult to change the essence of inter-Korean relations. Reducing the level of the unification policy to the North Korea policy also did not bring changes in North Korea. In fact, the quantitative increase in terms of exchange and cooperation between North and South Korea failed to bring changes to the nature of inter-Korean relations. The root cause can be found in the North's unchanging perspective on the unification of the Korean Peninsula. However, when looking at the power difference and the respective side's international status, it is ultimately South Korea's unification policy that will need to induce changes in North Korea.

The Korean governments' unification policy lines covered in this paper are consistent to one another in that they are phased, peaceful, gradual,

and functional. However, there were cases in which short-term North Korea policies was placed above medium-to-long-term unification policies. Unification policy is a strategy for national development. That is, it is a strategy for ultimately achieving unification by establishing a strong groundwork for peaceful unification through inducing changes in North Korea and normalizing inter-Korean relations. Thus, unification must be achieved with long-term and tactical perspectives. It took a long period of time before the late 1980s Nordpolitik was formed from the 'June 23rd Declaration of Peace and Unification' presented in the 1970s. The policy authorities at the time would not have recognized it, but the strategy turned out to be a success.

In this regard, the unification policy that is represented by the 'National Community Unification Formula' needs to be improved and developed in order to be enforced within the overall strategic landscape while accommodating the changes in both the domestic and international conditions. The Park administration's Trust-building Process reveals such need. Efforts to set 'normal inter-Korean relations' and establish the basis for the unification period need to be more than doubled by critically evaluating North Korea's attitude toward all the unification policies since the Kim Young-Sam administration, accurately analyzing North Korea's unification policy and South Korea policy, evaluating and strategically examining the Northeast regional order that has been experiencing dramatic changes since the emergence of China as a G2 state, and by improving specific strategies and policy alternatives as well as approaches.