

**DYNAMICS OF INTER-KOREAN RAPPROCHEMENT:
CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS**

By

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my whole work to my beloved Ami and Abu Jaan. I would never have been able to reach this far without their prayers and over-whelming support. My dear parents, I owe you too much in my life.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
BBC	British Broadcast Corporation
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DPRK	Democratic Republic of Korea
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSOMIA	General Security of Military Information Agreement
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IR	International Relations
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
MHS	Mutually Hurting Stalemate
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
ROK	Republic of Korea

SOP'S	Standard Operating Procedures
THAAD	Thermal High Altitude Area Defense
USA	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
UNTCOK	United Nations Temporary Commission of Korea
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
UN	United Nations
USSR	United Soviet Socialist Republic

ABSTRACT

Thesis Topic: Dynamics of Inter-Korean Rapprochement: Challenges and Prospects

Korean conflict has become an enigmatic challenge for International Peacemaking Bodies and a serious concern for the region of world leading economies. The North Korean testing of ICBM's in 2017 and war of words with America had put both states on the brink of war. The sudden shift in Kim's hostile posture in 2018 and opening of talks with South Korea and US had raised hopes for the resolution of conflict. This phase of improvement in relations remained in progress for a year and again states reached on a deadlock. How did the historic developments in Inter-Korean relations unfold in 2018? Why is North-South Korean rapprochement is challenging and what are the future prospects of Inter-Korean Peace? This study aims to identify its major dynamics along with the possible solutions of the problems in the light of Ripeness theory. This study argues that there will be no solution of the conflict until the states do not reach on the state of mutually hurting stalemate. As the Korean Conflict has not ripened yet therefore the North-South Korean conflict will likely to continue in future. The absence of uniform approach of all the actors of Korean conflict with lack of perception of a way out had been the basic cause of continuous breaking down of negotiations over the past years. The absence of a neutral third party for conflict resolution and repetition of failed policies in dealing the North Korean nuclear issue has been the subject of utter ignorance by the international community.

KEY-WORDS

Korean Peninsula, Inter-Korean Conflict, Inter-Continental Ballistic missiles (ICBM's), Peace-Making Bodies, North Korea, US-China, Denuclearization, Conflict Resolution, Third Party, Dead-lock.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the second half of the 20th century, Korean peninsula has been in the state of continuous hostility and cold war. The ideological clash along with the nuclear proliferation has raised the serious concerns towards the peace and stability of the region. The cold war politics of the great powers have put the regional states on the brink of war and after the seven decades this issue is still unresolved. The existing major economies of the region, had been involved in efforts of the establishing peace between the hostile states but so far no success has been achieved.

Korean peninsula has been the victim of foreign invasions since the beginning of 20th century. In 1910, Japan colonized Korea and ruled it for the next 35 years.¹ At the end of the world war II, after Japanese surrender, Soviet forces captured the northern part while USA captured the Southern part of the peninsula. On 15th August, 1945, USA president Truman proposed the division of peninsula at 38th parallel to USSR which it accepted.² Both great powers wanted to establish puppet governments in these states which would protect their geo-strategic interests in the region. In May 1948, Republic of Korea (ROK) came in to being with a democratic government in South and in contrary, on September 1948, North Korea proclaimed its communist identity with the name of Democratic Republic of Korea(DPRK).³ On 25th June 1950, North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel and attacked South Korea.⁴ The clash of ideologies and failure in establishing a unified government resulted in the three years of violent and fratricidal war (1950-53). UN

¹ “Korean History and Political Geography,” Centre for Global Education, assessed January 17, 2020, <https://asiasociety.org/education/korean-history-and-political-geography>.

² Andrea Matles Savada, William Shaw, ed. *South Korea: A Country Study* (Washington DC: US Government printing Office, 1992), pg# 50, assessed January 17, 2020, https://books.google.com.pk/books?id= adMWevoEq0C&pg=PA1&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false.

³ Ibid 50.

⁴ Ibid 50.

commanded the cease fire between the confronting states through an armistice and with a Demilitarized zone between South and North Korea.⁵

The Korean war ended but the influence of cold war politics remained in the region, where USA kept its military presence in South Korea and Japan, while communist China and USSR kept their influence in North. Due to the continuous interference of great powers in the political affairs, the states of the newly divided peninsula always consider each other as a hostile neighbor and a potential threat for their security. The Korean war ended but the US fear for the communist aggression in the region remained. As the result, US signed the various defense agreements with South Korea and Japan to maintain balance of power in the region. Later on South Korea and Japan being the closest ally of US in the cold war era also become the part of US Nuclear deterrence policy. US biggest concern was the alliance of North Korea with China and USSR.⁶

With rising security concerns from South.; North Korea considered nuclear program as a source of its survival. North Korea started working for establishment of nuclear power plant with the collaboration of USSR. In 1977, it established the Yongbyon Nuclear Reactor under IAEA safeguard. Afterwards, North Korean indigenous nuclear expansion of plutonium and uranium enrichment increased.⁷ After the dis-integration of Soviet Union in 1991 both North and South Korea signed a Joined Declaration on Denuclearization of Korean Peninsula but North Korea withdrew from it. As the result North Korea came under the hard sanctions of the western world. Mean-while US president Bill Clinton took initiative for the de-escalation of tensions in the region. Under the Agreed Frame Work, North Korea decided to halt its nuclear program in return for providence of

⁵ Adam Yang, "The long Road to the Korean War Armistice," *The Diplomat*, August 9, 2018, assessed January 17, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/the-long-road-to-the-korean-war-armistice/>.

⁶ Terence Roehrig, *From Deterrence to Engagement: The U.S Defense and Commitment to South Korea* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2007), 35, https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=CVPvALMOg0C&printsec=frontcover&dq=defense+policy+of+u+s+and+south+korea&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi3_OWhiLXfAhVcUUhUIHT57B00Q6AEIJTAA#v=onepage&q=defense%20policy%20of%20us%20and%20south%20korea&f=false.

⁷ "North Korean Profile-Timeline," *BBC News*, June 13, 2018, accessed January, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15278612>.

two light water reactors and relief in sanctions. US failed to fulfill this agreement which ended in 2002, and compelled North Korea to resume its nuclear proliferation.⁸

In 2003, North Korea announced its withdrawal from NPT by resuming its nuclear proliferation. In 2006, North Korea gained international attention by announcing its first nuclear test. After a day UNSC imposed sanctions on North Korea demanding immediate shutting down of the proliferation. Despite of all the isolation and sanctions, North Korea continued its nuclear program which resulted in escalation of tensions across the border. In the next couple of years, North Korea did various nuclear missile tests, each with more yield and capacity. In 2017, North Korea did biggest nuclear hydrogen bomb test, announcing the accumulation of an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), which can reach up to US main land. This test has raised serious security threats for the western world. South Korea with the increasing threats from the northern side also started to arm itself with the cooperation of US. It conducted many military exercises, live-fire drills. US also deployed its missile defense system THAAD to South Korea to contain the Northern Nuclear Threat. Such arms race and rising US military presence in the region has raised security concerns of the other regional states, i.e. China, and Russia.

Despite all the hostilities and skirmishes over the years, both states also took measures for de-escalation of tensions and stepped forward for cooperation. In 1972, for the first time in the history, Red Cross Societies from the both sides met in Pyongyang.⁹ Both parties discussed the reunion of the Korean families but talks ended up in failure. Later on the assassination attempts on South Korean leader roiled the opportunities of further development in relations and violent cross border skirmishes continued. After joining the United Nations in 1991, both nations signed non-aggression agreement for peace on border.¹⁰ In 2000 both states opened many doors of cooperation and joined hands for long term improvement in relations. A landmark Inter-Korean summit took place in

⁸ Leon Sigal, "DPRK Briefing Book: US Interests and Goals on the Korean Peninsula," assessed January 17, 2020, <https://nautilus.org/publications/books/dprkbb/uspolicy/dprk-briefing-book-u-s-interests-and-goals-on-the-korean-peninsula/>.

⁹ "Timeline: The Two Koreas," *Aljazeera*, Last Modified April 1, 2008, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2007/10/20086151706665476.html>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

which the leaders of both states signed a joint declaration to work towards re-unification.¹¹ Same year the reunion of Korean families held twice and South Korea also provided huge assistance and aid to North Korea due to famine and economic crisis. In the year 2002, clashes emerged on disputed sea border resulted in killings of South Koreans hence reduced the hopes for further development. Then 2003 onwards North Korean withdrawal from NPT and Nuclear proliferation terminated the Inter-Korean efforts of rapprochement.

The year of 2017 had gone through a critical phase of relations between the Korean neighbors and the super power USA. The testing of ICBM's had opened the war of words between them and led USA and North Korea on the brink of war. In the middle of the hostile relations, a new phase of historic Inter-Korean Rapprochement began when Kim Jong Un, in his new year speech of 2018 announced the acceptance of dialogues with South Korea. The South Korean counter-part welcomed this move and began the diplomatic drive for regional peace and prosperity. The improvement in North-South relations opened ways for improvement of relations with US. Trump-Kim historic meeting have raised hopes around the world for the resolution of Korean conflict.¹²

Asia Pacific is one of the very significant region in the international politics due to its challenging geopolitical landscape. The region is the home of 40% of world population with 60% of global GDP.¹³ The world leading economies i.e China, Japan and Korea exists here. Above all, six of the world largest militaries are present in the region i.e Russia, China, North Korea, Japan, South Korea and US.¹⁴ Moreover, multiple rivalries and territorial disputes have roiled the relations of many states. The biggest obstacle in the way of peacemaking in the region is North and South Korean rivalry. Their rivalry is still based on the cold war politics which has divided the region in to two ideological blocs i.e Communism and Capitalism. The military confrontation between North and South Korea

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Alicia Sanders Zakre, "Chronology of US-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy," *Arms Control Association* (2018), accessed December 13, 2018, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron>.

¹³ Brock R. Williams, "Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Countries: Comparative Trade and Economic Analysis," *Congressional Research Service*, June 10, 2013, p. 2.

¹⁴ David J. Berteau, Michael J. Green, "US Force Posture Strategy in the Asia Pacific Region: An Independent Assessment," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, August 2012, p. 13, http://csis.org/files/publication/120814_FINAL_PACOM_optimized.pdf.

have not ended since Korean War 1953. The border 38th Parallel is one of the largest militarized zone in the world. Any war breakout would result in to nuclear escalation, which would not only bring catastrophic consequences for the region but for the whole world. Despite of the efforts of regional and international actors for peace making in the region, no biggest development has been achieved yet. Therefore, it is very important to find out the reasons and factors of the diplomatic failures. In the wake of recent efforts for Inter-Korean rapprochement, it is very important to analyze the dynamics which has pushed North Korea to propose peace talks with its rivals. The identification of these factors will also highlight the interests and concerns of all involved actors and it would also be helpful in finding out the possible solutions of this problem.

Conflict between DPRK and ROK is a complex and multi-dimensional in nature. It has historical, political, ideological, military, regional and international dimensions. Korean conflict is of the international importance due to its seriousness and has the repercussions for regional peace and economic stability. Since the Korean war, the issue had emerged and flared up due to many factors, but at the same time, efforts have been made for de-escalation of the tensions between the main actors of the region as well. Many times the actors came forward for resolving the existing hostility but always ended-up in failure. In 2018, the Inter-Korean and US summits have been called as the greatest improvement in the relations. The core points of discussions were the Denuclearization of peninsula and relief from the international sanctions. There-fore this study would analyze the scope of Inter-Korean rapprochement by covering the political, military and regional dimensions.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the year 2018, a sudden change was seen in the political environment of the Korean Peninsula. In the beginning of the year, Kim Jong Un, the leader of DPRK, in his new year welcome address called for improving relations with South Korea. In February, North Korea sent its team to participate in Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games where both Korean Teams marched together as one with unified flags of Korean Peninsula. In April 2018, an Inter-Korean summit was conducted and for the very first time the North Korean leader entered in the territory of South Korea since the Korean war 1953. A joint

statement was issued in which both leaders shared the firm commitment to bring a swift end to the hostility and would work for national conciliation, peace and prosperity.¹⁵ On 18th September 2018, both leaders again met in North Korea and after the meeting of five hours a “Pyongyang Joint Declaration” was issued which accentuated the denuclearization of Korean Peninsula.¹⁶ The opening up of talks and frequent meetings of North-South premiers also resulted in the development of US-North-Korean relationship. On 12th June 2018, a historic meeting of US president Donald Trump and North Korean president Kim Jong-un held at Singapore. Later on February 2019, another on front meeting was held in Hanoi, Vietnam which couldn’t produce any fruitful results as Trump cut short the summit without reaching on any agreement. Then in June 2019 Donald Trump paid a surprised visit to Korea and crossed the DMZ from South towards North Korean Territory. Donald Trump become the first US president to enter in to North Korean territory. This positive gesture of US was welcomed in the North Korea and has raised hopes for the solution of the Korean rivalry. But with time no further development was made in the relationship and Inter-Korean Rapprochement lost its pace.

Despite all these historic reconciliations no significant breakthrough has been made because there is a serious clash of interest among the main actors of the region. Korean objective of unification appears to be in clash with the American strategic goals and interests in the region. The US nuclear umbrella to South Korea and its military presence in the region is perceived as a serious threat by North Korea. For denuclearization, it demanded a complete abolition of US nuclear threat and elimination of sanctions while US forcefully demands the end of nuclear proliferation of North Korea first. So, in the wake of 2018-2019 phase of rapprochement, this study aims to investigate the drivers of Inter-Korean Rapprochement and possibilities of achieving peace in Korean peninsula in the face of the contradicting interests and concerns of the regional and foreign actors.

¹⁵ “Korean Summit: Trump Hails ‘end of the Korean War’-as it happened,” Support the Guardian, assessed January 22, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2018/apr/27/north-and-south-korea-summit-leaders-prepare-for-historic-inter-korean-meeting-live?page=with:block-5ae2e794e4b05b151652ad27#block-5ae2e794e4b05b151652ad27>.

¹⁶ “The Pyongyang Summit: 6 Key Points,” The Globe Post News, accessed January 22,2020. <https://theglobepost.com/2018/09/19/key-points-pyongyang-summit/>.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The principle objectives of this study are: -

- To identify the key drivers of the North-South Korean Conflict.
- To find out the reasons of recent developments in relation to the Inter-Korean peace.
- To find out the challenges for the North-South Korean Rapprochement.
- To analyze the prospects for achieving peace in Korean peninsula.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the contours and drivers of North-South Korean conflict?
2. How did the historic developments in Inter-Korean relations unfold in 2018?
3. Why is North- South Korean rapprochement challenging?
4. What are the future prospects of Inter-Korean Peace?

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

David Kang in the research paper, “Inter-Korean Relations in the absence of US-ROK alliance”, highlights that how Inter-Korean relations would evolve if the US-ROK alliance gets dissolved. The author also explained the points of disagreements exists in US-ROK policies in dealing of North Korean Issue and how it would affect their relations. If US alliance with ROK gets dissolved, then it would result in to two possible situations. First It might improve the North-South relations or it would pull North Korea more apart from South due to absence of a threat. But still the absence of US will not change its ability to intervene in the Peninsula because its deep economic, cultural and political ties would continue.¹⁷ The author adopted the futuristic approach to predict that how the Inter-Korean relations would go in the presence or absence of US involvement in the region. The author’s points of view’s support my research as one of my objective of study is to find out the challenges in the way of sustaining of Inter-Korean relations. It is clear that US policy

¹⁷ David Kang, “US-ROK Alliance: Implications for an ‘Alternative Future,’” (Paper presented at KiFS/NBR Conference, Seoul, South Korea, September 10-11,2007).

towards North Korea have changed since its testing of ICBMS, therefore it is important to analyze that how it would affect the regional politics.

David Alton and Rob Chidley in the book *Building Bridges: Is there a hope for North Korea* describe a complete picture of North Korea, from the earliest history to the tragic division and right up to the present day. In doing so, they discuss various approaches to reach North Korea with a glimmer of hope. In the chapter “*Signs of Hope*” authors highlight the possibilities of achieving peace with North Korea except then denuclearization. For cooperation in the region, confidence building measures and trust building is very important. For example, the opening of Bureau of Cooperation in Pyongyang with the collaboration of France, the Human rights campaigns of Britain was able to pave way for further negotiations.¹⁸ These ideas of authors support this research as it aimed at finding out the possible solutions of the Korean Peninsula. According to the author, it’s true that cooperation in non-traditional security issues would build confidence among the states and will pave way for further development but such steps have been taken many times in the past and no fruitful outcome have been observed yet.

In research paper “How to stop North Korea’s nuclear ambition: Failed diplomacy and future options”, the author Jinwook Choi describes the nature of hostility in Korean peninsula. According to the author, North Korean nuclear crisis has been a mixture of hostilities where each actor has different threat perceptions, national interests and strategic calculations.¹⁹ The author adopted a comprehensive approach in identifying the core issues of the confronting parties, the un-intended errors of regional and international community and the nature of North Korean threat perception.

Kyoji Yanagisaw in research paper “The North Korea- United States Summit and Possibilities for New Security-Oriented Thinking” demonstrated that the opening up of

¹⁸ David Alton and Rob Chidley, *Building Bridges: Is There Hope for North Korea* (England: Lion Books, 2013),198,

<https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=h5PjBAAAQBAJ&pg=PA64&dq=peace+without+denuclearization&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiT8PeY4rrfAhWUSxUIHcCbAjoQ6AEIRzAG#v=onepage&q=peace%20without%20denuclearization&f=false>.

¹⁹ Jinwook Choi, “How to stop North Korea’s nuclear ambition: failed diplomacy and future options,” *Journal of contemporary East Asia Studies* 7 (2018): accessed January 25, 2020, doi : 10.1080/24761028.2018.1499426.

denuclearization talks of North Korea has proved that the deterrence as a security measure has become ineffective. If the North Korean issue can be resolved through negotiations and through giving incentives, then deterrence cannot be the only resort. Hence it has changed the perceptions and approaches to attaining assurances of security.²⁰ The author's views are related to my field of study. As the negotiations process has begun between the adversaries so there might be a chance of resolution of the issue.

Linda Maduz in the research paper, "Rapprochement on the Korean Peninsula" analyzes the current course of rapprochement of two Korean states. According to the author, the international community should grab the opportunity of opening of the talks and should reach on an enduring resolution of the issue. The author has covered the current convergence of the interests of the regional actors towards the rapprochement and defined all the events of meetings of the respective leaders of the states comprehensively. She has adopted a very systematic approach of defining the current phase of events and also mentioned the old obstacles that might be a hurdle in the way of the further development of the relations.²¹ The author's research is very valid for my study however; the author was unable to highlight the role of the other regional actors towards the rapprochement.

In the book *Peace Regime Building on Korean peninsula and Northeast Asian Security Cooperation* the editors Tae Hwan Kwak and Seung Ho Joo highlighted that an inter-Korean and international approach is important for the construction of a permanent peace regime on the Korean peninsula. Tae Hwan Kwak in the chapter "A creative formula for building a Korean peninsula peace regime" highlights the structural factors, contributing in slow peace process in the peninsula. These are mutual distrust, DMZ, conflicting approaches, North Korean concern over US presence in the region.²² The

²⁰ Kyoji Yanagisawa, "The North Korea-United States Summit and Possibilities for New Security-Oriented Thinking," *Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament* 2 (2019): accessed January 25, 2020, doi: 10.1080/25751654.2019.1592708.

²¹ Linda Maduz, "Rapprochement on the Korean Peninsula," *Centre for Security Studies* 240 (2019): accessed on January 27, 2010, doi: 10.3929/etz-b-0003291156.

²² Tae-Hwan Kwak, "A creative Formula for building a Korean Peninsula Peace Regime," In *Peace Building on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asian Security Cooperation*, ed. Tae-Hawn Kwak and Seung-ho joo (New York: Routledge, 2016) 207, <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=6bwoDAAAQBAJ&pg=PA207&dq=peace+is+possible+in+korean+peninsula+without+denuclearization&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi3kNuDwrrfAhXSXRUIHT8VAxEQ6AEIOjAE#v=onepage&q=peace%20is%20possible%20in%20korean%20peninsula%20without%20denuclearization&f=false>.

author's views support my research in identifying the core challenges. The author's points are valid as these factors had been the biggest cause of the slow peace process in peninsula. Without addressing these issues, the peacemaking is not possible.

Hans Schattle in his research paper "Toward an Incremental Pathway to Peace on Korean Peninsula" points out a series of important steps needed to be taken which would gradually lesser the tensions and eventually would lead towards establishing peace in Korean peninsula. The author highlights the role US can play in the peace process. According to him one of the biggest obstacle in the way of achieving peace in Korean peninsula is the US hard policy towards North Korea.²³ The immediate demand of complete denuclearization by US is not a proper way to convince North Korea for cooperation. US also needs to give some incentives, e.g by reducing its military influence in the region which is the biggest concern of North Korea. The author's viewpoint supports this research because one of the aim of the study is to highlight the obstacles posed in the way of peace process. The author argument regarding US hard policy towards North Korea is valid because in the wake of recent Korean rapprochement, American forcible demand of denuclearization for peace is not a diplomatic way to negotiate. The Kim-Trump talks held in 12th June were historic but not successful because no major outcome was produced.

Duyeon Kim in a research paper, "Negotiating Towards a Denuclearization-Peace Roadmap on Korean Peninsula" have identified the options of the possible solutions to Korean Issue. According to the author, there are multiple approaches and policy options available for North Korea and US for resolution of the Nuclear issue and each option would have different impacts on the region. The denuclearization can be either rapid and complete and it can be incomplete and phased.²⁴ The nature of the solution depends upon the willingness of the main actors. The author has adopted a very comprehensive approach in sorting out the roadmap for peace making of peninsula. The author's study relates with my

²³ Hans Schattle, "Toward an Incremental Path way to Peace on the Korean Peninsula," *Asia Pacific Issues* 134 (2017), accessed December 24,2018, https://www.eastwestcenter.org/system/tdf/private/ewc_api_n134_web_file.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=36615.

²⁴ Duyeon Kim, "Negotiating toward a Denuclearization-Peace Roadmap on the Korean Peninsula," *Centre of American Security* (2019): 10, accessed January 24, 2020. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.cnas.org/documents/CNAS-Report-Denuclearization-final-1.pdf?mtime=20190627094531>.

research because this research will highlight the possible solutions of the problem through conflict resolution models. The author's approach was very critical; however, the author has not mentioned the role of other regional states very clearly. Secondly she has also left to identify the role of international community for peacemaking in the region.

Tatsujiro Suzuki in the research articles, "On Recent Developments on the Korean Peninsula" has pointed the role of ROK and US leaders towards the rapprochement with North Korea. The author demonstrates that both South Korea and US have adopted different policies in dealing the issues of the peninsula.²⁵ The only reason of failure in talks is the ignorance from the past lessons. The author's view is a very strong point while studying the obstacles in the way of Peace Making in the peninsula however author have failed identify the drivers of rapprochement.

Hong, Yong Pyo in the research paper "Why have attempts to settle Inter-Korean conflict failed: Lessons for Peace Building in the Korean Peninsula" covers the history of agreements signed between North and South Korea from 1953-2000. The authors have also highlighted the basic reasons of the failed agreements, which include the biggest security concerns of North Korea. According to the author, North and South Korean should adopt military talks with each other because conflict over security cannot be concluded without lessening of the military confrontation.²⁶ The author's point is valid as no matter how much economic engagements are being carried out between the North and South, the biggest threat towards peace in the region is the security sector.

1.5 RESEARCH GAP

After the analysis of the literature, it has been observed that there are certain limitations in the previous research and the areas which have not been studied yet are as follows. Many of the sources cover the events of the Inter-Korean rapprochement but do not highlight the drivers of the rapprochement 2018, Therefore, this study would

²⁵ Tatsujiro Suzuki, "On recent developments on the Korean Peninsula," *Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament* 2 (2019): 376, accessed February 1, 2010, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/25751654.2019.1624310?scroll=top&needAccess=true>.

²⁶ Hong, Young-Pyo, "Why have Attempts to settle Inter-Korean Conflict Failed: Lessons for Peace Building in the Korean Peninsula Failed," *The Korean Journal of International Relations* (2008) : 135, accessed February 1, 2020, <file:///E:/IR/Failure%20of%20Inter%20Korean%20diplomacy.pdf>.

investigate all those common factors which made this improvement in relations possible. Most of the literature is covering the developments occurred in 2018 and 2019, when the relations were at the height of improvement but no more. The Year 2020 has ended the Inter-Korean talks. So this research would analyze the scope of achieving peace in the region by covering the current dynamics of the politics.

As Kim Jong Un's diplomatic moves were welcomed by the regional and international community, it is very important to identify the role they can play in the development of the relations. Therefore, this research would identify the interests of the key players involved in the rapprochement and would also highlight the role regional and international community can play towards the further developments.

1.6 CORE ARGUMENT

Various diplomatic efforts have been made for five decades to resolve the conflict between North and South Korea. This study argues that there will be no solution of the conflict until the states do not reach on the state of mutually hurting stalemate. As the Korean Conflict has not ripened yet therefore the North-South Korean conflict will likely to continue in future.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research will be conducted for an academic purpose. As North East Asia is one of the significant region in the world due to the presence of major economies along with an un-resting hostility of regional states over nuclear proliferation. However, any positive change in the political environment of the region is considered as a ray of hope for peace making. In the wake of Inter-Korean rapprochement, this study aims to identify its major dynamics along with the possible solutions of the problems. Therefore, this study will be descriptive and analytical in nature. This section presents the detail of sources of data collection and the methods of data analysis which would be used in the research: -

There are two types of scientific research i.e quantitative and qualitative research. In social science research, qualitative method is largely used to analyze the problems. To analyze and explain the political affairs of Korean peninsula qualitative research method

would be used. In such type of study, non-numeric data would be composed and analyzed to find out the dynamics of Inter-Korean relations.

This research would be analytical and descriptive in nature. The purpose of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon comprehensively. As the study would analyze the events of rapprochement in the region, hence it requires a complete detail of the meetings being held between the main actors i.e Kim Jong Un (DPRK), Moon Jae In (ROK) and Donald Trump (US). Therefore, this study would include a complete description of the recent events. This research would address the factors of Inter-Korean conflict which would also answer the first research question. In explanatory research, the primary purpose is to explain that why certain events occur in international system.²⁷In this study, the researcher would made an in-depth analysis of the Inter-Korean meetings to analyze the core interests of the states and would also find out the possibilities of peace making in the region and investigation of a particular phenomenon, case study or an issue to identify its major causes. This study would also explain the causes of instability in Korean peninsula by analyzing the challenges for Inter-Korean rapprochement.

1.7.1 SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

The source of data collection would be secondary and tertiary in nature. Secondary data is an already existing knowledge, which is being used by researcher for analysis. The secondary sources used for data collection of this research would be books, journal articles, government publications news and websites: -

Books are the most significant and authentic source of data collection. For this research books on history of inter-Korean relations, nuclear struggle of North Korea, foreign and security policies of North and South Korea would be reviewed for the content. In order to understand the topic, the books of the South Korean, American and western authors would be reviewed. Both hard and soft copy platforms would be utilized for data collection.

²⁷ W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (England: Pearson, 2013), 27.

Journal articles are shorter than books but are also the authentic source of data collection. Journal articles are written by the academic experts who carefully collect data and generate an expert opinion on it. For this research, the famous North East Asian journals and research papers would be analyzed to generate relevant data. The major journal sources of data collection for this study include Foreign Affairs, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies, Centre for Security Studies, Asia Pacific Issues, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy etc.

For analysis of the views of both Korean governments, official documents of each government will be used as a basic material. These documents or reports would be collected from the official websites of DPRK, ROK and USA. Similarly, the official statements being released by the premiers of North and South Korea through media outlets would also be analyzed to get a realistic view.

To keep the check on developments in the relations is mandatory for the research therefore, the authentic sources of news search would be used e.g BBC news, Vox News, Washington Post etc. The articles published on the authentic websites would also be reviewed for this research. The articles published in the online international news magazines e.g The Diplomat, Foreign policy, Texas National Security review, Voice of America.

1.7.2 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

In this research, content analysis method would be used for data analysis. In this type of analysis, the collected content is critically analyzed to build the argument and to address the research questions regarding the particular phenomena under study.

Following strategies of content analysis would be used: -

- 2 The collected data would be examined to ensure the authentication of the sources.
- 3 The final data would be analyzed to build the argument with respect to the research questions.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The year of improving Inter-Korean relations 2018-19 is called as the most significant in the history of Korean-Peninsula. The opening up of dialogues and signing of joint communiques have sparked a debate in international system regarding the resolution of the Korean Issue. But in order to understand the sustainability and development of the relations, it's very important to know about the dynamics of this Rapprochement. Therefore this research would provide a complete insight of the dynamics of the conflict, drivers of rapprochement 2018, the interests of the major active states and its impact on the regional security order. This study will also highlight those common factors which always halt the improvement in the relations.

This research would be greatly beneficent for the International relations academia, students and researchers. Another set of interest group that will benefit from the findings of the research will be the policy makers, think tanks of the North East Asia who are concerned about the peace of the region. This study will also provide a road map for resolution of this issue by evaluating the current phase of relationship.

1.9 DELIMITATION

As the issue on the Korean peninsula has always been large in scope. There has been foreign influence in the regional politics. One nation has been divided in to two parts due to cold war policies of great powers. The power struggle prevents them to remove their differences and collaborate for the peace. In 2018, both nations took historic measures to improve their ties with each other, but still their will to resolve issues have come across many challenges. Therefore-The main focus of this study would be on the dynamics of Inter-Korean rapprochement 2018. It will include the study of the interests of major actors of the region i.e. North Korea, South Korea and USA. The study will also highlight the challenges for the efforts towards peace making in the region and what are the possibilities for peace without denuclearization. This study will cover the time-period of 2018-2020.

1.10 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Chapter #1: Introduction

Chapter # 2: Conceptual Framework

Chapter# 3: Historical Background

Chapter# 4: Dynamics of Inter-Korean Rapprochement.

Chapter#5: Challenges

Chapter# 6: Prospects of Inter-Korean Rapprochement.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of the warfare and inter-state conflicts have been evolved since the cold war period²⁸. With the emergence of nuclear technology and other sophisticated weapons, war has become an expensive matter with unpredictable consequences for all involved actors. Therefore, the inter-state conflicts, specially connected with the nuclear proliferation are no longer considered as a state matter but an international issue.²⁹ In such cases, global powers and international peace making bodies always look for non-violent means of conflict resolution. Among many conflicts across the world, one of the prominent is the conflict in Korean Peninsula. The hostile relations of North and South Korea, Nuclear proliferation of North Korea and its oppressive regime has become a challenge for world powers and peacemaking organizations. Many efforts have been made by regional and international actors for improvement of North-South Korean relations but the conflict is beyond resolution. Many times, both states came forward for negotiations but always failed to reach on a binding agreement. In the year of 2018, the improvement in the North-South Korean relations were an historic one and rapprochement was expected but again it ended-up in failure. Therefore, the conceptual framework which defines the reason of failure of Inter-Korean rapprochement is the “Ripeness Theory” of Ira William Zartman.

Ira William Zartman is a social scientist who proposed a conflict resolution theory called as the “Ripeness Theory”. According to him, in conflict resolution the substance of proposal for solution is important but the key to successful resolution lies in the timing of the effort of resolution.³⁰ The parties only resolve their conflict when they are ready to do

²⁸ Paul C. Stern and Daneil Druckman, ed., *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War* (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 2000), 14.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ I. William Zartman, “Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond,” in *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, ed. Paul C. Stern and Daneil Druckman. (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 2000), 235.

so. Zartman called this time as a “Ripe Moment”. Ripe moment in conflict only comes when a deadlock appears and the unilateral means of achieving the interests get blocked.³¹ Ripeness theory has two basic components which identify the timing of negotiations. The first is the “Mutually Hurting Stalemate” which occurs when parties during conflict reach on a painful dead lock and when fighting further will increase the damage on both sides. At this moment none of the party can move further to get victory. The second element of ripeness is the “Perception of way out” in which parties share a perception of finding a way out of the conflict. Overall the conflict is ripe for resolution, when parties perceive themselves to be in a hurting stalemate and accept that there is a possibility of a negotiated solution of the conflict.³²

Korean peninsula has been in stalemate since the end of Korean war 1953 but no solution has been achieved because the conflict has not ripened yet. The protracted conflicts in any circumstances would only move towards resolution when both parties show willingness for it, as the result of a painful deadlock. So the realization of the pain by the conflicting parties is the preliminary stage of ripeness and is very decisive. In case of Korean peninsula, the stalemate is there but it is not a mutually hurting one, therefore the realization of the pain is feeble. Although the element of perception of pain is subjective in nature but it require an objective evidence of the loss.³³ States need an evidence of harm whether in military or civilian loss or in economic terms to realize the moment of hurting stalemate. For example, European nations realized the value of peace after the years of suffering and devastation. The world war II was the most brutal war in the history of Europe which resulted in approx 60 million deaths.³⁴ Most of the areas across the region were completely destroyed because states owned the sophisticated weapons. Other than collateral damage, all nations suffered huge economic loss as well. Therefore, by seeing the horrors of deadliest war, all nations adopted the term of “Never Again” in 1945 to avoid the future catastrophes. The objective evidence in terms of human loss, collateral damage

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ I. William Zartman and Alvaro de Soto, “Timing Mediation Initiatives,” *United States Institute of Peace* (2010): 6.

³⁴ Victor Davis Hanson, “A War like Many Others,” *National Review*, accessed 2 August, 2020, <https://www.nationalreview.com/magazine/2017/10/30/war-many-others/>.

and economic crisis created the mutual realization of pain among them. Hence it generated a perception of a way out which resulted in the establishment of peace keeping institutions with an aim to avoid future wars. The notions of collective security and economic interdependence led to the establishment of European Union which has become a prominent regional organization. Since then, no major war occurred on the European land and all states are collaborating with each other for the economic and social development.

In the case study of Europe, objective evidences were the symbol of pain which was realized by all the conflicting parties and it resulted in peace. In order to identify the level of ripeness in the Korean Peninsula, it is important to determine all the objective evidences that can caused pain to the conflicting parties. Since the of Korean war, the nature of North-South Korean conflict has been transformed. It began with an ideological clash than changed in to a political crisis and resulted in a deadliest war. The Korean war ended in a stalemate but the North-South Korean rivalry along the power struggle remained persistent. Therefore, one of the objective element of hurting stalemate in Korean peninsula can be the burden of arms struggle between the conflicting parties. According to Zartman, if cost of the conflict becomes huge and does not produce any gains for the parties, it might end up in inflicting pain and suffering.³⁵ Hence the absolute, relative or opportunity costs of the conflict can indicate the presence of hurting stalemate.³⁶

Arms struggle and military modernization in the Korean peninsula had been in practice since 1953, which has not only raised the cost of the conflict but has become a prominent subject of concern specially after the North Korean nuclear proliferation. On the other side, South Korea has got a continuous backup of US in the form of nuclear umbrella. US ensured the protection of South Korea firstly with the deployment of its nuclear missiles and then with the missile defense system. At the same time US troops are also stationed in the South for its military assistance but in return it is paying huge sum of money for the troops. Every year, South Korea increases its military budget, hence spending more on the military sector. The rising military competition between the states might be a burden on their economies. North Korea has highly centralized economic

³⁵ I. William Zartman and Alvaro de Soto, "Timing Mediation Initiatives," *United States Institute of Peace* (2010): 13.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

structure where all the economic sectors are under the state ownership and are based on the Soviet economic model.³⁷ Being isolated from the outside world, and with limited economic resources, North Korean collapse has been predicted many times. Contrary to that, South Korea build a capitalist economic structure with exclusive economic institutions which resulted in the fastest growth and progress of the state. Therefore, in order to find out the ripe moment among the states, it is important to analyze the economic conditions of both countries with respect to the cost of conflict.

The separation of North-South Korea in 1948 resulted in the division of the economic sectors of the state. North Korea become rich in mineral and energy resources while South Korea got the best agricultural lands. In post war period, North Korean quick recovery from war devastation was impressive and soon all the destroyed infrastructure was reconstructed by the state. North Korea established a centralized economy and all privatization from the country was abolished. A public distribution system was introduced in the state where the food and basic needs are distributed to the public by the government. At the same time much of the attention was paid on building the heavy industries in the state. For increase of industrial production, special teams were made to work long hours without any break.³⁸ With time, this strategy was expanded to every industry across the country and people were awarded on the basis of increase of the industrial output. Till 1970, North Korean economic growth was much better than the South Korea. North Korean journey of economic development was strongly backed by the communist allies i.e China and Russia but it was not too long when North Korean rising economic graph began to decline. Although the industrial modernization played huge part in the economic growth but it also raised the state debts, as large number of the modern machinery was imported from the other countries. With time, North Korea was surrounded by the pool of troubles including imbalanced economic growth, lack of food resources and above all is the loss of Northern communist support. Despite all this, North Korea never compromised on its military modernization and defense sector has always been the top most priority of its

³⁷ Micheal J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea: From late 19th Century to present* (Unites States of America: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers,2010), 130.

³⁸ *Ibid*,123.

regime. Having a strong military backup was indeed the monopoly of Kim II Sung for regime survival.

The biggest trouble North Korea faced since independence was the shortage of food resources. About 80% North Korean terrain is composed of mountains, and only 20% area is composed of plains which is also vulnerable to harsh weather, natural disasters and environmental problems.³⁹ After Korean war, North Korea adopted the collectivization agricultural policy and large farms were given to the farmers for crops production. Anything produced on the farm land is considered as the state's property which later is distributed in to masses under a strict rationing policy.⁴⁰ Till 1980's, the agriculture sector of North Korea showed improvement but it was not enough to fulfill all country's needs. The destalinization in Soviet Union and cultural revolution of China effected the amount of aid to the North Korea. It made Kim to adopt the self-reliance ideology called as Juche. The whole nation was trained to work in double shifts if necessary for the success of the state, but as the result, North Korean contact with the outside world got reduced and it became isolated. The fall of Soviet Union further ended the support to North Korea and the flooding's of 1995-1996 destroyed the ripped crops of the state. Finally, the death of Kim II Sung and failure of the new regime to cope up with the people's needs resulted in a huge and deadliest famine of the history of North Korea. The rough estimate of the people died with starvation was approximately 3 million but as there are no validated source of information therefore some researchers anticipated more numbers than the estimation because North Korea has never revealed the exact numbers of deaths.⁴¹ The international community responded to North Korean calamity and sent huge sum of aid for people's assistance. After wards North Korea kept on receiving the foreign aid on yearly basis specifically from China, South Korea and United Nations. With the foreign help, the famine rate of the country has reduced to great extent and the agriculture sector of the North has improved but the famine crisis of 1990's is called as the biggest catastrophe for the state after the Korean war. After, Nuclear proliferation in 21st Century, North Korean

³⁹ William A Dando, ed. *Food and Famine in 21st Century* (Santa Barbra: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 258.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 243.

⁴¹ "How did the North Korea Famine happened," *Wilson Center*, accessed, 25 Aug, 2020, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/how-did-the-north-korean-famine-happen>.

contact with the outside world has immensely reduced. The sanctions and diplomatic isolations has given a big blow to its economic sector. The famine and lack of food resources has always been the biggest problem for the state. Hence, North Korean economy is in crisis and the growth rate of the country is very less.

The Southern part of the Korean peninsula shows a complete different picture from the North. A state with strong democracy, rising economy, well developed infrastructure, better life style and has become the Asian Tiger. After the division of the peninsula, South Korea inherited only agricultural lands and very few industries as all the important industrial sites and mineral resources become the property of the North. In front of the North Korea rapid development, South Korea was in a very poor state. The only surviving source for the state was the US economic aid and assistance. Secondly the government under the leadership of Syngman Rhee failed to bring any political and economic reforms in the state. In order to maintain his power, Synman Rhee and his supporters become more authoritative then democratic. With the help of corruption, bribery, rigging and power he was able to secure his term four times consecutively. Many opposition parties were formed during this time period but no one was able to secure victory due large rigging of Syngman Rhee. When he was competing elections fourth time, his party had lost the public support but with the help of vote rigging he again won the elections. On the announcement of the results, protests broke out in the state. Synman Rhee tried to use force to control the national wide protests but the army general refused to fire on the people.⁴² Finally Sygnman Rhee resigned and exiled to Hawaii, while his wife and sons committed suicide at home.⁴³

Democratic elections were again conducted in South Korea and the democratic party formed after alliance of small parties came in to power. The state constitution was formed by the interim government and it was called as the revival of the democracy. The public had huge expectations from the government in terms of the economic reforms but soon the factions of democratic party got separated and begin conspiring against each other. Due to power struggle the newly elected democratic government could not pay much attention on the people's demands and soon the internal stability began to thaw. Public

⁴² Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*, 152.

⁴³ Ibid.

demonstrations began to rise on daily basis and student federations were formed to raise voice against the incompatible government. Meanwhile the leftists got an opportunity to raise their agendas. At first they demanded the withdrawal of foreign troops out of the country and then the radical group of the students decided to meet the North Korean representatives.⁴⁴ Such actions of the radicals have raised serious concerns for the military as well because growing internal stability would also bring further challenges from their next door rival neighbor. The government's failure to deal with the situation had further set a stage for the military coupe. Finally, on March 1961 all the government buildings were captured by the army and General Park Chung Lee declared martial law in the state.⁴⁵

The military regime of South Korea adopted the self-reliance policy with an aim to free the country from the foreign aid and debt. Park Chung Lee got a very fragile state and for its survival it was very necessary to bring serious reforms. On the other side the two close rivals i.e North Korea and Japan were on the path of rapid growth and industrialization. Like the North, Pak Chung lee was also determined to strengthen the military sector of the state and it was only possible through economic self-sufficiency. At first all the rich businessmen were detained who had close ties with the former corrupt politicians but later the government understood the importance of these people for the state's development. Thus the special agreements were signed with these businessmen with a promise to serve the state at all cost. Similarly, all the banks were nationalized to control the follow of money in the state. All the young bureaucrats, entrepreneurs and technocrats were assigned special positions in the economic planning board to utilize their skills and talents for the industrial boost in the state. Each five years of economic plan was proposed with the certain targets to achieve e.g to boost the light industries for export, for improvement of infrastructure and energy sectors etc. Each development plan was successful and achieved more than the set targets. At the same time the Park Chung Lee used the military relations with US for economic development for example at the time of Vietnam war, South Korea signed an agreement for providing the technical goods and services to the troops fighting in the South Vietnam. South Korea also got the concessions from the US in return of sending its troops in the war. With the growing economy, Park

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Chug Lee began to focus in the establishment of heavy steel and petrochemical industries in the state. South Korea also began to expand exports and its ship industry began to get foreign contracts for providing fine quality ships in a short period of time. Huge amount of foreign exchange began to flow in the state. Park Chung Lee was also a pioneer of the economic partnership with their former colonial power Japan. Japanese investment and aid to Korea bought many fruits to the state and after US it become the second biggest investor in Korea. During the oil crisis of 1973, South Korea faced economic set back but they were able to bear all the burden and continued their path towards growth and development. Hence the economic reforms of Pak Chung lee set South Korea on the new journey which changed its destiny from being a poor state to the world leading economy.

Today, there is a huge difference in the economic development of the Korean states. South Korea has become the fastest growing state in the world while the North has stagnated economy.⁴⁶ South Korea exports technology to the world while North being hampered by foreign sanctions only export clothes, coal and shell fishing.⁴⁷ South Korea has maintained free trade relations with many countries across the globe and North Korea is completely isolated and has trade relations with few countries. The South Korean GDP had crossed the figure of trillion dollars while according to CIA report 2015, North Korean GDP has been recorded as 40 billion dollars only.⁴⁸ Although both states have huge economic variation, but North Korea has surpassed South Korea in terms of military means. North Korea has always adopted offensive military policy towards South Korea. US presence in the region and its military ties with South Korea is the one of the reason of the North Korean military provocation. Secondly through military backup, Kim Sung II was able to secure its authoritative rule over the state. Therefore, military expenditure has always been the top priority of the state. Today North Korea lies at fourth position among the countries with largest armies in the world and it also ranks number one in the military spending as per its gross domestic product.⁴⁹ According to ripeness theory, when conflict

⁴⁶ "How South Korea Left the North Behind," *NyTimes*, accessed, August 25, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/02/06/world/asia/korea-history.html>

⁴⁷ *Ibid*.

⁴⁸ "The World Fact Book," Central Intelligence Agency, accessed, August 25, 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>.

⁴⁹ "N. Korea ranks No.1 in military spending as percentage of GDP," *Yonhap News Agency*, accessed, August 25, 2020, <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20200109007500325>.

costs prevent other preferable expenditures, it can also indicate pain which might lead towards the conflict resolution.⁵⁰ A country with fragile economy, food crisis and worst growth rate are the objective evidences of pain then why these crises could not convince North Korea for the way out of the conflict?

The most important element of hurting stalemate is the moment when the conflicting parties fail to gain their interests. This moment results in a deadlock under which the parties realize that they can no longer gain anything from this struggle, hence the conflict become ripened for resolution. Despite all the economic hurdles, North Korea never stepped back from its aims because in every critical situation, it managed to get all the aid and support it required to save the state. For example, after Korean war 1953, North Korea got huge assistance of its communist allies for reconstruction and development. When relations with these allies begin to thaw North Korea adopted the self-reliance policy and transformed the whole state in to it. The foremost aim of North Korea was the military modernization leading up to the Nuclear proliferation as well. Although this self-reliance policy strengthened the defense of the state but it was unfit for the economic sector. The economic crisis changed in to a worst famine in 1995 and the government publically announced about the food shortages and appealed the world for aid.⁵¹ The economy was in the recession and new regime was unable to deal with all the situation. This moment was indeed a painful one for the regime as millions of people were dying of hunger and malnutrition. This was a perfect opportunity for South Korea to invite North Korea for resolving their mutual issues but it was ignored and in return bulk of food aid was sent from China, US and South Korea. This aid continued till 2009.⁵² During this time period the relations of North Korea deteriorated with US and South Korea due to continuous proliferation and testing but as the six party talks were in process and North Korea continued to get fruits of aid. Meanwhile North Korean nuclear program began to advance and every new test showed improvements in the technology. In the wake of Covid 19

⁵⁰ I. William Zartman and Alvaro de Soto, "Timing Mediation Initiatives," *United States Institute of Peace* (2010): 17.

⁵¹ "The North Korean Famine and Food Shortage: The Problem, The politics and the Policy," *Harvard Law School*, accessed, 25 August, 2020, <https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/8944674/LeeD06.html>.

⁵² "Foreign Assistance to North Korea," *Every CRS Report*, accessed, 25 August, 2020, <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/R40095.html>.

pandemic, North Korean economy was called to be in recession and despite hostile relations with the South again it has received millions of won from the South Korea. Another major contributor to the North Korean economy and aid is China. Despite the international sanctions, China wants the stability in the next door neighbor. Therefore, it has been active in giving abundance of aid to North Korea. Hence the internal crisis has never been an issue for North Korea and it has never remained in a prolong hurting stalemate due to the timely aid of its friends and foes. It has been given all support to feed its people and in return it invested more and more in the nuclear program.

North Korean military first policy has been in practice since half a century and despite of the internal crisis, the government has always prioritized this sector. In fact, during the years of famine, North Korea continued its nuclear program and tested short and middle range missiles. The reason behind this posture was to overcome the vulnerable image of the state and to strengthen the regime's authority. Another dark side of the North Korean state is the huge gap and discrimination between the elite and poor class of the society. Since the independence, the foremost important aim of the regime was to secure power. The military was largely composed of former guerrilla fighters under the leadership of Kim Sung II. When the Korean communist worker party was formed, Kim sung II turned the whole state in to class based system i.e loyal, wavering and hostile.⁵³ The loyals are the elite class, include the members of communist party, bureaucrats and military personals who live the luxurious lives. The wavering is the middle class lying between the loyals and hostiles. The hostiles are the ones who disobeyed the regime and almost form 30% of the population.⁵⁴ Hostiles are the most deprived class of the society and led miserable lives. They are subjected to severe punishments and are discriminated to every possible way. The food distribution and other basic facilities, education, career opportunities and luxuries of life are determined by this classification of the society.⁵⁵ The loyal class which is also known as the core class, has been the back bone of the regime's survival. The Kim Sung II surrounded himself with the diehard supporter's in political party and military personals to secure his regime and this model has been in practice even

⁵³ Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*, 140.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

today. During the famine of 1990's there has been speculations about the mismanaging of food distribution in the public. More food aid was given to the elite class and military instead of the needy ones.⁵⁶ Jorden Weissmann stated this situation as, "Farmers began to stole their own crops, elite stole the aid and improvised Koreans starved".⁵⁷ As the result of the giving more privileges to the elite, the farmers began to hide a certain portion of their crops to save their families from starvation. Finally, Kim had to send army to stop hoarding, hence in any situation, army is the last resort of the regime.

The Kim regime facilitates the military and in return military ensures the regimes control over the state. For this purpose, the military has formed an extensive control mechanism across the state and each area is under the strict supervision of police and army. Special informants are appointed in every city, province and village, who keep a vigilant eye on people behavior and their daily activities. Other than this, North Korea has also initiated neighborhood watch program, under which the neighbors keep an eye on each other and any suspicious activity is immediately informed to the authorities.⁵⁸ This policy has been in practice in army as well where each wing is inspecting the other. It has not only raised competition among them but has also made their firm control over their assigned jobs by the government. People who criticize the regime has been considered as a crime and people get serious punishments including secret execution by the authorities. No one is allowed to change the city, make foreign calls or watch any foreign news etc. People go with the self-criticism session every week which is judged by the authorities to find out their views about the state.⁵⁹ People follow and believe what government wants them to believe. Not only the people but the politicians of the communist worker's party and bureaucrats also go through the surveillance of military and any suspect of anti-state agendas or anti-regime views is taken over by the authorities and are subjected to further trails. This situation clearly justifies the nonchalant response of North Korean regime towards the famine of 1995. Ripeness theory highlights the significance of the role of

⁵⁶ Ibid, 221.

⁵⁷ "How Kim Jong II Starved the North Korea," *The Atlantic*, accessed, 30 August, 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/12/how-kim-jong-il-starved-north-korea/250244/>.

⁵⁸ Ken.E Gause, *Coercion, Control, Surveillance and Punishment: An examination of the North Korean Police State* (Washington: Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, 2012) 24.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

leadership in perceiving the mutually hurting stalemate. One of the biggest obstacle in the way of ripeness is the act of holding out of the regime against the pain and external pressure. The Kim regime is only concerned about its authority over the state and military is the only possible means to attain this goal. Therefore, any kind of internal crisis will not bring the moment of hurting stalemate for the North Korea until it does not threaten the state's authority. To counter the foreign threats, North Korean regime began its nuclear program and despite all the international sanctions and diplomatic isolations, it managed to get them. So the North Korean regime has been resisting all the external pressures throughout their journey of Nuclear proliferation, and refused to give up at any cost.

On the other side, South Korea is an Asian power house with the trillion-dollar economy and today it ranks in the top thirty richest countries in the world.⁶⁰ South Korean development from a poor state to the leading economy with well stable institutions and strong political system has set an example in the world. With all these success stories, the only problem and a mild threat South Korea face in the region is the rivalry of the North Korea and its Nuclear Program. South Korea emerged on the map of the world as a very fragile state and its survival without assistance could not be possible. Therefore, this assistance and immense support was given by the great power USA and soon South Korea become its important strategic ally. For collective defense against the Northern threat, South Korea signed a mutual defense agreement with US in 1953.⁶¹ Under this treaty, US stationed a large number of ground troops in South Korea and both countries are cooperating in cost bearing of these military basis. Alongside, South Korea has also contributed through its troops in US led wars in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.⁶² Over the years, South Korea has been increasing its defense spending amid to the North Korea nuclear provocation. Presently, South Korea is largest weapon buyer of US and spend billions of dollars for military development per annum. Although South Korea has got the nuclear umbrella of US but it has been working to get missile defense systems of its owns

⁶⁰ Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*, 266.

⁶¹ "Factbox: US and South Korea's Security arrangement, cost of troops," *Reuters*, November 13, 2019, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-usa-military-factbox-idUSKBN1XN09I>.

⁶² "The US-South Korea Alliance factor and the China Factor," *The Diplomat*, August 26, 2020, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/08/the-us-south-korea-alliance-and-the-china-factor/>.

to deter the short range missiles threat of the North. Due to the excessive dependence on US for the defense of the country, South Korea often face criticism about its sovereignty. Therefore, South Korea is looking forward to obtain the operational control from US. Under the Trump administration, sharp differences have been observed on the South Korea contribution towards the stationed US troops in Korea. The talks held every five years and in 2019, there was 8% increase in South Korean annual contribution but in 2020, Trump administration has demanded to increase the contribution to five times more than before and all the offers of the South Korea has been rejected by the US.⁶³

Presently South Korea is paying \$927 million to US for its troops but Trump administration is asking to increase the figure to \$5 billion.⁶⁴ With this resistance from US, South Korea has also increased its indigenous military spending putting a huge sum of burden on its economy. But, like North South Korean military sector has also been a state's priority. With the GDP of trillions of dollars, the cost of the conflict is not as huge as for the North is. Therefore, the military sector is not a burden for the state, therefore South Korea can be considered as not in a hurting stalemate. The only this painful for the state can be the North Korea short range missiles and Kim's threats to turn the Seoul in to sea of fire but as long as South Korea has got US military backup and its defense power, South Korea can never develop the perception of hurting stalemate. Firstly, there is no objective evidence of the loss for South Korea because US presence in the region is enough to deter all the North Korean threats. US presence in the region is directed towards China's rising dominance over the region and for this purpose it will continue to use the North Korean card to fulfill its interests. Similarly, the South Korean rapprochement of 2018 to the North has been called as an election stunt of the Moon administration in order to gain public support in an upcoming election. Although the moon administration won the elections of 2020 but no improvement has been observed in the relations afterwards. Therefore, the failure of 2018 inter-Korean rapprochement was not a right time for negotiations because

⁶³ "America's Alliance System will face one of its biggest tests yet," *The Atlantic*, May 29,2019, October 2,2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/05/us-and-south-korea-gear-burden-sharing-talks/589999/>.

⁶⁴ "Factbox: US and South Korea's Security Arrangement: Cost of troops," *Reuters*, Novemner 13,2019, October 4,2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-usa-military-factbox-idUSKBN1XN09I>.

both conflicting parties are not in a hurting stalemate and are not ready to give up their position in the conflict.

Another problem exist in South Korea is the split of the liberal and conservative political parties in dealing with North Korea. The liberal and progressive parties believe that North Korean issue can be resolved through diplomatic means. Every liberal and progressive governments of South Korea supported inter-Korean Dialogues and emphasized that through negotiations, the peace in the region can be achieved. For the first time the democratic party of Korea, led by Kim Dae Jung came in to power in 1997, after the decades of conservative rule.⁶⁵ He introduced the Sunshine Policy, which included peaceful coexistence, peaceful Inter-Korean exchanges and peaceful unification of Korean peninsula.⁶⁶ He was awarded with the Nobel peace prize in 2000 for his Sun Shine policy which is aimed for reconciliation with North Korea.⁶⁷ Similarly his successor, Roh Moo Hyun expanded the scope of Sun shine policy and believed that by increasing economic ties between both states, the issue of North Korean Nuclear program can be solved.⁶⁸ On the other hand, the conservative parties adopted hardline approach towards North Korea and emphasize in limiting the inter-Korean engagement. The conservatives believe that by strengthening alliance with US and through international pressure, North Korean threat can be deterred. After the Roh Moo Hyun, conservative party ruled South Korea for two consecutive terms and during this time period, no progress in inter-Korean relationship has been made and North Korea continues their nuclear tests.

In 2017, after the impeachment of conservative president Park Guen Hye, the liberal party came in to power under the leadership of Moon Jae In. Moon Jae in followed the policies of his predecessors and again opened ways for dialogue with the North. In 2018, an historic breakthrough in the relationship was observed and many direct meetings were held between the leaders of both states. The winning of 2020 elections by Moon Jae

⁶⁵ “Kim Dae-Jung: President of South Korea,” *Britannica*, January 4,2020, accessed March 31,2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kim-Jong-II>.

⁶⁶ Geetha Govindasamy, “ Kim Dae Jung and the Sun Shine Policy: An Appealing Policy Options for Inter-Korean Relations,” *Sarjana* 27 (2012): 2.

⁶⁷ “Kim Dae Jung: Facts,” *The Nobal Peace Prize*, 2000, Accessed March 31,2020, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2000/dae-jung/facts/>.

⁶⁸ Hong Nack Kim, “ South-North Korean Relations Under the Roh Moo-Hyun Government,” *International Journal of Korean Studies* 10 (2006): 37.

In has raised hopes for the resolution of the conflict but the deadlock of US-North Korea has roiled the improvement of North-South Korean relations as well. At the same time, the prevailing situation of Covid-19 and the monsoon floods in South Korea has further affected the government efforts. South Korea has been providing aid to the North as a good will gesture but no improvement has been observed in the inter-Korean relations in 2020. With the prevailing party split, if the liberal party gets successful in reaching on to any agreement with the North Korea, its credibility will be lost when any of conservative leader will come in to power in South Korea.

All the above mentioned elements of the ripeness theory explain the reasons of an unresolved Korean conflict. First, there is no objective evidence of the pain which results in ripeness. Secondly, the involvement of many outside actors have made it difficult to identify the time of ripeness. Third, there is no perception of a way out of the conflict because parties are not in a mutually hurting stalemate and last there is an absence of a neutral third party to identify the moment of ripeness for the parties. Therefore, every effort of conflict resolution in Korean peninsula has ended up in failure. The recent example is the historic Inter-Korean rapprochement of 2018 and its failure. The year of 2017 has been the most critical time of the crisis when North Korea tested the Inter Continental Ballistic Missile and declared the US mainland as its target. This step initiated the war of words between Trump and Kim had put the security environment of the North East Asia on brink of nuclear war. Surprisingly, in the new year speech of 2018, Kim showed willingness for the Inter-Korean talks. The offer was accepted by the South and invited them to participate in the upcoming Olympics games in the South. In response North-Korea participated in the winter Olympics, held in Pyeongchang and Kim also sent a North Korean delegation to South under the leadership of his sister, Kim Yo Jong. After series of talks finally on April 27th, the leaders of both states Moon Jae In from South and Kim Jong Un from North Korea met at Panmunjom and issued a declaration called as Panmunjom Declaration. The declaration included the points of peaceful unification of peninsula, reducing tensions across DMZ and denuclearization of the peninsula etc. With the improving Inter-Korean relations, South Korean president wanted to change the North-US hardline policy through diplomacy. Therefore, Moon sent an envoy to America with an invitation letter of Kim Jong Un, inviting Trump for meaningful negotiations.

Kim Jong Un's letter to Trump had opened the debate in the American politics about whether to accept the invitation or not. A clear split was observed in the congress between the hardliners and soft liners. Finally, the Trump administration accepted the Kim's invitation, raising hopes for peace in Korean Peninsula. Despite the acceptance of American administration there has been many up's and down till the commencement of the final meeting. Many times both states stepped back from the summit but soon they realized no other solution then talks. Finally the summit was held on 12th June 2018 at Singapore.⁶⁹ Both leaders met for 45 minutes and a joint communique was signed in which both states signed for further cooperation. President Trump committed to provide security guarantees to North Korea and in return Kim signed a commitment for complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The summit continued the US-North Korean official meetings for further development of the relations. US also postponed the military exercises with South Korea as a good will gesture and in return North Korea out all the nuclear activities on hold. Following the US-North Korean summit, the critical phase of the crisis began to thaw. The second meeting between the both leaders was held in February 2019 at Vietnam called as Hanoi summit but it failed to produce any results.⁷⁰ Both sides blamed each other for unsuccessful talks. US stated that North Korean demand of complete removal of sanctions in return of denuclearization could not be approved. In return North Korea stated that they have demanded to uplift substantial sanctions.

Despite the failed summit, diplomatic efforts continued at the back channel. South Korea has remained active in negotiating with the North Korea. Trump and Kim continued to exchange letters and in June 2019, Trump paid a surprise visit to North Korea at DMZ.⁷¹ Hence he become the first sitting president of America to step in to the North Korean mainland. The rising hopes for peacemaking in the region began to thaw, when in response to the preparations of US-South Korea military exercises, North Korea reinitiated the testing of short range missiles. With time, North Korea continued the testing of missiles

⁶⁹ "June 12 in Singapore: Time and Place for Trump-Kim Summit set," *Ankit Panda: The Diplomat*, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/june-12-in-singapore-time-and-place-of-trump-kim-summit-set/>.

⁷⁰ "Trump: Kim Summit 2.0: What you need to know," *Aljazeera*, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/2/26/trump-kim-summit-2-0-what-you-need-to-know>.

⁷¹ "US-North Kores: Trump and Kim hold historic meeting at DMZ," *BBC News*, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48817898>.

and rocket launches and declared that decision of the resumption of the ICBM's testing depends on the US attitude.⁷² North Korea gave US the timeframe of December 2019 to continue the talks and in case of failure, all the previous commitments of denuclearization will become void. Meanwhile the US step of adding North Korea in the list of the terrorism sponsoring countries had further deteriorated the relations. And finally on 2020 new year's speech, Kim announced that North Korea is no longer bounded to all the previous commitments and will pursue a new strategic weapon.⁷³ Since then North Korea has tested many missiles and the conflict has reached up to the same pre-rapprochement time period. The border clashes have now become a daily bulletin. With growing tensions, North Korea has blown-up the liaison office at border which was built for the Inter-Korean diplomatic activities and therefore all the efforts of rapprochement ended up in failure.

The Inter-Korean and US-North Korean efforts for rapprochement in 2018 could not become a success story because the conflict has not ripened yet. First of all, the timing for the negotiations was not suitable as none of the party was under the hurting stalemate and no one came forward with any perception of a way out of the conflict except then ambiguous ideas and void agendas. All the actors of the conflict played the interest game, which was based on their political gains and interests. Kim's successful testing of ICBM's in 2017 and a surprising call for denuclearization in 2018 was pretty devious. The aim was to bargain a deal with a stronger position on the negotiating table and North Korea has been planning for this moment for quite long. North Korean Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs stated many times that North Korea have no interest in the nuclear talks with US until it had achieved the ability of complete nuclear deterrence.⁷⁴ After the ICBM's test, Kim got an opportunity to sit on negotiating table with US as an equal but the intentions of North Korea remained unclear. Kim Jong Un's meeting with the Donald Trump bought him on the spot light of world politics as the summit got an international broadcasting and all eyes were on the outcome. During all the events of Inter-Korean talks or with US, Kim played the same card that his predecessors used many times before i.e to get sanctions relief in

⁷² "North Korea Threatens to resume Nuclear Testing," *BBC News*, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50962768>.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Van Jackson, *On the Brink, Trump, Kim and the Threat of Nuclear War* (United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2019), 189.

return of denuclearization. The declarations signed between North-South Korea and US-North Korea included the point of denuclearization as first priority but the sanctions relief was nowhere mentioned. All parties gave strong verbal stance about the denuclearization but no one was clear about how to achieve this? With no perception of the way out of the conflict, soon the momentum of these diplomatic activities began to thaws and finally ended in a political deadlock.

Ira William Zartman said that North Korea has always manipulated the crisis to avoid and rationalize its own stalemates and throw the monkey on another's party's back.⁷⁵ This happens to be true because whenever North Korea has shown flexibility for the negotiations or improvement in relations, it was either a propaganda to divert world's attention away from its secret missions or for gaining support through exaggeration of the internal crisis. The prominent examples are the food crisis of 1995 and the nuclear proliferation of North Korea during Six party talks. There has been many skeptics that North Korea stockpiles the foreign food supplies to spend more on the nuclear tests⁷⁶. Therefore, North Korean call for resolution of conflict in 2018 was another attempt to get economic assistance from South and to get relief on sanctions which got failed. On the other side, Donald Trump's acceptance of the Kim's proposal was not entirely based on sincere aspirations for the resolution of conflict. In one year a dramatic turn over has been seen in the Trump statements for Kim Jong Un from being "a little rocket man who he will bestow with fire and fury" to "His best Friend". Trump's acceptance to the Kim's invitation was unexpected but there were some hidden agendas too. Van Jackson in his book "On the Brink: Trump, Kim and the threat of nuclear war" explains the features of Trump media politics. Since his coming in to power, Donald Trump has always been in the news headlines due to number of sensational statements and tweets.⁷⁷ The year of 2018 was quite controversial as Trump was under two big scandals which could bring down his presidency.⁷⁸ First was about the Russian interference in the 2016 general elections and

⁷⁵ Van Jackson, *On the Brink, Trump, Kim and the Threat of Nuclear War* (United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2019), 178.

⁷⁶ "How Kim Jong Il Starved the North Korea," *The Atlantic*, accessed, 30 August, 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/12/how-kim-jong-il-starved-north-korea/250244/>.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 178.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

second was the allegations of Stormy Denials for relationship with Trump.⁷⁹ The only possible way for Trump was to change the subject of media through a one-to-one meeting with the Kim Jong Un. Therefore, Trump made dramatic series of provocative tweets and finally surprised the world with the summit with North Korea. Both leaders met with no plan of solution of the problem and no one has any perception of the way out of the conflict. Therefore, despite all further meetings and summits, no improvement has been made in the relations which prove that the conflict has not ripened yet. The leaders met with each other not because they were in pain or stalemate but for the personal interests and gains.

The Ripeness theory has been tested by many IR scholars and with time many new elements has modified the classic version of the theory. All these practitioners proposed different models with respect to the theory in order to find out the reasons of unsuccessful conflict resolutions. O' Kane examined the ripeness theory at different level of analysis and highlighted its effectiveness in the multilateral setting. According to him, one of the biggest impediment in ripeness in the involvement of many actors in one conflict because, it becomes really hard to identify that which party needs to realize the hurting stalemate first. For example, in War of Terror in Afghanistan, there are Talibans on one side and United States, NATO Forces and the Afghan government are on the other.⁸⁰ In this situation it is very difficult to reach on a bilateral setting of negotiation as all these sides have opposite policies with regard to the resolution. In such situations, it gets difficult to identify that which party needs to feel the hurting stalemate first before ripeness.⁸¹ Korean peninsula has also been the victim of the foreign influences and many actors are involved in the conflict i.e US, China, North Korea, South Korea and Japan. The involvement of many actors has not only intensified the conflict but has also complicated the peace making process in the region.

All the above mentioned actors of Korean conflict are pursuing their interests in terms of force and power. US has the geo-strategic interests in the region and it has established a strong military influence through its alliance with South Korea and Japan.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Dietrich Gunther, "The Combined Ripeness Model: Becoming a Ripeness Generalist" (Master diss., Saint Paul University, 2011).

⁸¹ Ibid.

This act of America was taken as a threat by North Korea, so they build the Nuclear weapons for survival. To deter the North Korean nuclear proliferation US had extended the nuclear umbrella to South Korea and Japan. Finally, China wants to have a peaceful neighborhood as a buffer zone between itself and the US forces stationed in South Korea. For this case, China has always been the backbone of the North Korea, providing it with huge sum of economic support. Above all, the US-China geo-strategic competition along with the trade war has further reduced the chances for cooperation in the regional security issues.⁸² Today, the region is the highly militarized zone in the world. Every state is involved in an intensified arms struggle against each other. Due to imminent nuclear threat of the North, South Korea is more interested in peacemaking in the region but due to clashing interests of all actors, the conflict is beyond resolution. In this situation, it is very difficult to identify the element of hurting stalemate in the parties. Being the hegemon, it is unlikely that US would feel stalemate as long as its influence remains in the region. North Korea will never step back as far as US threat remain persistent. South Korea wants peace but due to unsuccessful peacemaking attempts and vague promises of North Korea, it is inclined to build conventional arms for defense. Along these struggles the elements of hurting stalemate only exist among the main actors of conflict i.e North Korea is suffering severe economic crisis, food shortages and unbearable cost of the conflict. South Korea is under the imminent North Korean threat of turning Seoul in to sea of fire. Due to involvement of foreign actors, both states are unable to identify the hurting stalemate and therefore the development of the perception of way out of the conflict seems impossible in the Korean peninsula.

One of the proponent of the ripeness theory suggests that the ripe moment can be cultivated or highlighted by the outside parties or mediators through various means.⁸³ These measures consist of political, economic, military punishments and rewards.⁸⁴ In case of Korean Conflict, the role of the third parties is vague and imprecise. In order to prevent

⁸² “The Case for Multilateralism: The Korean Peninsula in a Regional Context,” *Institute for Security and Development Policy*, accessed, 2 September, 2020, <https://isdpr.eu/publication/case-multilateralism-korean-peninsula-regional-context/>.

⁸³ I. William Zartman, “Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond,” in *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, ed. Paul C. Stern and Daneil Druckman. (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 2000), 235.

⁸⁴ Marieke Kleiboer, “Ripeness of Conflict: A Fruit Notion,” *Journal of Peace Research* 31(1994):111.

North Korean Nuclear Proliferation, the international community responded with hard stance. After the first nuclear test of North Korea in 2006, UNSC passed resolution to impose sanctions on DPRK and these sanctions keep on increasing with every new test.⁸⁵ At the same time US along with South Korea, Japan and European nations also imposed heavy sanctions on North Korea targeting the economic activities, foreign assists and diplomatic isolations. But these sanctions have been ineffective and failed to stop North Korea from Nuclear Proliferation. The biggest reason of this failure is that all the challenges associated with the sanctions were not addressed by any third party. For example, despite the UNSC sanctions, some nations i.e China and Russia continued their assistance and backing to North Korea due to their own national interests. Similarly, As the result, North Korea kept on resisting the international pressure and finally was able to get the weapons. Hence all the possibilities for cultivation of ripeness have failed.

Another extended notion of the ripeness theory which highlights the important role of mediator in the conflict is the readiness theory.⁸⁶ Readiness theory was given by Dean G. Pruitt and it more focuses on the role of single party rather than mutual role of the conflicting parties.⁸⁷ He categorized the components of ripeness theory separately to find out the solution of the conflict.⁸⁸ Readiness is called as the extent to which an individual party is interested in negotiations. According to him, meaningful negotiations will only begin if there is some degree of readiness present on the both sides of the conflict.⁸⁹ Readiness theory has two important components parallel to ripeness theory. One is motivation to end the conflict and the other is optimism. If parties perceive that there is no wining in the conflict, then it might motivate them for solution. For motivation, the role of third party is very important. The stronger mediator through pressure or motivation can change the perception of conflicting party. The optimism is the belief that other part is also motivated to resolve the conflict and this role can also be fulfilled by the third party or

⁸⁵ “UN Security Council Resolutions on North Korea,” *Arms Control Centre*, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/UN-Security-Council-Resolutions-on-North-Korea>.

⁸⁶ Aytakin Cantekin, “Ripeness and Readiness Theories in International Conflict Resolution,” *Journal of Mediation and Applied conflict analysis* 3 (2016):85.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Dean G. Pruitt, “Whither Ripeness Theory,” *Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution Working Paper* 25 (2005):7.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*8.

mediator. As in case of Korean Conflict, the hard measures have failed to create a hurting stalemate, so the persuasion of the third party can play an important part. The involvement of external actors in to the conflict should be addressed strictly in this process as many times North and South Korea have committed for resolving their mutual issues, but the external influences have always affected their efforts. In 2018, North-South Korean opening of negotiations have raised hopes for the solution of the conflict but the failure of US-North Korean talks has halted all the ways of improving ties for South Korea as well. Therefore, to resolve the conflict, only a powerful neutral mediator can play an affective part by bringing parties on negotiation table.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The 20th century is considered as the most challenging phase in the modern history because during this time period the world order has gone through many changes. First the two world wars made countless changes in the world map, secondly the rise of a bipolar world and finally the creation of unipolar world order. At the same time many inter and intra-state conflicts set their stage and become a challenge for the peace making institutions. The end of Japanese imperialism in the Far East had raised hopes for freedom and stability in the region but soon it become the battle ground of the Cold war politics of great powers. Their influence and continuous meddling in the region had propagated the rivalry in one nation and divided it on ideological basis. As the result, two new states emerged from Korean peninsula. The Northern part joined the communist block and was named as Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) while Southern part adopted the capitalist block and become Republic of Korea (ROK). Both states fought three of deadliest war (1950-1953) and UN commanded the cease fire between the confronting states through an armistice but it didn't end the war.⁹⁰ Since then, the security environment in the Korean Peninsula has been in the state of turmoil and instability. Both states are in the power struggle against each other. Therefore, this chapter will focus on history of the conflict in Korean peninsula and would highlight the nature and stages of this conflict in both in 20th and 21st century.

3.1 KOREAN PENINSULA BEFORE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Korean peninsula has always been the center of attention of world imperialists and the kingdoms of North east Asia. The history of the rise of peninsula goes back to the 4th century, when many small tribes were inhabited in the region. In order to protect themselves from the foreign invasions these small tribes made alliances with each other

⁹⁰ Adam Yang, "The long Road to the Korean War Armistice," *The Diplomat*, August 9, 2018, assessed January 17, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/the-long-road-to-the-korean-war-armistice/>.

which resulted in the formation of three large kingdoms in the peninsula named as Koguryo, Paekche and Silla.⁹¹ All three kingdoms were rivals of each other, got in to many battles to achieve supremacy and finally the Silla dynasty occupied the other kingdoms and unified the Korean peninsula.⁹² By the 8th century, Silla started to breakdown and was taken over by a war lord Wang Geon and he formed the Goryeo dynasty.⁹³ In 12th century Goryeo dynasty reached at decline and Joseon dynasty came in to being and this was the last ruling dynasty of Korean peninsula, before Japanese annexation.

Throughout the history, all Korean dynasties suffered the influence of neighboring imperialist powers. At first, Chinese Tang dynasty joined hands with Silla for unification of Korean Peninsula and later on, all the successive Korean monarchs kept close relations with China⁹⁴. With time, Chinese culture and literature have parted their ways to Korea and imprinted on them. Koreans started to follow the Confucianism and Chinese script was used in Korea. At the same time, Korea remained depended on China for its defense. During 14th century, Japan approached Korea as well and trade relations began between both kingdoms. By 16th century, their relations got bitter when Joseon King refused to expand trade on the request of Japanese Emperor. This separation finally resulted in seven years of war and Korea was able to survive this blow with the help of China. Afterwards Korea become a hermit kingdom, and remained in isolation till 19th century.⁹⁵

After the wake of industrial revolution in the west, foreign trade began to expand across the world. In North East Asia, the dominant states i.e China, Japan and Korea kept themselves in isolation. In 1867, America approached Japan to break itself from traditional isolation which was refused by the Japanese ruler Tokugwa shoguns.⁹⁶ The elites of the states were not in favor of this decision and revolted against the king's decision. The revolt

⁹¹ "Korean History and Political Geography," *Centre for Global Education*, accessed 20 April, 2020, <https://asiasociety.org/education/korean-history-and-political-geography>.

⁹² Roger Tennant, *A History of Korea* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 43.

⁹³ Tim Lambert, "A Brief History of Korea," *Local Histories*, April 20, 2020, <http://www.localhistories.org/korea.html>. s

⁹⁴ William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 37.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Kallie Szczepanski, "What Was the Meiji Restoration?," *ThoughtCo*. July 7, 2019, accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-was-the-meiji-restoration-195562>.

ended with the fall of Tokugawa shoguns rule and was replaced by Meiji as emperor.⁹⁷ Meiji the emperor bought many reforms in Japan with respect to trade and military developments. As the result, Japan changed from an isolationist state to a regional imperial power. On the other side, China refused to open its gates for foreign trade and modern developments and hence it left behind from Japan. After modernization, Japan sought to expand its influence across the region and the nearest target was Korea. Japan aimed for establishment of an independent Korea, which would be completely free from Chinese influence. Meanwhile many opposition factions formed in Korea, who were inspired with Japanese modernization and wanted these renovations in Korea as well.⁹⁸ As the result, Japan expanded its trade with Korea and signed many treaties to increase its influence on the Peninsula. With time the bitterness in Sino-Japanese relations over Korea increased and changed in to a battle ground. The China's regional power status weakened after the defeat of Qing dynasty in the Opium wars against British and French.⁹⁹ The Chinese defeat was a perfect opportunity for Japan to strengthen its hold in Korea, therefore it plotted many conspiracies for ousting the king of Korea. In 1884, one night with the help of Korean and Japanese progressives, the King and Queen were seized and the next day King was forced to proclaim the independence of Korea.¹⁰⁰ The siege only remained for two days when the Chinese military showed up with thousands of troops and forced the group to retreat.¹⁰¹ This incident has put the both states on the brink of war.

The war began in 1884, when Japan seized the Joseon King and China came to rescue. The first war was fought at sea where Japanese navy held superiority over Chinese warships. On the land, Chinese forces were no match to the better equipped Japanese soldiers, and finally Pyongyang in the North was captured by Japan. After the fall of Pyongyang, Chinese forces retreated and Japan penetrated in to the China as well. In order to avoid the further losses, China offered the peace treaty to Japan and Treaty of

⁹⁷ Kallie Szczepanski, "First Sino-Japanese War," *ThoughtCo*. October 17, 2019, accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www.thoughtco.com/first-sino-japanese-war-1894-95-195784>.

⁹⁸ Laerence H. Battistini, "The Korean Problem in the Nineteenth Century," *Monumenta Nipponica* 8 (1952): 54, accessed April 25, 2020, doi:10.2307/2383005.

⁹⁹ Kenneth Pletcher, "Opium Wars," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, February 5, 2020, accessed April 25, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Opium-Wars>.

¹⁰⁰ Laerence H. Battistini, "The Korean Problem in the Nineteenth Century," *Monumenta Nipponica* 8 (1952): 57, accessed April 25, 2020, doi:10.2307/2383005.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*.

Shimonoseki was signed in April 1895, which ended the Sino-Japanese War. The rise of Japan became a threat for Russian growing interests regarding the access of warm water ports in the region. For Russian strategic interests, Chinese dominating position was very important. For this case, Russia along with France and Germany made a triple intervention and forced Japan to return the Liaotung Peninsula back to China.¹⁰² In the presence of the western powers, Japan couldn't have rejected the demand but it has confirmed the presence of another rival in the region i.e Russia. In order to balance Japanese rise in the region, Russia signed a secret alliance with China against Japan.¹⁰³ As the result, Russia extended its influence in the region by establishing trans-Siberian railway across Manchuria and captured the port Arthur which lies near the Korean Peninsula. With improving Sino-Russian cooperation, Japan started to increase its ground forces on the peninsula. Just like China, Russia failed to adopt military reforms as Japan did and the growing military strength of Japan began to pose threat to Russian presence in the region. In 1904, Russia accepted the regional dominance of Japan and decided to withdraw from Port Arthur and Manchuria but it was too late because Japan was ready for war with Russia.¹⁰⁴

On the night of 8th February 1904, Japan attacked Russian fleet on Port Arthur without any declaration of war.¹⁰⁵ Russia suffered heavy losses in this attack. The war began in next morning and Russian naval fleet couldn't cope up with the Japanese ships and all the Russian ships were destroyed. The ground battle was fought in Manchuria where Japanese forces outnumbered the Russians and was able to attain the victory. The war remained for one year and both sides suffered heavy losses. Finally, the US president Theodore Roosevelt offered peace negotiations and both rivals exhausted by the war accepted the proposal. Roosevelt served as a mediator and after the negotiations Treaty of Portsmouth was signed which ended the Russo-Japanese war.¹⁰⁶ According to the treaty,

¹⁰² Tosh Minohara, "The Russo-Japanese War and the Transformation of US-Japan Relations: Examining the Geo-Political Ramifications," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 27 (2016): 47, accessed May 1, 2020, http://www.jaas.gr.jp/jjas/pdf/2016/03_MINOHARA.pdf.

¹⁰³ "Russo-Japanese War," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, February 23, 2020, accessed May 1, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Russo-Japanese-War>.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ "The Treaty of Portsmouth and the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905," *Office of the Historian*, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1899-1913/portsmouth-treaty>.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Russia recognized the Japanese control over Korean peninsula and in Port Arthur thus Japan attained the position of a hegemon in the region.

3.2 KOREA UNDER JAPANESE RULE

After the Russo-Japanese war, Korean Emperor signed Eulsa treaty which is also known as Japan- Korea protectorate treaty 1905. Under this treaty the Emperor declared Korea as a Japanese protectorate and Japan took control over all the diplomatic and foreign affairs of Korea.¹⁰⁷ Korean emperor or any other authority was not allowed to engage in any international affairs. With time Japan began to take control over the other important affairs of the state and gradually it led to the complete annexation of the peninsula. In coming years more treaties were enforced on Korea by Japan to legalize its expansion in the state. Despite these restrictions, Korean dynasty tried to get back their lost hold over the state. One attempt includes the secret mission sent to the Hague Peace Convention of 1907, to get help from international world in regaining the lost sovereignty of Korea.¹⁰⁸ The Korean pledge couldn't get any support and failed but in retaliation Japan ousted the emperor and replaced him with his son. Under Japanese influence, the new emperor signed another treaty through which the most important government and bureaucratic positions of the state were handed over by the Japanese. Furthermore, all the imperial Korean army was disbanded. This decision provoked strong anti-Japanese sentiments and many resistant groups were formed in the country. These groups were mainly joined by the disbanded soldiers and revolt began at few places in the state. The Japanese forces put down all the uprisings with an iron hand and it resulted in the killing of thousands of people across the country.

With growing internal revolts, Japan sought to completely annex the peninsula. The western powers, who were involved in the settlement of Russo-Japanese war were no longer interested in the Japanese imperialist aims in Korea. On the other side, Russian threat was also eliminated after its signing of a secret agreement with Japan in 1907, in

¹⁰⁷ Andrei Lankov, "Elusa Treaty," *The Korean Times*, December 17, 2017, accessed May 2, 2020, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2016/02/165_57464.html.

¹⁰⁸ Micheal J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea: From late 19th Century to present* (Unites States of America: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers,2010), 35.

which Russia agreed to the Japanese annexation of Korea in return for its recognition of Russian interests in Mongolia.¹⁰⁹ US also agreed to the Japanese annexation of peninsula in return of Japanese recognition of US interest's in Philippines. At domestic level all political activities and gatherings were strictly banned and people are given severe punishments in case of breaking laws. Finally, in 1910, Japan-Korea annexation treaty was signed, in which the emperor of Korea handed over the sovereignty and power to Japan and next day Korea was declared as the part of Meiji Kingdom.¹¹⁰

Japanese rule over the peninsula is referred as the most oppressive and tyrannical period in the Korean history. Reforms were made to wipe out the Korean history and culture. Japan intended to transform Korea in to a Japanese land completely. Thousands of Japanese began to settle in Korea and were appointed on good administrative and military positions. The Japanese school system was introduced in the state and subjects of Korean language and history were excluded from the curriculum. People were deprived of the freedom of livelihood, freedom of speech and political activities. Previously, agriculture was the major source of income for Korea but now it also came under the monopoly of Japan. Major cultivatable lands were confiscated by the government and sold to the Japanese in lower cost. The major amount of rice produced in Korea was exported to Japan regardless of the people's needs. Any kind of protest was dealt with an iron hand and people were severely punished. Under this oppressive regime, many Koreans migrated to the neighboring and formed anti-Japanese groups.

The growing oppression of Japanese rulers and increasing discontent of the public gave rise to the independence movements inside and outside Korea. Inspired from Woodrow Wilson Paris Peace Conference speech, Korean students in Tokyo began demonstration and issued a resolution demanding independence of Korea.¹¹¹ It further provoked the Korean nationals and the first countrywide demonstration for Korean independence was observed on 1 March 1919, also known as March First or Sam il

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Chai-Shin Yu, *The New History of Korean Civilization* (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2012), 194.

Movement.¹¹² The movement remained active for whole year across the country and came to an end on December due to Japanese forceful retaliation. During this struggle large number of Koreans lost their lives. Although Japanese military force crushed the independence movement across the country but the struggle remained active outside Korea. These movements were started by the exiled Koreans who also formed anti-Japanese camps in Manchuria and Siberia.

3.3 FORMATION OF KOREAN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENTS

With the growing Japanese oppression and firm control in Korea, it was not possible to establish a governmental body in the state, therefore many overseas Korean nationalists established Provisional Korean Governments in Russia and China. The first Korean government was “Koreas People’s Congress”, established in Vladivostok Russia by the overseas Koreans in Manchuria.¹¹³ The second provisional government was established in Shanghai China by the members of new Korean Youth association.¹¹⁴ The third was secretly established in Seoul by the representatives of thirteen provinces.¹¹⁵ The arrest of Korean national leaders in Seoul and Japanese fierce response has proved that running a government in Korea is not possible. Some of the leaders were the members of two provisional governments as well therefore it was decided to join all these scattered governments in to one. The group in Vladivostok was more focused on running the war against Japan, therefore Shanghai was an ideal spot for all. Finally all the provisional governments got united at Shanghai under the leadership of Syngman Rhee.¹¹⁶

The other two most prominent figures of Korean Provisional government were Yi Dong Hwi and Ahn Chang ho. Yi Dong Hwi was the minister of military affairs, and he

¹¹² Penny Bailey, “One Hundred Years on from the Korean Sam-il Independence Movement,” *Asian Studies Association of Australia*, January 21, 2019, accessed on May 2, 2020, <http://asaa.asn.au/one-hundred-years-korean-sam-il-independence-movement/>.

¹¹³ Bong-Youn Choy, *Korea A History* (Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1971), <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=X0nRAgAAQBAJ&pg=PT198&lpg=PT198&dq=korea%27s+people%27s+congress+vladivostok&source=bl&ots=cfq4b6NhCe&sig=ACfU3U3k70Gqzr4wkUXnWYIJG0N NNOG1g&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi4p8zAnXpAhXDzoUKHZbUA7IQ6AEwCnoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=korea's%20people's%20congress%20vladivostok&f=false>.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Roger Tennant, *A History of Korea* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 45.

was also the in charge of Korean guerilla camps at Manchuria.¹¹⁷ Yi Dong Hwi was inspired from the Russian Bolshevik revolution and also founded the Korean Communist Party in Russia. The Ahn Chang Ho was a very prominent activist of Korean independence movement and he was elected as the minister of Home Affairs.¹¹⁸ The Shanghai Provisional Government formed a secret but extensive structure in Korea to gain the public support and to collect funds for the anti-Japanese guerilla warfare. The overseas Koreans began to use this platform to raise the cause of Korean independence on the world platform but they couldn't meet with much success.

Syngman Rhee began to use the title of president of Korea in United States which was opposed by the other members of Korean provisional government. Similarly, this act of Syngman Rhee was not welcomed in the United States as well because US had already accepted the Japanese control over Korea under the Taft-Katsura treaty.¹¹⁹ This faction of provisional government supported the democratic principles and modern way of government.¹²⁰ But within the government some of the prominent figures were more inspired with the Russian Bolshevik revolution and began to consider communism as an ideal system for Korea. Later on this ideological difference become one of the cause of split of the provisional government of Shanghai.

The unity of provisional government began to thaw within a year, due to internal divisions and contradicting views of its members. The provisional government was divided in to three groups with different policies for Korean independence. The Synman Rhee and his supporters were more interested in propaganda through diplomacy.¹²¹ The second group consists of Yi Dong Hwi's supporters who preferred military actions against Japan.¹²² The third group was under the leadership of Ahn Chang Ho who was in the favor of adopting

¹¹⁷ Chong Shik Lee, *The Politics of Korean Nationalism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), 130, <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=le55kK618QC&pg=PA341&lpg=PA341&dq=differences+between+syngman+rhee+and+yi+ton+hwi&source=bl&ots=qze9YWMBnW&sig=ACfU3U3SZrnk1anVxqL2OcEdZY9mlH9xg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwibicmeiJfqAhVHOhoKHe6MDjQQ6AEwC3oECA8QAOQ#v=onepage&q=differences%20between%20syngman%20rhee%20and%20yi%20ton%20hwi&f=false>.

¹¹⁸ Ibid

¹¹⁹ Raymond A. Esthus, "The Taft-Katsura Agreement: Reality or Myth?," *The Journal of Modern History* 31 (1959): 46, doi.org/10.1086/238298.

¹²⁰ Shin Yu, *The New History of Korean Civilization*, 232.

¹²¹ Shik Lee, *The Politics of Korean Nationalism*, 135.

¹²² Ibid.

middle road, excluding the military means or waging a war.¹²³ Ahn Chang Ho urged Koreans to strengthen economic and organizational structures to stand against Japan.¹²⁴ In 1921, Yi Don Hwi and Ahn Chang Ho resigned from their positions in the provisional government.¹²⁵ Another cause of this division was the lack of trust by the Korea nationalist armies in Siberia and Manchuria. They were not in favor of sharing any income with the provisional government.¹²⁶ Secondly these groups were under the influence of Russians who were providing them continuous military and economic support. Hence they were more inclined towards communism.

The First Korean Communist Party was formed by Yi Dong Hwi's in 1919¹²⁷, who later become a prominent member of Korean provisional government at Shanghai. Similarly, the Russian Bolshevik revolution resulted in creation of Korean Communist movements in Manchuria and Siberia. To strengthen the efforts for Korean independence, all governments including liberals and socialists joined together at Shanghai in 1919 but disintegrated in 1921. This ideological fragmentation between the people inspired with the Marxism and those supporting western liberalism remained till 1945.¹²⁸ Other than this, each ideological movement also become the victim of further division and factionalism. The communist movement was split in many factions including those who were attached with the Soviet communist party and the ones supporting the Chinese communism by Mao Zedong¹²⁹. At the same time communist movements began in Korea as well but they had no contact with outside Korean communist factions. Similarly, the union of the right wing parties also began to grow apart. Syngman Rhee was impeached by the cabinet members of the provisional government due to his unconstitutional actions.¹³⁰ Many prominent

¹²³ Ibid,136.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid,140.

¹²⁷ DJun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea: Second Edition* (California: Greenwood,2014) 155, <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=IgxvBAAAQBAJ&pg=PA155&lpg=PA155&dq=The+First+Korean+Communist+Party+was+formed+by+Yi+Dong+Hwi&source=bl&ots=F58gYmmLfd&sig=ACfU3U2Y5FAJ8cZdsGe-gcXUBisFIYaN-A&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwivnK2BoprqAhWwShUIHRDPBbEQ6AEwC3oECA0QAQ#v=onepage&q=The%20First%20Korean%20Communist%20Party%20was%20formed%20by%20Yi%20Dong%20Hwi&f=false>.

¹²⁸ Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, 14.

¹²⁹ Ibid,15.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

leaders resigned and established their own parties for the cause of Korea. This division weakened the cause of Korean independence and no big success was achieved by any party. These factions kept on working for the Korean Cause till 1945 and after the end of the Japanese occupation, many of them merged in to political parties.

3.4 END OF JAPANESE IMPERIALISM AND DIVISION OF KOREAN PENINSULA

Korean peninsula remained under the Japanese oppressive rule for almost half of the 20th century. During this time period, Korean overseas nationalist leaders made countless efforts to gain the support of western liberal powers for Korean independence but no success was achieved because the renowned Liberal powers i.e Britain and US had recognized the Japanese control over the peninsula in return for Japanese acknowledgement of their interests in East Asia. Therefore, Korean peninsula remained nonexistent in the world politics throughout the Japanese rule. With the growing resistance from Koreans and emergence of many nationalist groups in the state, Japan finally sought to ease their harsh rule in the peninsula. For this cause, Japan made certain reforms, include reduction in cruel treatment of Koreans and allowing their participation in the business affairs but there was no freedom for any political activity in the state.¹³¹ Arrest of Korean nationalists and ban on protest or demonstrations continued till 1945. At the same time Japan increased its military presence in the region in order to continue its imperialist ambitions. The first target was China and for this cause, Japan tactfully planned an incident to capture Manchuria. In September 1931, an explosion was planned to destroy the railway tract at Mukden, which was under Japanese control.¹³² The explosion was blamed on Chinese nationalists and in retaliation it invaded Manchuria and made it the part of Japanese Empire.

Japanese invasion of Manchuria met with a huge criticism in the western world because it was the first war incident after the world war I. Another reason of this harsh

¹³¹ J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*,49.

¹³² *Ibid*,72.

response was the Japanese violation of Kellogg Brand Pact¹³³, according to which every signatory state would go for peaceful settlement of their disputes with the others. The issue was taken up to the League of Nations and a commission was sent to investigate the incident. In 1932, US issued a Stimson non-recognition Doctrine according to which US would not recognize any agreement between China and Japan that would affect US commercial rights in the region.¹³⁴ The same year, League of Nation's commission issued a report, blamed Japan for this incident and demanded the withdrawal of Japanese forces from Manchuria. On rectification of this report, Japan withdrew from league of nations in a protest and never returned. All western powers were trying to recover from the impact of Great Depression so no hard stance was taken up against Japan. Therefore, Japan continued its expansion in China and it also gave an opportunity to other European imperialists to follow the footsteps of Japan, which resulted in World War II.

After the Mukden incident, Japan continued its efforts for further expansion in China and it resulted in second Sino-Japanese war in 1937. Japanese expansion began to threaten the interests of Western nations in the region, which roiled its relations with the west. During the inter-war period, Japan mobilized all of Korea in war efforts. People were forced to work in industries and agriculture to produce products for war time. Many organizations were established in the country to create awareness about the war situations and to unite people for this cause. Military drills were made compulsory in educational institutions and young students were trained. for participation in the war.¹³⁵ In the world war II, people were forcefully recruited to perform military service. At the same time, Japan issued a name order, forcing all Koreans to adopt Japanese names. Hence Koreans faced more oppression from Japan during the war period and it was obvious that Koreans resistance against their rulers is impossible without the foreign assistance. This oppression of Japanese rulers was directed to gain as much war material from their occupied areas as they can. Finally, a sudden shift in the world politics in the last year of World War II

¹³³ Werner Gruhl, *Imperial Japan's World War Two: 1931-1945* (New Brunswick: Transactional Publishers, 2011), 173.

¹³⁴ "The Mukden Incident 1931 and Stimson Doctrine," *Office of the Historian*, accessed June 15, 2020, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/mukden-incident>.

¹³⁵ J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*, 72.

changed the position of Korean peninsula in the eyes of the great powers. They all joined hands for the liberation of the peninsula from Japanese control.

US joined the World War II in 1941 by declaring war on Japan, a day after the Pearl Harbor Attack. In coming years, US aim to defeat Japan created such circumstances which made USSR to join this struggle as well. It was obvious that, Japan's defeat in the region would create a power vacuum which could be either fulfilled by China or Soviet Union. Chinese aim of dominating the region got cleared during the war period as the nationalist government of Chang Kai Sheik, asked the allied powers to recognize the provisional government of Korea at Shanghai.¹³⁶ China could not directly get involved in this issue as it was busy in regaining its lost territories from Japan. Soviet interests in Korea were geo-strategic in nature. Firstly, Korean occupation would provide access to the warm water ports to Soviets. Secondly it lies among the three great powers of North East Asia i.e Japan, China and USSR, therefore it can be a source of power against all enemies¹³⁷ specially Japan. On the other side, US interests were not very clear in the region as, in the beginning America was reluctant on Korean issue but US policy makers were ready to take leading role in the world affairs. Therefore, America not only become determined to end Japanese Empire but also wanted to attain leading position in deciding the fate of its occupied territories.

During the World War II, Chinese nationalist government kept the support to the Shanghai branch of Korean Provisional government and in 1942 it demanded allied powers to recognize this branch of the government. It was obvious that Chinese nationalists wanted to establish a friendly government next door. US didn't give any sudden response to it. In 1943, US president Roosevelt discussed the Korean issue with the British foreign secretary Anthony Eden and proposed to put Korea under international trusteeship until its people learn to deal with the running of the state affairs.¹³⁸ At the same time, decision was made

¹³⁶ Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, 17.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 18.

¹³⁸ Chi Young Pak, *Korea and the United Nations* (Netherlands : Kluwer Law International, 2000), 9, https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=dB_8L4ysZrEC&pg=PA3&lpg=PA3&dq=1943,+US+proposed+trusteeship+of+Korea&source=bl&ots=UjOzyxSbut&sig=ACfU3U1sTV6-NRILVz-FTP1HjumidwWBg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi5r9HKz5_qAhWi2eAKHb_TD8gQ6AEwD3oECAoQAQ#v=onepage&q=1943%2C%20US%20proposed%20trusteeship%20of%20Korea&f=false.

to return Manchuria back to China. Later on, in November 1943 allied powers except USSR gathered at Cairo conference in Egypt to discuss about the war with Japan¹³⁹. The issue of Korea was raised in the conference and after discussion it was decided to grant independence to Korea after the war. Although immediate independence of Korea was decided in the conference but the western powers had some reservations on this. Allied powers again met in Tehran conference, held in December 1943.¹⁴⁰ In the conference Korean issue was again raised and US present Roosevelt proposed to place Korea under 40 years of international trusteeship.¹⁴¹ Joseph Stalin was also present in the conference and he showed his willingness towards the US proposal but China was the only state who objected the proposal as it wanted the immediate independence of Korea.

The next meeting held at Yalta in 1945, in which four power trusteeship of Korea i.e Britain, China, US and USSR was proposed, which was accepted by all powers.¹⁴² Soviet Union proposed reduction in 40 years of trusteeship of Korea and finally after negotiation the time period was reduced to 25 years. In the same conference, after meeting with Roosevelt, Stalin agreed to join fight against Japan in return for recovery of its lost territories in Russo-Japanese war. Throughout these meetings, the cold attitude of Stalin raised suspicions to US regarding Soviet hidden designs in the region. It was suspected that Soviets might take this as a chance to occupy Korea as it would bring a great strategic and economic opportunities for it. After the nuclear attack on Hiroshima, the chances of Japanese surrender seemed obvious. As the result, Stalin ordered his generals to begin military deployment southwards. Russian forces entered from the North east of Korea six days before the Japanese surrender.¹⁴³ In 1945 Potsdam conference, allied powers gathered to discuss the terms of Japanese surrender.¹⁴⁴ During the conference, US new president

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ “The Tehran Conference,” *Office of Historian*, accessed 24, June 2020, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/tehran-conf>.

¹⁴¹ Kimie Hara, *Cold war Frontiers in Asia Pacific: Divided Territories in San Francisco System* (London: Routledge, 2007), 25, <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=9k58AgAAQBAJ&pg=PA19&dq=korea+under+international+trusteeship+for+40+years&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewjKw8Lgu6HqAhUCDmMBHT2gCnAQ6AEwBHoECAAQA#v=onepage&q=korea%20under%20international%20trusteeship%20for%2040%20years&f=false>.

¹⁴² Chi Young Pak, *Korea and the United Nations*, 3.

¹⁴³ Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, 18.

¹⁴⁴ Chi Young Pak, *Korea and the United Nations*, 4.

Harry.S Truman proposed the division of Korean peninsula called as 38th parallel, a dividing line between Soviet forces in the north and US forces in the South. Afterwards, this proposal was included in the surrender agreement of Japan, issued by US. According to agreement, Japanese forces in the north of 38th parallel would surrender to Commander in Chief the Soviet forces and in the south US Commander in Chief of Asia Pacific would take surrender.¹⁴⁵ Stalin immediately accepted the proposal and by then Russian military divisions had captured largest areas in the North. US forces entered in Korean peninsula from the Southern ports by September 1945.¹⁴⁶ The decision of the 38th parallel was vague and unclear itself because no agreement was made regarding the duration of this division and occupation which resulted in a permanent division of the peninsula.

In the final days of World War II, the Korean provisional governments become active in their independence movement. In the North of the peninsula a committee was made for the preparation of independence of Korea and after the occupation of Soviet Forces, all such movements came under the direct influence of Soviet Union. As the result, many communist Koreans were included in the committee. Meanwhile hundreds of Soviet Koreans who were running the anti-Japanese guerilla camps were bought back in the state. Now Soviet Union needed a strong communist leader. All local leaders of committee could not be trusted therefore the former guerilla soldiers of eighty-eight Red Army brigade were the best option.¹⁴⁷ This group of soldiers included Kim II Sung as well, who was popular in the overseas communist soldiers due to his successful attacks on Japanese soldier camps. Therefore, he was selected as the leader of committee by Soviet Union and later on he was promoted as the leader of communist party in northern part of Korea.

In the South, the situation was completely different because occupation of Korea was not in the policy of America. Due to the Soviet rapid mobilization in Korea and fear of losing the important strategic site to Soviet Union, US had to take immediate action. As the result the US proposed 38th parallel and the US Pacific fleet who was responsible for

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ "Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The British Commonwealth, The Far East, Volume VI," *Office of the Historian*, accessed on July 15, 2020, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d418>.

¹⁴⁷ J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*, 88.

Japan, was given an order to occupy Korea. Therefore, US army which entered from the Southern parts of Korea had no knowledge about the state or its situation on the ground. The General Hodge was given the responsibility to lead the state affairs for establishment of a government. After his arrival in the state, the Korean Provisional government tried to make contact with the general but on the directions of US government, he refused to meet them or any political party on the ground. US suspected the involvement of communists in parties and they had no intention to support them. Therefore, all the anti-communist overseas Korean leaders were called back. On the arrival of Synman Rhee, Hodge introduced him to the public and recognized his US based exile.¹⁴⁸ Meanwhile other Korean nationalist leaders based in China also began to return in the state. By the end of the year, it became obvious that US wanted to establish a non-communist, democratic government in the state.

After the World War II, the foreign secretaries of all four Korean trusteeships were called on Moscow to resolve the Korean issue. The basic agenda of this meeting was the creation of unified Korean government. US proposed that the four power trusteeship should be reduced to just five years of time. In response, Soviet Union offered a US-Soviet joint commission for establishment of an independent unified Korean government.¹⁴⁹ In the following year, the joint commission visited Seoul to make discussions with the political parties but soon they met with criticism of parties in the South who were against the foreign occupation and trusteeship. At the same time, clash emerged between the US and Soviet representatives of the joint commission. Soviet was asserting to take consent with only parties who accepted the trusteeship and its proposals while US was in favor of consulting all the political parties before establishing the unified government. After the decision of trusteeship in Moscow Conference, all political parties in the South rejected the proposal and demanded the immediate independence. On the other side, on the pressure of Soviet forces, political parties in the North accepted the trusteeship and were ready to go with the constitutional means. Therefore, Soviet demand would clear the path for communism in the state but US was not willing for this at any cost. Due to opposing views, the commission

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 90.

¹⁴⁹ Chi Young Pak, *Korea and the United Nations*, 4.

failed to reach on an agreement and Finally, the issue of the establishment of unified Korean government was taken up to the United nations.

In 1947, United nations appointed a temporary commission on Korea (UNTCOK) to conduct general elections for the establishment of free, democratic and unified government in Korea.¹⁵⁰ The mission arrived in Korea for observing the general elections but Soviet Union refused to give any assistance to the members of the commission. Soviet Union was not in the favor of involving UN in to the Korean Issue. When the matter was taken up to the UN by America, Soviet Union opposed it by stating that only US-Soviet joint commission is responsible for the solution of Korean problem and appealing in UN would violate the terms and condition of the Moscow treaty and four power Korean trusteeship. Therefore, after the arrival of the UNTCOK, Soviet Union refused to allow the commission to conduct the elections in the North. American aim to involve UN in to the matter was to ensure the establishment of democratic government in Korea. This step threatened the aspirations of Soviet Union regarding the establishment of supportive communist government in the peninsula. As the result of this political rift, the temporary division of 38th parallel become permanent. The general elections were only held in the South under the supervision of UN. In 1948, a new state emerged in the South named as Republic of Korea (ROK) under the leadership of Synman Rhee, while a month later, Democratic Republic of Korea(DPRK) was emerged in the North with the Soviet sponsored Communist government under the leadership of Kim II Sung. The peninsula got divided in to two states with different political ideologies, hence the new era of rivalry and instability began.

3.5 THE KOREAN WAR

The division of the peninsula in to two states was not accepted by the people of Korea. The leaders of newly emerged states had aspirations of the unification as well and they were willing to take military action for it. After the declaration of both states ROK and DPRK, the US and Soviet forces began to withdraw from the peninsula. The post-independence situation with in both states was completely different from each other. In

¹⁵⁰ Ibid,5.

South Korea, the government of Syngman Rhee began to face political troubles from the opposition. After the division of peninsula, the major industrial sites were lost to North Korea. North Korea also cut off all the electric supply lines after the independence of South Korea.¹⁵¹ The economic conditions of the state were also not good. The rice export industry was completely destroyed after Japanese surrender. As the result, South Korea was largely dependent upon the US aid.

The head of the state Syngman Rhee began to govern in an authoritarian style.¹⁵² He began to focus on those sectors of the state which can help him maintaining his authority e.g bureaucracy, military etc. At the same time, he began to exert his influence on the youth of Korea through their organizations. One of the very prominent figure in youth was Yi Pom Suk and his group become the most impressive among youths. In order to gain the support of Youth, Rhee made him the prime minister of the state. With time, internal divisions in the state began to grow. People were still against the division of the peninsula and in 1948, a huge protest against the holding of separate elections in Korea began at Jeju Island.¹⁵³ With time the protest changed in to a violent quarrel and as the result 10,000 people died.¹⁵⁴ After wards, the government began to tighten the control over the state banning all kinds of protests. Another fear of the government was the subversive activities of the North and the communist took over. Therefore, communism was highly discouraged and people or political leaders with communist following were arrested. The defense sector of the ROK was not very strong as compared to the DPRK. US while withdrawing its troops left 500 US military personals for training and assistance of Korean soldiers.¹⁵⁵ The army lacked the modern military equipment and major combat training. Due to dissatisfaction with the Rhee's regime, US began to reduce the amount of aid given to ROK.

¹⁵¹ J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*,95.

¹⁵² "Syngman Rhee: President of South Korea," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, March 22, 2020, accessed 18 June 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Syngman-Rhee>.

¹⁵³ John Merrill, "The Cheju-do Rebellion." *The Journal of Korean Studies* 2 (1980): 139, www.jstor.org/stable/41490155.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*,100.

In the North of the peninsula the situation was completely changed. The regime of Kim II Sung had complete control over the state and there was no case of any political opposition. Kim's party was largely composed of his former guerilla soldiers and he had the support of hundreds of the Soviet Koreans in the administration as well.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, the political base of North Korea was stronger than the South Korea. After the independence, Kim regime made many reforms in the state to take control over the Japanese established industries and lands. All the lands were confiscated and redistributed among the farmers. Above all North Korean military sector was well equipped and more reformed than the South Korea. Firstly, it was largely composed of well-trained former anti-Japanese's guerilla forces who migrated from Soviet Union and China after the end of Japanese rule. Secondly they got largest military support of Soviet Union. After the withdrawal of Soviet Forces, they provided heavy artillery equipment to North Korea. Thousands of North Koreans were sent to Soviet Union for training of the new military equipment¹⁵⁷. Finally, the leader of the state was himself the former military person and he developed an extensive military command and control structure in the state. During the Chinese civil war, North Korea sent hundreds of soldiers to fight with the Mao's army against the nationalist government. With the establishment of People Republic of China, North Korea also got the support of next door communist regime. Therefore, with the determination of the unification, North Korea had the capability to take over the Southern part of the peninsula.

By 1949, Kim II Sung had planned to declare war against South for reunification. For this case he made many visits to Soviet Union to persuade Stalin for this cause. In the beginning, Stalin was reluctant towards the plan of invading South because it might result in US intervention in the war. Finally, Stalin agreed by seeing the confidence of Kim II Sung regarding immediate victory in the South. On the other side Mao Zedong also agreed to support Kim in the war. All Northern Communist blocks aligned against the small and fragile state hoping that occupation of South Korea would end the US influence and direct access in the region. For drawing up the plan for invasion, Soviet Union sent a military expert team to North Korea. Lastly, the stage was set for the invasion of South Korea.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid,98.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid,100.

Kim's first target was to invade Seoul first as capturing the capital would deteriorate the rest of the state. Finally on 25th June 1950, the Korean war began.¹⁵⁸

Korean conflict was the first and the bloodiest war of the Cold War period. North Korean army penetrated in to South with heavy equipment and well trained soldiers. The South Korean army defended the capital for two days but finally retreated and Seoul was captured by the North Korea. The South Korean government fled to Pusan and it remained the country's capital during the war period. The news of the war shocked the world as no one expected an arm conflict to be happened on the Peninsula. The US president Harry S Truman immediately reacted and ordered General Douglas MacArthur in the far east to reach Korea to support ROK forces.¹⁵⁹ United nations also responded by denouncing the attack and order North Korean army to withdrawal back to the 38th Parallel. Two days later, UN established UN military command under US and asked the member nations to contribute their forces for the cause of Korea.¹⁶⁰ At the same time the US troops stationed in the Japan were ordered to reach South Korea as well. In Korea, the North Korean army advanced in to the South a bit late then expectations of Kim. South Korean army although weak in artillery and training were able to resist. By the time US forces reached, North Korean forces advanced towards the Pusan, an area in the extreme South of the state¹⁶¹. US played a clever strategy to circle the North Korean forces in the ROK. General Macarthur entered with US forces from Incheon,¹⁶² an area exist at the south of 38th Parallel. The attack took DPRK with complete surprise, and North Korean army in the south began to fall. With the assistance of the US, the ROK forces took all the captured territory of South Korea form the North.

After the huge defeat of Kim forces in the South, Synman Rhee and the US General aimed at unification of the peninsula. On October, US ordered to cross 38th parallel and destroy the Kim's forces.¹⁶³ North Korea fell immediately to the foreign forces.

¹⁵⁸ Brad Lendon, "The US Army once ruled PyongYang," *CNN News*, June 25,2020, accessed June 26 2020, <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/06/24/asia/korean-war-70th-anniversary-intl-hnk/index.html>.

¹⁵⁹ "Korean War Facts," *CNN News*, June 6,2020, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/06/28/world/asia/korean-war-fast-facts/index.html>.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Max Hastings, *The Korean War* (London: Guild Publishers, 1987) 80.

¹⁶² Ibid, 118.

¹⁶³ J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*,104.

Pyongyang, the capital was captured and the forces speedily advanced towards North. The Kim II Sung and the government moved towards the border along Manchuria. During this time period, China issued many threatening statements for US and demanded to stop Northward penetration immediately. By the time North Korea was about to reunify with the South, Chinese forces intervened. The Chinese attack was fierce and soon they were able to pull back the foreign and ROK forces back to the South. By December, Chinese forces captured Pyongyang and further penetrated in to the South and captured South.¹⁶⁴ Within a counter attack by foreign forces, Seoul was taken back from Chinese troops. Soviet Union didn't participate in the war with on ground soldiers but helped in providing military aid. With the troops pulled back to 38th Parallel, US president offered talks for the truce. Mao accepted the offer with the condition to keep peninsula divided where it was before the war. Talks began between the warring parties in 1951 but the war continue for two more years. By 1953, all parties wanted to end the war except the South Korean leader Synman Rhee. He was still forcing the US government for reunification. By ignoring the demands of Rhee, finally an armistice was signed by UN, DPRK and China on 27th July 1953 and came in to force without the signing of South Korean leader.¹⁶⁵ According to agreement a demilitarized zone was established at 38th parallel, hence dividing the peninsula forever. The armistice was a ceasefire between the North and South Korea but it was not an end to the war. Since then, both countries with one historical background and ethnicity consider each other as rival and a threat to their sovereignty.

3.6 INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

Rivalry on Korean peninsula was the result of Cold war politics and a nation with one historical background and ethnicity was divided in to two states with completely different contrasting systems. Both states suffered the worst consequences of the Korean war, with millions of causalities and immense collateral damage. The shadows of the Korean war still prevail among the both nations as the war has never been over. After the war, both states were completely isolated from each other and no contact was made among

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ "Korean War Facts," *CNN News*, June 6, 2020, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/06/28/world/asia/korean-war-fast-facts/index.html>.

them. Mean-while the border skirmishes continued and both sides suffered losses. North Korea continued its subversive tasks in South Korea and one major incident occurred in 1968 called The Blue House Raid.¹⁶⁶ The Blue house is the presidential palace in South Korea and North Korea sent a unit composed of approx. 30 soldiers to assassinate the president. The mission failed and all soldiers retreated but were found and killed on the border mountains by US and South Korean army. The incident resulted in casualties of 124 civilian and palace security personnel.¹⁶⁷ Same year North Korea captured US spy Navy Ship called USS Pueblo.¹⁶⁸ US demanded the immediate release of the crew and called it as illegal step as the ship was in international waters when it was captured. After series of negotiations, the crew was released on December 1968.¹⁶⁹

Despite the hostilities, efforts were also made for improvement in relationship through series of dialogues. The first attempt was made in 1970's by the Red cross society in which the meeting was held in Pyongyang where the leaders of both states met for the first time since their inception.¹⁷⁰ The agenda of meeting was to locate and reunite the scattered families on Korean peninsula. The plan was formed for reuniting the families but clash emerged over the agenda of reforming the South Korea policies regarding the anti-communist law and finally the talks came to an end in 1973.¹⁷¹ A year later North Korean supporter made the assassination attempt of the South Korean leader Park Chung Lee. The president remained safe during the incident but his wife killed in the attack. More tensions escalated as there was another attempt of the assassination of Park Chung Lee's successor Chun Doo Hwan in a bomb attack in 1983.¹⁷² North Korea denied any involvement in the

¹⁶⁶ "The Blue House Raid: north Korea's Failed 1968 Commando Assault on Seoul," *Military History Now*, September 20, 2013, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://militaryhistorynow.com/2013/09/20/the-blue-house-raid-north-koreas-failed-1968-commando-assault-on-seoul/>.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Chloe Hadjimatheou, "Sailor recalls 1968 North Korea capture of USS Pueblo," *BBC News*, 23 January 2012, accessed 26, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16650683>.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ "First Inter-Korean Red Cross Talks in 1972," *KBS World*, March 15, 2018, accessed June 26, 2020, http://world.kbs.co.kr/service/contents_view.htm?lang=e&menu_cate=history&id=&board_seq=275254.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² "Timeline: Two Koreas, Key Events in relations between North and South Korea since 1945," *Aljazeera news*, April, 2, 2008, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2007/10/20086151706665476.html>.

incident. Relations showed a little improvement in 1985, when the family members from both sides reunited with each other but again the dialogues could not sustain for long.

South Korea established diplomatic relations with North Korea under the leadership of first democratically elected president of South Roh Tae Woo. Relations showed improvement as the inter Korea trade began in 1989.¹⁷³ In December 1991, both Korea signed an agreement on reconciliation, non-aggression and exchange and cooperation.¹⁷⁴ The inter-Korean relations went through the rough era afterwards but in 1994, South Korea president called for summit to meet the Kim II Sung. Kim died weeks before the summit and again the relations reached on the brink of breaking down. A turn over in North South relations was observed under the presidency of Kim Dae Jung. He introduced the Sunshine policy for reconciliation and cooperation with the North Korea.¹⁷⁵ Under this policy huge amount of aid was provided to the North Korea amid to the famine and food crisis. Similarly, family reunion meetings were conducted under the policy and it was decided to continue these meeting in the future. The successor of Kim Dae Jung, Roh Moo Hyun continued the Sunshine policy and provided humanitarian assistance to the North but soon the relations got complicated due to the North Korean Nuclear Proliferation.

After the Korean war, America signed a mutual defense agreement with the South Korea under which US not only stationed its army in South Korea but had also deployed nuclear weapons. Due to this military alliance, South Korea was no longer felt threatened of the Northern aggression. As the result North Korea began its journey towards nuclearization The real tension in the peninsula initiated when North Korea signed agreement with Soviet Union for the establishment of the Nuclear reactor and research facility at Yongbyon.¹⁷⁶ Soon afterwards, North Korea received plutonium reprocessing plant from Soviet Union and began to expand its indigenous program. A team of scientists was sent to Soviet Union for training of the field. By 1980's North Korea had developed

¹⁷³ Lim Wonhyuk, "Inter-Korean economic cooperation at Cross Roads," (paper presented at 17th U.S.-Korea academic symposium, September 27, 2006).

¹⁷⁴ "Inter-Korean Exchanges and Cooperation," *Korea.net*, accessed June 26, 2020, <http://www.korea.net/AboutKorea/Inter-Korean-Relations/Inter-Korean-Exchanges-Cooperation>.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ "Nuclear," *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, October, 2018, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://www.nti.org/learn/countries/north-korea/nuclear/>.

all the necessary elements for proliferation and specially their own supplies of uranium.¹⁷⁷ North Korean nuclear activities caught international attention and it came under pressure of signing of Non-proliferation treaty. Finally on the pressure of Soviet Union, North Korea signed the NPT in 1985, but it didn't signed the IAEA safeguard agreements.¹⁷⁸ Despite signing the NPT, North Korea continued its nuclear activities in secret. After the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991 both North and South Korea signed a Joined Declaration on Denuclearization of Korean Peninsula but later on North Korea withdrew from it.

At the end of cold war, US president Bill Clinton decided to withdraw all its nuclear weapons from South Korea and by December 1991, South Korea was free from nuclear weapons.¹⁷⁹ As the result of ending Soviet disintegration and end of Northern Support, North Korea showed flexibility in its policies and signed the IAEA safeguard agreements. After signing this agreement, IAEA conducted series of inspections of North Korean nuclear facilities.¹⁸⁰ Clash emerged when IAEA asked North Korea to grant access to its nuclear waste sites and North Korea refused. IAEA took this issue to the United Nations to authorize the access to the waste and as the result North Korea announced its withdrawal from the NPT. Just a day before the withdrawal, North Korea suspended its decision due US invitation of bilateral talks. In order to ease the tensions US former president Jimmy Carter visited North Korea and met with Kim II Sung and the series of bilateral talks began.¹⁸¹ During the talks North Korea continued its processing which raised concerns for IAEA and US as well. Finally, US and North Korea signed an Agreed Framework in 1994 in which North Korea agreed to freeze its facilities in return of construction of two light water reactors with US collaboration.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ "North Korean Nuclear Negotiation," *Council on Foreign Relations: 1985:2019*, accessed on June 28, 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/north-korean-nuclear-negotiations>.

¹⁸⁰ Leon Sigal, "DPRK Briefing Book: US Interests and Goals on the Korean Peninsula," assessed January 17, 2020, <https://nautilus.org/publications/books/dprkbb/uspolicy/dprk-briefing-book-u-s-interests-and-goals-on-the-korean-peninsula/>.

¹⁸¹ "North Korean Nuclear Negotiation," *Council on Foreign Relations: 1985:2019*, accessed on June 27, 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/north-korean-nuclear-negotiations>.

¹⁸² "Nuclear," *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, October, 2018, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.nti.org/learn/countries/north-korea/nuclear/>.

The year 2000 saw improvements in Inter Korean and US relations. An historic inter-Korean summit occurred and the leaders of both states met and signed several cooperative agreements. Same year, the North Korean leader Kim Jong Il made an historic visit to US and nuclear talks held but no agreement was signed. The year 2001 made turn in the relations as despite the agreed framework agreement, both sides were dissatisfied with each other. The agreed framework continued till 2002 but none of the side complied with its terms. North Korea kept on delaying the IAEA inspections and US failed to provide the light water reactors to North Korea. Meanwhile the US intelligence agencies revealed the production of highly enriched uranium in North Korea. In 2002, bilateral talks began between US and North Korea in which North Korea agreed the production of HEU and its aims for building of nuclear weapons. North Korean statement ended the Agreed Framework and dead lock appeared. After 9/11, the US president George W. Bush's statement of Axis of Evil further intensified the situation and in early 2003, North Korea announced its withdrawal from NPT.¹⁸³

North Korean withdrawal raised serious concerns in the regional states regarding peace and stability, Therefore, China stepped in and offered the Trilateral talks to North Korea including US. and China. The talks further expanded by including other regional states, i.e Russian, Japan and South Korea. The Six party talks began in Beijing in 2003 and five rounds of talks were conducted till 2005 and in the fifth meeting, North Korea agreed to abandon its nuclear program with a condition of easing out of all international sanctions. No further progress was made and next year, North Korea shocked the world with its first underground nuclear test with the yield of few killo tons. The international community condemned the tests and UN Resolution 1718 imposed trade sanctions on North Korea.¹⁸⁴ The Six party talks continued for next few years and many time North Korea committed to abandon its nuclear program but again failed to comply with. The year of 2010-2011 escalated tensions on DMZ with several military confrontations between the armies. Same year North Korea attacked the South Korean navy ship killing 46 of the

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

sailors.¹⁸⁵ After the incident, South Korea cut all of its economic ties with the North. In December, the leader of North Korea Kim Jong Il died and power was taken over by his successor Kim Jong-Un. Under the Kim regime, North Korea progressed in its Nuclear and missile capability. 2013 onwards, all diplomatic talks ended as North Korea carried out the Nuclear tests. In 2016, North Korea announced the successful testing of a thermonuclear device.¹⁸⁶

The year of 2017 had gone through a very critical phase of inter-Korean and US relations. In 2017, North Korea announced the successful testing of Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile. The testing of ICBM's had opened the war of words between the US and North Korean leaders and both states reached on the brink of war. In the middle of the hostile relations, a new phase of historic Inter-Korean Rapprochement began when Kim Jong Un, in his new year speech of 2018 announced the opening of dialogues with South Korea. The South Korean premier welcomed this move and invited the North Korea to participate in the upcoming Olympic games in the South. In return, North Korea sent its team to participate in Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games where both Korean Teams marched together as one with unified flags of Korean Peninsula. In April 2018, an inter-Korean summit was conducted at demilitarized zone and a joint statement was issued after the meeting, in which both leaders shared the firm commitment to bring a swift end to the hostility and would work for national conciliation, peace and prosperity.¹⁸⁷ At the same time North Korea also announced to halt all of its nuclear activities and further nuclear tests. On 18th September 2018, both leaders again met in North Korea and after the meeting of five hours a "Pyongyang Joint Declaration" was issued which accentuated the denuclearization of Korean Peninsula.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ "Chronology of U.S-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy," *Arms Control Organization*, May, 2020, Accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron>.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ "Korean Summit: Trump Hails 'end of the Korean War' -as it happened," *Support the Guardian*, assessed January 22, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2018/apr/27/north-and-south-korea-summit-leaders-prepare-for-historic-inter-korean-meeting-live?page=with:block-5ae2e794e4b05b151652ad27#block-5ae2e794e4b05b151652ad27>.

¹⁸⁸ "The Pyongyang Summit: 6 Key Points," *The Globe Post News*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://theglobepost.com/2018/09/19/key-points-pyongyang-summit/>.

The opening up of talks and frequent meetings of North-South premiers also opened diplomatic grounds for US and North-Korea. On 12th June 2018, a historic meeting of US president Donald Trump and North Korean president Kim Jong-un held at Singapore.¹⁸⁹ Both sides vowed in easing out the tensions in the peninsula and North Korea agrees to work for complete denuclearization of the peninsula. Later on February 2019, another on front meeting was held in Hanoi, Vietnam which couldn't produce any fruitful results as Trump cut short the summit without reaching on any agreement. After the Summit, Trump made a public statement that Kim Jon Un demanded a complete sanction relief which is not possible. In April, North Korea tested two short range nuclear missiles. Then in June 2019 Donald Trump paid a surprised visit to Korea and crossed the DMZ from South towards North Korean Territory. Donald Trump become the first US president to enter in to North Korean territory from DMZ. This positive gesture of US was welcomed in the North Korea and has raised hopes for further improvement in the relations.

In August the hopes for the talks again deteriorated due to US-South Korean joint military exercises. North Korea condemned the exercises and resumed the testing of its short range missiles. In coming months, North Korea conducted various tests raising international criticism. In September, US again approached North Korea to begin a new series of talks but no progress was observed. Meanwhile North Korea tested submarine launched ballistic missile and in return US issued a statement asking North to refrain from such provocations. No progress has been made between the states since then and a dead lock appeared. In 2020 welcome address, the South Korean leader emphasized on the need of inter-Korean cooperation. In this year North Korea resumed working on its ICBMs and also fired short range missiles several times. Tensions were sharply escalated on the border in May 2020, and fire exchanges were observed on DMZ. In June, South Korean activists began to send balloons with messages of criticizing the Kim regime. In response, North Korea ended all the communications with the South and threatened to send army in the border zone. Hours later, North Korea blew up the joint Liaison office at its border, which was setup in 2018 for inter-Korean improvement in relations. North Korea blamed South for breaching terms of 2018 talks and accused them responsible for breaking of the

¹⁸⁹ "North Korea Profile-Timeline," *BBC News*, April 26, 2019, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron>.

dialogue. The destruction of the office had abandoned all hopes for the of development in the Inter-Korean relations and peace settlement in the peninsula.

CHAPTER 4

DYNAMICS OF INTER-KOREAN RAPPROCHEMENT 2018-2019

North –South Korean conflict has become an enigmatic challenge for the International peace making bodies, as all the diplomatic efforts taken in last seven decades have always resulted in failure. Transformations in international system along with the regional geopolitical landscape has affected the nature of the conflict. The involvement of many actors has also aggravated the situation and with each passing day, it is becoming more challenging to find out the possibility for peacemaking in the region. North East Asia consists of world’s leading economies and the North-South Korean conflict has become a matter of grave concern for them. With respect to the Zartman the time of negotiations for the conflict resolution is very important. He called this as a “Ripe moment” in which parties come forward for negotiations with a perception of way out. Therefore, it is necessary to find out the moment of ripeness in the conflict in order to make the conciliatory efforts a success. One of the reason of the failed Inter-Korean rapprochements was the lack of the perception of the way out of the conflict. No party came forward with a sincere will to resolve the conflict except then their personal gains and interests. There have been many examples in the past when parties came forward for resolution of the conflict and proposed series of joint agreements to ease the rising tensions but they produced no results.

The Inter-Korea rapprochement of 2018 was an historic event as no development of such level was ever made before. Kim Jong Un who is called as an international pariah surprisingly announced the opening of talks with the South. The year witnessed the number of Inter-Korean summits, where leaders met with rhetoric of peaceful denuclearization of the peninsula. The same year, another development was seen in US-North Korea relations when the US president Donald Trump agreed to meet Kim Jong Un to resolve their mutual issues. This was considered as the biggest breakthrough in the relations and the world expected a suitable outcome out of it. But some analysts raised suspicions about the North

Korean friendly behavior because a year ago, North Korea was ready to respond to all foreign threats with the weapons of mass destruction. They referred this rapprochement as another unsuccessful attempt like the past. All these speculations resulted to be true because these improvements began to thaw within a year and the parties failed to obtain a mutually accepted agreement. All the parties kept on emphasizing on the denuclearization of the peninsula but no side was clear about how to reach this goal. All the parties had different aims and agendas, therefore they could not reach on any agreement. In order to analyze the reasons of the failure of Inter-Korean rapprochement 2018, it is important to highlight the factors which led to this development. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the Dynamics of Inter-Korean rapprochement of 2018.

4.1 INTRA-STATE DYNAMICS OF RAPPROCHEMENT

The Inter-Korean rapprochement of 2018 was not a new event in the North-South Korean relations. Many former South Korean governments have made similar efforts for the denuclearization of North Korea. The peaceful declarations were signed before too but no party remained committed and as the result no permanent solution of Korean issue has been devised. However, one element was common in all the past efforts. Every time, North Korea was approached by other parties for the negotiations. In the year of 2018, for the first time North Korea came out of its isolation and initiated the opportunity of talks, not only with South Korea but also with its other biggest rival, USA. North Korean conciliatory approach with a determination for conflict resolution has raised hopes around the globe for the peacemaking in the region. As a good will gesture, North Korea announced to halt its nuclear testing as well. It resulted in the number of official visits between the states where the democratic allies pressurized for the rapid denuclearization in return of the sanctions relief for the North. North Korea demanded the sanctions relief first and in return it will dismantle its nuclear program. The lack of trust and a history of withdrawal from the binding commitments by US and North Korea and their clashing interests had affected the process of negotiations. No party was ready to show a restrain or to step back from their demands. Due to the continuous pressure of denuclearization on North Korea, the clash remerged and the parties failed to produce any positive outcome out of the summits hence all the efforts for conflict resolution went in vain. As the result, North Korea reinitiated its

nuclear testing and all the temporary reconciliations broke down. The events of these changes have been covered internationally and the failure of the historic summits elevated doubts about the intentions of the state leaders regarding conflict resolution. Therefore, it raised many questions about the hidden aims and agendas behind the shadows of negotiations that if no side was ready for peaceful way out of the conflict then what was the purpose of one to one meetings? In order to find out the state's intentions and interests through the showdown of negotiations, this chapter would highlight the intra-state factors which tentatively drew the states out of hostile posture and raised hopes for the conflict resolution.

4.1.1 NORTH KOREA

North Korea is an isolationist state and has been declared as a main cause of instability in the Korean peninsula. North Korea is the only country in the world which disregards the international laws, world institutions and democratic political system. For the survival of state's sovereignty and power stabilization, North Korea has never compromised on the defense of the state and despite the economic stagnation, it was able to develop the most powerful deterrent against its enemies. North Korean nuclear program took serious turn under the leader ship of Kim Jong Un. Since then, North Korea has kept on improving its capacity to deliver war heads with greater distance and yield. One of the biggest achievement is the testing of the ICBM in 2017 and the successful testing of the Hydrogen bomb. After this success, a sudden shift was observed in the behavior of North Korea. First of all, it opened doors for peaceful negotiations with South Korea and then called for the meetings with the US. This behavior raised many questions about the intentions of the Kim Jong Un behind the diplomatic engagement with his long term rivals. According to the analysis, there are number of factors which drove North Korea to pursue the diplomacy.

4.1.1.1 POWERFUL DETERRENT

Since the Korean war, North Korea has been successful in deterring all the kinds of foreign threats, especially from South Korea and its allies. In terms of military capability, South Korea has never been a direct threat to North Korea as its short range missile

capability can deter the conventional power of the South. North Korean biggest threat is the US presence in the region and its military backup to South Korea. Therefore, it has been working to deter the American threat and the only possible way is to develop the powerful weapon. Therefore, the journey of the North Korean Nuclear program began and despite the strict international sanctions it was able to achieve this goal. Although the nuclear program of North Korea has been operational since 1970's but it was developed rapidly under the leadership of Kim Jong Un. After taking over the government in 2011, he set two aims for North Korea. First is to build strong weapon and second is the economic development. North Korea was successful in achieving the first one by building an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile in 2017 which can deter the American nuclear threat. Now North Korea preferred to focus on its second aim of economic development. The large number of international sanctions have already put the country's economy in severe crisis therefore the only possible way for North Korea is to open its doors of isolation and get an international recognition. One of the possible way is to use the achievement of ICBM to attain the status of a powerful state.

Soon after the testing of biggest hydrogen bomb, South Korean President's invitation for the winter Olympics has opened the door of opportunity for North Korea and Kim Jong Un responded towards this request in his long aggressive national speech. In the new year speech of 2018, Kim Jong Un called the testing of ICBM as a biggest victory and declared that no foreign power specially US can now attack the North Korea.¹⁹⁰ He paid tribute to the nuclear scientists for this achievement and repeatedly praised the nation for this milestone. The significant part of the speech was an aspiration of the regime for improving ties with the South Korea. It was declared that South Korea should work sincerely for the Inter-Korean relations, without the assistance of any other foreign power because in case of war, there will be the loss of both nations.¹⁹¹ The speech of Kim Jong Un was an amalgamation of threats with aspirations of peace. Finally, he announced the participation of North Korean delegation in the Olympics games. This change in the North Korean posture was in fact the result of its confidence over strong defensive power. The

¹⁹⁰ "Kim Jong Un's 2018 New Year's Address," The National Committee On North Korea, accessed November 19, 2020, <https://www.ncnk.org/node/1427>.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

nuclear weapons victory has strengthened his position nationally but now it was the time to get an international recognition.

North Korea already had an aim to reach out US and it has opened this matter during the reconciliation process with South Korea. North Korean has been preparing for this moment for quite long so that they can sit on the table with their foes as an equal. When the Korean-US relations were on the brink of war, North Korea disclosed that it has no interest in the negotiations until it gets an ability to strike the United States.¹⁹² Over the years North Korea has learned the lesson from Iran and Libyan model of denuclearization and they understood that the only possible way of survival is to build a strong nuclear weapon. Finally, they were able to attain a weapon which can threaten US main land and its security protocols towards its allies. The making of ICBM's has not only strengthened the regime survival but has also their negotiating position at the table. Meeting with the leader of super power will make the world believe about the power of North Korea. As the result it might open the economic opportunities for the state or it might be able to get some sanctions relief. Therefore, the ICBMs were the driving factor behind the Inter-Korean and US-DPRK summits because as the result North Korea has got international coverage and their message of being a powerful state has reached up to the world.

4.1.1.2 INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The North Korean sudden shift towards policy of engagement with the major powers in 2018 gave it much of the attention across the globe. This indeed was the result of being at stronger position in the system, whether at regional or international level. Whenever North Korea made sudden change in any of its policy, the observers began to identify the key aims of the shift and its impact. The only sector of North Korea which has got the international attention over the years is its nuclear program, in fact this has been the biggest source of its identity in the international system. For the first time, the nuclear issue of North Korea has got an international attention in 1993, when IAEA announced about the secret nuclear program of the state. In response the international institutions

¹⁹² Van Jackson, *On the Brink, Trump, Kim and the Threat of Nuclear War* (United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2019), 189.

pressed North Korea to open ways for the IAEA inspections. North Korea refused the demand and threatened to withdrawal from NPT. To avoid the nuclear crisis, the US former president Jimmy Carter took initiative and opened doors for negotiations for the both states. This led to the signing of historic agreed framework of 1994 between USA and North Korea. Although this agreed frame work was failed but North Korea achieved the slight identity as a nuclear state.

In 2003, Bush announcement of “Axis of Evil”, North Korean withdrawal from NPT, termination of the agreed framework and nuclear proliferation gained international attention. The 2006 nuclear testing received much voice and criticism. Finally, tensions were de-escalated due to the six party talks but again failed to produce any results. Obama administration adopted strategic patience policy towards North Korea but it could not stop nuclear designs of the North. In fact, North Korea has conducted more tests during this time period. Kim Jong Un kept the state under extreme isolation and just focused on the nuclear program. Finally, the testing of hydrogen bomb and ICBM’s in 2017 has brought North Korea on the spotlight again leading up to the talks with South Korea and US. Hence throughout the history, nuclear program has been the symbol of identity for North Korea which is a weapon of state security and regime survival. In 2018, North Korea again used the nuclear bomb card to interact with an outside world and the biggest aim was to get a recognition in the international system.

The North Korean foreign policy and its military posture has been changing over time but it has made one thing clear that North Korean attraction with an outside world is dependent upon its confidence over the military capabilities. After attaining the powerful deterrent against US in 2017, Kim Jong Un adopted a bigger platform to gain recognition as a nuclear power state. It played on a bigger stage with global outreach i.e meetings with China, Russia and USA. After the 2018 new year speech, Kim Jong Un sent his delegation to attend the Olympics games in South Korea. In March 2018, he paid his first surprised visit to China and met with the president Xi Jinping before the planned summit with South Korea.¹⁹³ In April 2018, Inter-Korean summit occurred and both sides vowed to cooperate

¹⁹³ “Kim Jong-un Met with Xi Jinping in secret Beijing Visit,” *The New York Times*, accessed November 20, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/27/world/asia/kim-jong-un-china-north-korea.html>.

in future.¹⁹⁴ On 12th June 2018, a historic meeting of US president Donald Trump and North Korean president Kim Jong-un held at Singapore.¹⁹⁵ In February 2019, Another summit was held between at Hanoi between North Korea and USA.

This gesture of North Korea has not only strengthened its position at regional level but also in international system. After the 2018 new year speech, Kim Jong Un sent its delegation to attend the Olympics games in South Korea. In April 2019, Kim Jong Un paid three days visit to Russia and met with the President Putin.¹⁹⁶ Another development was the North Korean declaration to halt the further testing of the nuclear warheads and in response Trump also delayed the US- South Korean joint military exercises. The June 2019 was a bit more moving for North Korea because Chinese President Xi Jinping and US president Donald Trump paid a surprising visit to North Korea. The visit of the leader of super power and a regional power was a biggest success. With all of these developments North Korean position on the negotiation table seemed stronger than before. Although these talks ended up in failure but North Korea has received an implicit recognition of being a powerful state. It used the nuclear card to bring the state in to lime light and through these diplomatic engagements it has given message of being a powerful state to the world.

4.1.1.3 REPEATING CYCLE OF ESCALATION TILL ENGAGEMENT

The aims and objectives of the North Korean foreign policy have always been unknown and uncertain. One of the reason is the isolation of the state and its institutions. There is no such media platform which covers the national matters except then the state owned national news channel. Lack of information and the isolation of the regime is the biggest reason in weak understanding of the aims and objectives of the state. Therefore, the national speeches and statements of the state representatives are the only source of

¹⁹⁴ “Korean Summit: Trump Hails ‘end of the Korean War’-as it happened,” Support the Guardian, assessed January 22, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2018/apr/27/north-and-south-korea-summit-leaders-prepare-for-historic-inter-korean-meeting-live?page=with:block-5ae2e794e4b05b151652ad27#block-5ae2e794e4b05b151652ad27>.

¹⁹⁵ “North Korea Profile-Timeline,” *BBC News*, April 26, 2019, accessed December 31, 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron>

¹⁹⁶ “North Korean summit: Putin says Kim needs guarantees,” *BBC News*, accessed January 12, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48047279>.

information for the outside world. The 2018 Inter-Korean rapprochement and then face to face summits with major powers were historic ones because no development of this level has been made before. Although Kim Jong Un was welcomed for his move towards denuclearization but it has also raised questions about the credibility of the leader as many times before the North Korea adopted such policies and then withdrew from them. In fact, from the longer prospective, North Korea has been repeating the cycle of provocation, crisis, engagement, negotiation and breakdown, for so long.¹⁹⁷

The first nuclear crisis in Korean peninsula began in 1993. The collapse of USSR ended the support of a powerful ally for North Korea. The North Korea nuclear program and its plutonium extraction was exposed in the world. Therefore, under the Russian pressure, North Korea signed the safeguard agreement with IAEA.¹⁹⁸ IAEA began inspections in North Korea but the team was not allowed to inspect the nuclear waste sites. Due to the international pressure, North Korea announced to withdraw from the NPT. North Korean announcement of withdrawal raised concerns in US and South Korea regarding the presence of Nuclear bomb in North Korea.¹⁹⁹ Just a day before the final withdrawal, US offered negotiations and as the result North Korea took back its decision of leaving NPT. In 1994, IAEA reinitiated the inspections and soon it was observed that North Korea has secretly removed the fuel rods from nuclear reactor. This step of North Korea met with huge criticism and US administration threatened to take military action. The crisis was about to turn into a war, but former US president Jimmy Carter intervened and visited North Korea on the invitation of Kim Jong Il which turned down the escalation of war. In 2005, Clinton's Secretary of Defense revealed in an interview that North Korean shift in approach was the result of a serious threat from US because president Clinton authorized the military action to destroy the North Korean Nuclear Facilities.²⁰⁰ It means that if these negotiations would not have begun then there would be a serious clash of rivals just like the Korean war. The Carter's public announcement for the initiation of diplomatic

¹⁹⁷ Euan Graham, "Trump, Kim and the North Korean Nuclear Missile Melodrama," *Lowy institute*, May, 2018, 4.

¹⁹⁸ Glyn Ford and Soyoung Kwon, *North Korea on the Brink: Struggle for Survival* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 150.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 151.

talks with North Korea halted all the offensive designs of US. Finally, after the series of talks between North Korea and US, agreed framework was signed in 1994. The agreement diffused the intensity of conflict and opened the ways for cooperation between North Korea, US and South Korea.

The second nuclear crisis began in 2001 onwards when George W Bush become the US President.²⁰¹ He adopted a hard line policy towards North Korea and stopped all the fuel supplies as per agreed framework of 1994. In response, North Korea expelled the IAEA inspectors out of the country. In the state of union address 2002, Bush listed North Korea with “axis of evil” states and convinced the world about the threat these states impose on the peace and prosperity.²⁰² Bush’s speech further deteriorated the relations with the North and ended the agreed frame work of 1994. In 2003, North Korea announced its withdrawal from NPT.²⁰³ North Korean withdrawal was a clear indication about its aims of nuclear proliferation. Therefore, the regional parties stepped in to diffuse the conflict and six party talks began between North Korea, US, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia.²⁰⁴ The six party talks remained till 2007 but they produced no results and the agreements of the six parties were not implemented.²⁰⁵ Meanwhile North Korea continued its nuclear program and tested many of its ballistic missiles which resulted in huge international criticism and sanctions.

The third nuclear crisis began in 2017, when North Korea tested its first ICBM which has a capacity to reach up to the US mainland. All the other series of tests which North Korea conducted the same year shows tremendous improvement in its potential and yield of Nuclear power. The North Korea nuclear proliferation and US offensive comments once again put the states on the brink of war. With South Korean efforts the intensity of ongoing offensive rhetoric got reduced and North Korea accepted to sit on negotiation table

²⁰¹ “The US and North Korea On the Brink: A Timeline,” *Front Line*, accessed October 25,2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/the-u-s-and-north-korea-on-the-brink-a-timeline/>.

²⁰² “ The Axis of Evil Speech,” *The New York Times*, accessed October 25,2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/politics/10000004021075/the-axis-of-evil-speech.html>.

²⁰³ “Nuclear,” *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, October,2018, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.nti.org/learn/countries/north-korea/nuclear/>.

²⁰⁴ Hanns Gunther Hilpert and Oliver Meier, “Facets of the North Korean Conflict: Actors, Problems and Europe’s interests,” *German Institute for International and Security Affairs* 12 (2018): 9, accessed October 25,2020.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

for talks. Within a year the world saw a dramatic turn over of Kim and Trump relations, when they forgot the recent combat of arguments and stood together at Vietnam, shaking hands and smiling, raising hopes for the peace. The leader met two more times with each other and Trump made a history, as a first US president to meet with a North Korean leader and to visit the DMZ. But no improvements have been observed since the last meeting in 2019 and the parties took the opposing pathways reaching on the same conflicting grounds. The deadlock of North Korean-US relations also effected the Inter-Korean relations. Clashes emerged across the DMZ again in 2020 which roiled the developments of inter-Koreans relations.

In all three times of the nuclear crisis, the events followed the same pattern moving from provocation to breakdown. At first the issue gets provoked by the conflicting parties then it turned in to crisis leading both parties on the brink of war. Then breakdown begins and series of negotiations take place and finally parties walk away without any outcome. The events of 2018 rapprochement followed the same cycle, where the crisis began with the war of words between DPRK and US, then the tensions got reduced due to engagements between Korean states. The Inter-Korean talks opened path for US-North Korean negotiations. Tensions reduced on the peninsula for the time being and then the parties walked away with no outcome. North Korea resumed its nuclear program which shows that denuclearization has never been the aim of North Korea. In 2019, American international broadcaster, “Voice of America” published leaked documents about the internal nuclear policy of North Korea. It claims that Kim Jong Un has no intention to give up the nuclear weapons.²⁰⁶ North Korea nuclear program has been the only source of the state’s survival hence Kim Jong Un has no reason to give them up. American political scientist John Mearsheimer said that there is no way that North Korea can trust US because it has a history of diminishing the deals.²⁰⁷ This statement has been quoted by the North Korean leaders many times before as well. Therefore, it is clear that denuclearization was never the aim of

²⁰⁶ “Leaked N.Korean Document Shows Internal Policy Against Denuclearization.” *Voice of America*, accessed December 30,2020, <https://www.voanews.com/east-asia/leaked-n-korean-document-shows-internal-policy-against-denuclearization>.

²⁰⁷ “N.Korea will not give up Nuclear weapons: Mearsheimer,” *Yonhap News Agency*, accessed December 30, 2020, <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20180320010200315>.

North Korea since the beginning of the talks. It was the similar strategy which North Korea has been playing over the years and this time it has played the game on bigger platform.

4.1.1.4 DECEPTIVE POLICY

The diversion and deception is the very important part of the North Korean state policy. North Korea describe the state with the self-proclaiming “workers’ paradise” however it has the worst record of human rights²⁰⁸. Similarly, It also states about having the best health system in the world²⁰⁹ and it is the only country which has successfully developed the Ebola Vaccine and continuously declared the state free from Covid-19. It has always promoted the fear of US attack and the regime’s successes in deterring it. All of these tactics has been consolidating the regime’s power for so long. In fact, the deception policy of North Korea has been the part of its foreign policy as well. Many times the regime opened doors for improvement in relations with its enemies by using denuclearization card but the main aim has always been to get economic aid, concession in the international sanctions or diversion from the internal crisis or from the active proliferation of Nuclear program. In the shadow of these engagements, North Korea has kept its nuclear program going on by ignoring the people’s suffering and state’s collapsing economic structure.

Another driver of North Korean diplomatic approach of 2018 was to deceive the world with a move of dismantling its main and important nuclear test site. On 21st April 2018, Kim Jong Un announced that he has suspended all further missile testing and has also decided to dismantle a nuclear test site.²¹⁰ This was a very surprising news for the world and specially for the immediate rivals of North Korea i.e South Korea and USA. North Korea claimed that its nuclear capabilities has been verified that’s why it does not need any further testing.²¹¹ This move was welcomed by South Korea and US stating it as a “Big Progress”. In May, North Korea Nuclear Weapon Institute released statement about the dismantling of the site tunnels through explosion and to completely shutting down the tunnels entrance. These announcements had raised hopes about the sincerity of regime for

²⁰⁸ Bennett, comment on RAND, “North Korea: Selling Political Deception.”

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ “North Korea Halts missile and nuclear tests, says Kim Jong-Un,” *BBC News*, assessed January 3 , 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-43846488>.

²¹¹ Ibid.

the denuclearization. North Korea invited the journalists to watch the show of dismantling the nuclear site²¹² but there was no expert of the field present in the audience.

North Korean dismantling of nuclear site was not an intentional move because the site was already collapsed due to a severe earth quake. After a few days of the first announcement of Kim Jong Un, Chinese scientists published a report regarding the collapse of North Korean main nuclear test site at Punggye-ri.²¹³ The collapse was the result of multiple explosions in 2017, which caused earth quake in the mountainous region. The Punggye-ri has historic significance for North Korea as it is the site of all the biggest nuclear tests since 2006²¹⁴. So shutting down this site was called as a good will gesture of North Korea but the experts believed it as a symbolic act and a clear deception. First, North Korea called this dismantle as a step towards denuclearization but in reality, the site was collapsed due to an earth quake. North Korea used this incident to take credit about its seriousness for denuclearization but the report of Chinese scientists questions on its sincerity. Secondly the satellite images of the site dismantling were shared which does not clearly show the collapse of all the tunnels. The site did not go under the inspection of the foreign experts therefore its complete freeze is unclear and could be reopened in the future by installing the cooling systems. Above all it does not deny the fact the North Korea nuclear program does not entirely based upon the one nuclear site. Therefore, the Kim's commitment for denuclearization is utterly an act of deception. The basic aim behind this move was to attain a very strong position on negotiation table to gain the international support in terms of economic aid and sanctions relief. Finally, this is not the first time North Korea deceived the world with such acts. In 2008, North Korea played a similar strategy by blowing up the cooling tower of the Yongbyon Nuclear Reactor.²¹⁵ As the result negotiations began and Washington removed North Korea from the list of the state sponsoring terrorism.²¹⁶ Other

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ "North Korean test site could be unusable after collapse: Chinese Scientists," *BBC News*, accessed January 3, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-43894394>.

²¹⁴ "North Korea nuclear test site has collapsed and may be out of action: China Study," *The Guardian*, January 3, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/26/north-korea-nuclear-test-site-collapse-may-be-out-of-action-china>.

²¹⁵ "North Korea's nuclear site: Is blowing up Punggye-ri just for Show?," *The Guardian*, accessed January 5, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/22/north-koreas-nuclear-test-site-is-blowing-up-punggye-ri-just-for-show>.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

than this, North Korea also gained the sanctions relief but negotiations failed and North Korea resumed proliferation in Yongbyon Nuclear Reactor. Similar events occurred in 2018-19 when North Korea opened diplomatic path, dismantled the nuclear sites, begin negotiations on denuclearization and again the talks collapsed. Despite all the efforts North Korea could not gain any economic aid of relief in international sanctions.

4.1.2 SOUTH KOREA

In the Korean conflict, South Korea is on the verge of an immediate threat from its Northern rival. Although it has got the US military backup but it has adopted the defensive policy towards North Korea because in case of a war breakout it would suffer the devastation of the nuclear attack. That's why throughout the history, South Korea has never showed any offensive designs towards North Korea. Since the return of democracy in the country, all governments adopted diplomatic means to resolve the mutual issues. Many Inter-Korean engagement policies had been initiated by the democratic governments of South Korea i.e Sun-shine policy of Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun, North East Asian Peace and Cooperative initiative by Park Geun Hye and finally Inter-Korean Détente by Moon Jae In in 2017. Moon Jae In has become the most active president in terms of the diplomacy and engagement's with North Korea. The 2018 rapprochement of has been unique and historic in terms of the high level talks between the leaders therefore, following are the dynamics of engagements for South Korea.

4.1.2.1 SOUTH KOREAN OLYMPIC DIPLOMACY

Inter-Korean relations have been shaped by number of factors i.e Cold War politics of great powers, regional dynamics, inter-state competition and military factor. Another sector which occupies a very significant position in the history of Inter-Korean relations is of the sports. Over the years, sports have been a ground of fierce competition and also a bridge of reducing the tensions between the states. Many significant engagements' in Inter-Korean relations began as the result of the regional or international sport events. At times, the states used these events for their personal gains directed against their rival's while on some occasions, the teams marched together under the unified flag of Korean peninsula. In 2017, when North Korea and US were on the nuclear standoff, the upcoming

Pyeongchang Olympics in South Korea had become a source of Inter-Korean and US rapprochement. On the invitation of the ROK president Moon Jae In, DPRK sent its team and delegation for the participation in the Olympic games. The teams marched together with the flags of unified Korea. The games changed the political environment of the peninsula and opened the diplomatic front for the rivals to resolve their mutual disputes.

Since the Moon Jae In taking over the power in 2017, South Korea come across with the number of challenges from the North. At first the US deployment of THAAD to South Korea become operational which received harsh criticism from North Korean and China. The North Korean testing of ICBM's and tough sanctions from US and South Korea. The bittering US-North Korean ties and the nuclear standoff was the biggest challenge of all of them. The South Korean hosting of Pyeongchang Olympics and growing instability on the peninsula were raising concerns for the International Olympic Committee about the security risks of 2018 game.²¹⁷ The members of the Pyeongchang organizing committee were also afraid about the impact of North Korean threat on the audience and participants.²¹⁸ The first response came from the Austria, France and Germany sport committees which stated that the worsening situation will not guarantee the safety of athletes so there will be no assurances of their participation.²¹⁹ The administration has sold the hundreds of tickets and there was fear about the cancellation of tickets from the public too. Although the ROK administration has devised a very effective security plan but there were fears about the subversive acts of DPRK to disturb the Olympics. South Korea was under the same fear it has faced before during the many sports events it hosted on the homeland. First of all it cancelled to organize the Asian Games in response to the political turmoil in 1970.²²⁰ In 1986 when South Korea hosted the Asian Games, North Korea

²¹⁷ "Pyeongchang 2018: growing North Korea fears dim hopes for Olympic Unity," *The Guardian*, accessed 10 January, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/aug/12/pyeongchang-2018-olympics-north-korea-south-peace>.

²¹⁸ "North's Missile Frustrates South Korea's Olympic Preparation," *Voice of America*, accessed 10 January, 2021, <https://www.voanews.com/east-asia-pacific/norths-missile-frustrates-south-koreas-olympic-preparation>.

²¹⁹ "North Korea Tensions Raise Concerns About Olympics in South Korea," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, accessed 10 January, 2021, <https://www.rferl.org/a/north-korea-raises-tensions-olympic-south-korea/28752594.html>.

²²⁰ Michal Marcin Kobierecki, "Inter-Korean Sports Diplomacy as a tool of Political Rapprochement," *Research Gate* 22111, (2018) : 145, accessed 20 January, 2021, doi 0.7862/rz.2018.hss.74.

disturbed the event by bombing at Gimpo airport in Seoul.²²¹ During the hosting of first Olympic game in the South Korea 1988, it was under the threat of North Korea attack.²²² Hence the North-US political chaos in 2017 raised serious security concerns in the South Korea for the security and peaceful going of the Olympics of 2018.

In this situation the only thing which can guarantee the security of the game is the participation of North Korea. The ROK president Moon Jae In has always been the supporter of the Sunshine policy of its predecessors and announced to continue the this policy. To reduce the escalating tensions on the peninsula, the upcoming Olympics was a very good opportunity. In September United Nations General Assembly session 2017, ROK president Moon Jae In throw light upon the role of the Olympics in promoting the peace and cooperation among the states. He talked about his dream of watching the North Korean athletes marching in to the stadium. In the end he invited the North Korea to participate in PyeongChang Winter Olympics. Afterwards South Korea also reserved space in the games for North Korean participation even if they decide on the last moment. North Korean participation in the Olympics would be a biggest breakthrough in the Inter-Korean relations and South Korea had expectations as there is a history of joint participation of both states in many sports events. One of the example was the time when Kim Dae Jung initiated the Sun Shine policy and it resulted in the number of sports exchanges between the states. In 2000 Olympics games in Sydney, the teams of both countries marched together with a unified flag of Korean peninsula.²²³ Both states participated in the Olympics with the unified teams and it was called as the historic event. It led to the inter-Korean summit 2000 and improvement was observed in the security environment of the peninsula. Therefore, the supporter of the Sun Shine policy, Moon Jae In used the same strategy to invite the North Korea to participate in the games. In coming months, there were many dramatic events of hostility and war of words between the US and North Korea but finally in 2018, Kim Jong Un accepted the invitation and sent its team to participate in the game. This announcement was a bigger relief to the South Korea as it has alleviated the possibility

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

of the provocation or any plot of disturbance from North Korea during the Olympics.²²⁴ Therefore, Moon Jae In was successful in achieving the security for the most significant event of the national pride and was able to reduce tensions in the peninsula by bringing the Kim Jong Un on the negotiating table. The winter Olympics were held in February 2018 in which 92 countries participated including North Korea, propelled ROK in the attention of International Media.²²⁵

4.1.2.2 MOON JAE IN'S POLITICS OF INTER-KOREAN DÉTENTE

The leadership of a country plays a significant role in shaping the domestic and foreign policy of the state. The past experiences and idiosyncrasies of the leaders affect the decision making process of the state. The South Korean policy towards North Korea varies with respect to the leadership of the state. The conservatives favor to adopt the hard approach towards the North Korea where the sanctions and international pressure is meaningful to stop nuclear proliferation of the North. The liberals believe that the hard approach towards North Korea has always ended up in failure. They favor the reconciliation with North Korea through diplomatic engagement and cooperation. Just like his liberal predecessors, Moon Jae In adopted the policy of reconciliation with the North Korea. He broke the hard line policies of the former conservative leaders and pushed the Inter-Korean détente at the time when the security of the Korean peninsula was on the risk. He acted as a negotiator and brought the US and North Korea on negotiating table to resolve the issue of nuclear proliferation. The Moon's aim of rapprochement with North Korea is the result of many factors which influenced his political approach.

Moon Jae In belongs to a family of refugees, who migrated to South Korea during the catastrophic event of Korean War 1953.²²⁶ He grew up seeing the pain of his family for losing the family members in the North. Moon stated many times about his father desire to go back to his home town to meet his family but he passed away with this dream.²²⁷ Moon

²²⁴ “Peongchang 2018: How is South Korea handling the security challenges,” *Aljazeera*, accessed 20 January, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2018/1/24/pyeongchang-2018-how-is-south-korea-handling-the-security-challenges>.

²²⁵ Bianca Milanowitsh, “Mapping the Presence of Korean Wave in North Korea,” *International Quarterly for Asian Studies* 48 (2018): 273.

²²⁶ “Peace a New start: 2018 Inter-Korean Summit,”

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

joined the politics in 2003 as a senior secretary for civil affairs under the Cabinet of President Roh Moo Hyun.²²⁸ He was the close friend and the advisor of the president. He along the president revoked the sun shine policy of the Kim Dae Jung and opened the Inter-Korean engagement in 2007. Moon Jae in made all the preparations for the summit where the ROK president Roh Moo-hyun crossed the Demilitarized zone to meet Kim Jong Il .²²⁹ The summit alleviated the tensions on the Korean peninsula but it remained for the time being and the relations went back to the hostility. The next two presidents of South Korea i.e Lee Myung Buk and Park Guen Hey were conservatives abandoned the Sun Shine Policy, broke all the engagement projects of the predecessors and adopted the hard line approach towards the North Korea. From 2009-2017 no big development was observed in the Inter-Korean relations. In 2017, Moon Jae in came in to power, holding the dream of Inter-Korean rapprochement and revoked the pro-engagement policy of his late friend and former president Roh Moo-hyun.²³⁰ Roh Moon-hyun's Uri Party had set the democratic principles of proactive engagement, economic and diplomatic cooperation towards North Korea. The Democratic party of Moon Jae In (Uri party transformed in to United Democratic Party and then in to Democratic Party) continued this legacy by supporting the cooperation with the North Korea. Therefore, Inter-Korean engagement was expected. before the Moon Jae In's presidency because all the previous democrats adopted the same policy.

During the election campaign in 2017, Moon Jae In promised to ease tensions in Korean peninsula and denuclearization of North Korea.²³¹ According to Moon, the hardline approach of the conservatives has always worsened the relations and provoked North Korea to get more offensive. Moon Jae In's agenda come across with the huge criticism from conservatives too. They called it a failed policy as the previous activities of Sun Shine were not successful as well. Moon had learnt from all the mistakes of the predecessors and

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ "Moon on a Mission: South Korea's New Approach to the North," *The Diplomat*, accessed 25 January, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/03/moon-on-a-mission-south-koreas-new-approach-to-the-north/>.

²³¹ "South Korea President Moon Jae In's Main Policy Pledges," *The Straits Times Asia*, accessed January 25, 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/south-korean-presidential-shoo-in-moon-jae-ins-main-policy-pledges>.

reformed the policy according to the needs of the time. The Sun Shine policy suffered the backlash when the South Korean government donated the \$500 million prior the summit in 2000.²³² Moon refrained to offer any economic assistance or sanctions relief before the summit. Secondly he made sure that the engagement has a domestic and international support. He promoted his idea of rapprochement at international platforms i.e Berlin Speech and UN General Assembly's Speech. The efforts of Inter-Korean summit 2007 got failed because the government got changed after few months. Therefore, Moon Jae In begin his efforts during his first year in the office because if the summit reached on any agreement then he will have four years to implement it and then it would not be easy for the next government to reverse his policies .²³³ Moon's success in breaking down the dead lock on Korean peninsula and bringing Kim Jong Un on negotiation table received international praise. He appeared on the cover of Time Magazine with the title "The Negotiator" for playing an active role as a mediator of US and North Korea. Hence the change in the geopolitical environment of Korean peninsula in 2018-2019 was the result of Moon Jae In's policy of Inter-Korean détente.

4.1.2.3 CLARIFY ROK'S POSITION IN US-DPRK RELATIONS

South Korea is a middle power which has a strong position in the North East Asia due to the growing economy and alliances. It was able to transform the state structure and its mounting developments bought it in to the list of world famous countries but in case of the issue of Korean peninsula, ROK's role seems unclear. South Korean alliance with US is the biggest problem for North Korea and throughout the history, North Korea –US rivalry has kept South Korea on the side lines. The inter-Korean issue has transformed in to US-North Korean issue. The North Korean testing of ICBMS has more confirmed the US-North Korean rivalry. The 2017 standoff between US and North Korea has raised questions about the position of South Korea in the whole issue. The sense of being marginalized and lack of control over the Inter-Korean relations put South Korea in to very uncomfortable position. Above all, these events happened within months of the new leadership of South

²³² "Moon on a Mission: South Korea's New Approach to the North," *The Diplomat*, accessed 25 January, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/03/moon-on-a-mission-south-koreas-new-approach-to-the-north/>.

²³³ Ibid.

Korea. Thus, South Korea needed to safeguard the legitimacy of the government and to ensure that no decision of the peninsula can be made without the involvement of ROK. As the result, the new government of Moon Jae In took immediate steps to bring the state on the driving seat of Korean peninsula diplomacy.²³⁴ Therefore, one of the driver of rapprochement for South Korea was to clarify its position in the US- North Korean relations.

In 2017 South Korea was very active in diplomacy, alleviating all the threats and problems it came across with this year. Moon's Pro-engagement policy had put South Korea on the front line country in dealing the Korean issue.²³⁵ He has re-oriented the South Korean foreign policy by changing the priorities of the state. He has adopted the conciliatory approach at a time when US and Japan believed on traditional approaches of sanctions for containment.²³⁶ Other than this, He also made a meaningful visit to China to de-escalate the tensions in relationship amid the deployment of THAAD to South Korea in 2017.²³⁷ South Korea also withdrew from Intelligence sharing pact with Japan called as GSOMIA which was initiated with the assistance of US.²³⁸ He also withdrew from the Comfort women issue with Japan which resulted in trade restrictions between both states.²³⁹ Above all, Moon also resisted when Trump proposed increase of burden sharing of US troops stationed in South Korea. All these steps show the growing of South Korean stature vis-à-vis its neighboring countries and allies. South Korea is in the middle of the relevant actors of the conflict and through its mediatory approach, it has clarified its position in resolving the issue. South Korea has demonstrated that its security concerns needed to be taken in account before making any decision about the peninsula. In a public address he affirmed his nation that US cannot take any military action against North Korea

²³⁴ "Moon Quietly in the center," *USA News*, accessed January 25th, 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2018-03-07/south-korean-president-driving-the-current-diplomacy-with-north-korea>.

²³⁵ "The Case of Moon Jae In," *The Asian Forum*, accessed January 25th, 2021, <http://www.theasianforum.org/the-case-of-moon-jae-in/>.

²³⁶ "Moon Jae In's Foreign Policy Reorientation," *The Interpreter*, accessed January 25th, 2021, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/moon-jae-s-foreign-policy-reorientation>.

²³⁷ "Was Moon Jae In trip successful," *The Diplomat*, accessed January 25th, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/12/was-moon-jae-ins-china-trip-successful/>.

²³⁸ "Moon Jae In's Foreign Policy Reorientation," *The Interpreter*, accessed January 25th, 2021, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/moon-jae-s-foreign-policy-reorientation>.

²³⁹ Ibid.

without our consent. Therefore, the active diplomacy of South Korea in 2017 onwards strengthened its position in the political environment of Korean peninsula.

4.1.3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

America is the most prominent actor of the Korean conflict and it has kept its presence on the peninsula since the end of World War II. It has played an active role in division of the peninsula and installing the capitalist institutions in the South Korea. It has continued to influence the political environment of the region. USA is the part of security and defense agreements with South Korea and Japan. It has also stationed around 28,500 soldiers in ROK and 40,000 in Japan²⁴⁰ hence providing a complete military backup to both states in case of any military conflict. The biggest concern of US in the nuclear program of the North Korea. Over the years, US has imposed strict sanctions on North Korea to stop its proliferation but all the efforts have failed. The biggest security threat for US took rise when North Korea tested the ICBM in 2017. The US response changed in to war rhetoric and the relations reached on the brink of war. With the efforts of South Korean president Moon Jae In, Inter-Korean relations began to improve. With his efforts, an historic summit was held between Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump in Singapore. Although the meetings and summits have not reached on to any solution but they had elevated the risk of deadliest war on the Peninsula. The Kim's reach to Donald Trump and his optimistic response was a surprise. A sudden shift in Trump's policy has opened a debate about the reasons of this new approach to deal the nuclear issue of DPRK, therefore following are the dynamics of US-North Korean diplomatic shift.

4.1.3.1 TRUMP'S DIVERSIONARY POLICY

Diversionary foreign policy is one of the key approach for many heads of the states to divert the attention of the public from the ongoing domestic issues. The main purpose of this approach is to divert the people's attention from the matters which can be harmful for their position in the state. Governments use war or diplomacy to change the course of events for their personal gains and interests. For example, at the height of Lewinsky

²⁴⁰ Hanna Gunther Hilpert and Oliver Meier, "Facets of the North Korean Conflict: Actors, Problem and Europe's Interests," *SWP Research Paper* 12 (2018): 22.

Scandal 1998, US president Bill Clinton announced to conduct airstrikes against the suspected terrorist sites of Al-Qaida in Sudan and Afghanistan.²⁴¹ This action was taken in response of the bombing incident in US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.²⁴² This step reduced the attention of the public from the president's scandal. Another important means of gaining public attention is the use of social media by the heads of the states. This provides a platform for sharing the accomplishments of the state as well as to divert the public attention from the serious matters. Among all the leaders on social media, Donald Trump's use of twitter has been the most controversial one. Since the beginning of his candidacy, there were approx. 30,000 tweets sent from his account.²⁴³ These tweets were composed of criticism, targeted insults, propaganda and for personal gains. Above all, Trump used tweets to divert attention from the matters which seemed controversial and harmful to his reputation in the public. Similarly, Trump's surprising approval for a summit with Kim Jong Un in 2018 was also the part of his diversionary policy.

In 2017, President Trump came across with two mounting scandals which threatened to bring down his presidency. In January 2017, FBI and CIA claimed that Russia interfered in the elections of 2016 to damage the election campaign of Hillary Clinton and to boost Trump.²⁴⁴ With respect to this controversy, the investigation began under the headship of FBI director Robert Muller. In spite of calling it a serious national security concern, Trump has been busy in defending his image in the public. An international study was conducted by the University of Bristol UK about the harmful media coverage and Trump's response in 2020. The team analyzed the content of the country's two politically neutral media channels, i.e New York Times and ABC News. The study concluded that "whenever media report something threatening or politically uncomfortable for President Trump, his account increasingly tweets about the unrelated topics representing his political strengths. This systematic diversion of attention away from a topic potentially damaging

²⁴¹ "The Risks of Foreign Policy as Political Distraction," *The Atlantic*, accessed February 12th, 2021, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/06/trump-diversionary-foreign-policy/530079/>.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ "Trump's tweets and diversion of the media," *Behavioral and Social Sciences*, accessed February 12th, 2021, <https://socialsciences.nature.com/posts/test-42b433ce-e040-4267-aaea-bd42bf83387b>.

²⁴⁴ "Trump-Russia timeline-Key Moments in the Muller investigation," *Financial Time*, accessed February 12th, 2021, <https://www.ft.com/content/0c5fe9e6-f6dd-11e8-af46-2022a0b02a6c>.

to him was shown to significantly reduce negative media coverage the next day”.²⁴⁵ The more negative reports get published, the more sensational tweets were given by Trump e.g accusing former president Obama for wiretapping the phones of Trump Tower, criticizing his policies of immigration, ousting the Obama care etc. The policy of diversion was not only limited to his tweets but he also altered his foreign policy preferences. For example, Trump has been criticizing the Obama’s involvement in the Syrian War but then he ordered to strike the Syrian Air basis and defended his point by congratulating the military for only bombing the airbases and not the runways. Another dramatic announcement of Donald Trump was the US withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement. This event casted aside the Muller’s investigation from the mainstream media as the media continued to discuss the implications of this withdrawal.

On July 2017 North Korean test of ICBM has given another opportunity to Donald Trump to turn the media away from the progress of Muller’s investigation. Donald Trump’s harsh response towards North Korea begin to emit signs of an outbreak of Nuclear war. The first response of Trump came on Twitter stating that Kim Jong Un has nothing better to do then launching missiles.²⁴⁶ Moving forward, Kim Jong Un and North Korean nuclear program become the center of Trump’s diversionary strategy. While reporting to the press at New Jersey, Trump stated that North Korea will met with fire and fury like the world has never seen before.²⁴⁷ In response Kim Jong Un announced that he can fire missiles to Guam. In September United Nations General Assembly’s session Trump announced that US would completely destroy North Korea and called Kim Jong Un as a rocket man who is on suicide mission.²⁴⁸ Trump’s announcement was indeed a direct threat to North Korea and the strict response was expected one. Kim Jong UN called Trump as mentally deranged man. Next month North Korea conducted another ICBM test with more yield and have capability to reach on US mainland. Next day Donald Trump announced the press that

²⁴⁵ “Trump tweets divert media from potentially damaging news,” *University of Western Australia*, accessed February 12th, 2021, <https://www.uwa.edu.au/news/article/2020/november/trump-tweets-divert-media-from-potentially-damaging-news>.

²⁴⁶ “Timeline,” *CNN News*, accessed February 12th, 2021, <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/09/22/politics/donald-trump-north-korea-insults-timeline/index.html>.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*.

²⁴⁸ “Trump UN speech: Why his rhetoric was a game-changer,” *BBC News*, accessed February 12th, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-41329112>.

“we’ll take care of it”. The personal attacks continued and both leaders threatened each other by having nuclear buttons on their desks. The rising tensions between US and North Korea were worrisome for the other regional states i.e South Korea and Japan. China and Russia also responded with sanctions. China sent its envoy to North Korea to ease down the tensions but got failed. Trump kept all the situation under observation and kept on putting provocative content on the twitter account. Perhaps Trump was successful in his diversionary policy of keeping the public attention away from Russian Scandal through the war rhetoric.

During the height of tensions between the states, South Korea president Moon Jae In aspirations for peace and his efforts in Inter-Korean summit got the interest of North Korea. In 2018 new year speech Kim Jong Un announced the participation in upcoming Olympics. The meetings between both states continued and finally the historic Inter-Korean summit was conducted in Punmanjong. During the meetings, Kim Jong Un shared his desire to meet Donald Trump and in response South Korea immediately sent its envoy Chung Eui Yong to White House. Chung visited the white house to brief the cabinet members and he was supposed to meet Trump the next day but when Trump got the word about the South Korean in the house, he immediately called him to oval office. Chung delivered him the message of Kim and immediately accepted to meet him. The Trump’s advisor reminded him to be careful in decision but he rejected his cautions and said, “I am willing to meet with Kim, why don’t you go and announce it?”²⁴⁹, The sudden approval of president Trump was taken with a surprise as no cabinet member was involved in the decision making. This step was also the part of Trump’s diversionary policy as 2018 opened the case of another scandal.

By the year 2018, dozens of Trump’s associates had been investigated and more trails had been on the way. Meanwhile film star Stormy Daniels filed law suit against the president Trump for not signing the \$130000 agreement.²⁵⁰ The more controversial matter

²⁴⁹ Bob Woodward, *Rage* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2020), 91, <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=79j9DwAAQBAJ&pg=PA92&dq=Why+Trump+agreed+for+talks+with+Kim&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiypcL42LHvAhX4Q0EAHeAPC3QQ6AEwAnoECAQQAg#v=onepage&q=Why%20Trump%20agreed%20for%20talks%20with%20Kim&f=false>.

²⁵⁰ “Why the Stormy Daniels-Donald Trump story matters,” *BBC NEWS*, accessed February 15th, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-43334326>.

was the article published on The wall street Journal claiming the amount was paid by Trump's lawyer one month before the 2016 elections counted as illegal.²⁵¹ The aim of this no disclosure agreement was to keep the information that would harm the Trump's candidacy for president.²⁵² The matter become more critical when the case become the part of Muller's investigation. The FBI raided the office and took all the documents including the nondisclosure agreement of 2016.²⁵³ Trump called this as a disgraceful act and a witch hunt. Hence Russian scandal was getting critical day by day so were the Trump's efforts to keep media reports in to his favor. Therefore, the only case which can turn tides in to his favor will be a surprising and historic meeting with Kim Jong Un. The arrival of South Korean envoy opened the doors of opportunity and Trump immediately took it. He said yes on the spot without consulting it with anyone. Within a month, Trump made significant changes in the administration by replacing Tillerson with Mike Pompeo and McMaster with John Bolton. The sudden changes become the subject of debate on media channels and the coverage of Russian scandal become frail. Van Jackson in his book, "On the Brink: Trump, Kim and Threat of Nuclear War" shared the Trump intension behind making these changes. Stormy Daniel gave an interview on CBS News a friend of Trump claimed that Trump didn't wanted to pick John Bolton but he just wanted to change the headlines that weekend.²⁵⁴ Similarly, Trump's policy t.owards North Korea kept on making the headlines on media.

The preparations of Trump's first summit with Kim went through several ups and downs. At times Trump cancelled the meeting but then again agreed to meet Kim. Such attempts got huge media coverage and the upcoming summit was propagated as a historic event. Trump got huge admiration and appreciation through media outlets that even one reporter asked the whether he deserved Nobel prize and Trump laughed by stating that "everyone thinks so".²⁵⁵ Finally, on the day of summit, the media coverage was unprecedented, the world eyes were on the summit's outcome. Nearly 2500 journalist from

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ "Micheal Cohen: Why the raid on Trump's lawyer is a big deal," *BBC News*, accessed February 15th, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-41419191>.

²⁵⁴ Van Jackson, *On the Brink, Trump, Kim and the Threat of Nuclear War* (United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 2019), 182.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

across the world reached Singapore to cover the summit.²⁵⁶ The interviews of Basketball star Dennis Rodman and Singaporean Prime Minister were broadcasted prior to the summit. More than 34 media outlets streamed the summit and nearly four million tweets were posted.²⁵⁷ Donald Trump got the credit of being the first president of America to meet with the North Korean leader. In the weeks following the summit Trump called it a successful and a big achievement. Contrary to the Summit the Muller's investigation continued and all the suspects were investigated one by one but no major progress was made. Hence Trump was able to divert the media coverage in to his favor through the summit.

²⁵⁶ "Trump-Kim Summit 2018: A Look at media coverage around the historic event," *The Drum*, accessed February 20th, 2021, <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2018/06/12/trump-kim-summit-2018-look-the-media-coverage-around-the-historic-event>.

²⁵⁷ "Trump-Kim Summit: Nearly 4 million tweets posted worldwide from June 1 to 13," *The Strait Times*, accessed February 20,2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/trump-kim-summit-nearly-4-million-tweets-posted-worldwide-from-june-1-to-13>.

CHAPTER 5

CHALLENGES

Korean peninsula has been in the state of instability for around 7 decades and it is one of the world's dangerous and sensitive protracted conflict. The division of peninsula in 1945 has sowed the seeds of political rivalry between one nation and since then there has been an unstoppable struggle for power and dominance. The ideological differences between the two states has been the biggest hurdle in the peace-making efforts. The nature of the conflict kept on transforming over time and currently the biggest issue is the Nuclear Program of DPRK. The North Korean nuclear program has become an enigmatic challenge for the peace making bodies. Many efforts had been made for the resolution of the Inter-Korean conflict but no major success have been achieved yet. The political standoff between the two states begin to thaw in 2018 and three historic summits had been conducted between the Korean states. This was the first ever attempt of peace making under the new regime of North Korea and there has been hopes for the resolution of the conflict. This diplomatic engagement remained for a year but parties could not reach on any mutual agreement. Therefore, all the efforts of rapprochement were failed. The peace processes of such level had been initiated many times before but all ended up in failures. Ira William Zartman's theory of Ripeness is used in this study to identify the problems in the conflict resolution of Korean peninsula. There are many theories which explain the initiation of the peace processes between the conflicting parties, but Zartman adopted a different approach to describe the success of the conflict resolution efforts, therefore this chapter highlights the challenges in the way of peace-making in Korean Peninsula and identify the impediments of the Ripeness Theory with respect to the Inter-Korean conflict.

5.1 LACK OF PERCEPTION OF HURTING STALEMATE

5.1.1 TOUGH RESISTANCE

The starting point of ripeness is when the conflicting parties accept that fighting further will cause more pain and suffering. This level is called as a mutually hurting stalemate and it compels the parties to find the solution of the conflict. One of the biggest challenges in ripeness theory is when complications arise in perception of the hurting stalemate. Parties resist the pain and suffering they face in the conflict hence it does not lead to the opening of meaningful negotiations. Such a case of resistant reaction to hurting stalemate can be found in the Korean peninsula. Firstly, there is no MHS between the Korean states. One-sided pain and suffering is the basic cause of tough resistance. Zartman claims that pressures on a party in conflict sometimes lessen the chances of reconciliation²⁵⁸ and it perfectly justifies the Korean problem. In Inter-Korean conflict, North Korea is the one party that has been pushed on the sidelines and is blamed to be the real cause of the regional instability. The hard economic sanctions, diplomatic isolations and stagnant economy were enough to cause the ripe moment for North Korea but it produced the opposite reaction. North Korea considered backing down as a threat to its survival and its failure in the eyes of the adversaries because the enemies of North Korea are far from feeling the pain therefore chances of reconciliation in the Korean peninsula are very less. As a result, North Korea kept offensive policy and hostility to create obstacles and security concerns for South Korea and USA. As the ripe moment was never developed therefore every time parties initiated the negotiations, they ended up in failure.

5.1.2 TRUE BELIEVERS CULTURE

Another complication with the notion of Hurting Stalemate arises due to the true believers in a particular culture. According to Zartman, true believer cultures are those who are highly committed to their ideologies and values.²⁵⁹ The tough resistance in such societies is referred to with the reward and prize. Such groups are considered as the hard

²⁵⁸ I. William Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," in *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, ed. Paul C. Stern and Daneil Druckman. (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 2000), 245.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

liners with non-negotiator mindsets. For example, 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, negotiations were not possible as long as US was exerting pressure for releasing of the hostage. From Iranian perspective, resisting against foreign threats and pressure means holding against satan.²⁶⁰ It was the part of their religious and nationalistic values therefore US pressures and sanctions had no effect on Iran. The more pressure US would exert on Iran; the most hostile response will come with justification to call it an act of heroism.²⁶¹ This aspect completely applies on the Juche Ideology of North Korea. Juche means “Self-reliance” and according to the founding father of North Korea Juche means “one is responsible for one’s own identity”²⁶² The ideology was promoted in whole North Korean nation and the propagandists called it a universal philosophy.²⁶³ It became the part of curriculum in schools and was applied to every other field i.e science, sports and music.²⁶⁴ Hence the whole nation was made to believe that they are different from the rest of the world and they are responsible for making their country strong. Similarly, relentless military drills in the country make the Korean nation to believe that US is evil who can attack the country any time.²⁶⁵ All able bodied adults receive military training and military drills are carried out on greater scale in the country.²⁶⁶ Any major international event is interpreted as a sign of a warning that US and its allies are planning an invasion of North Korea and such ideas are promoted in every platform of the country, Hence the rivalry with US and its allies is inculcated in people from generations. Such strict ideological culture where people are oppressed and live under strict surveillance has made them to believe that government is doing best to save and protect them. North Korean people treat the Kim’s family as their supreme leader, who has given them this land and freedom so any word coming from the Kim is considered as golden words. In national addresses, the leader appreciates their struggles and sacrifices and such words are taken as a reward. People’s love for their leaders are seen through the videos released by the state media. Therefore, such nationalistic culture explains the reasons of tough resistance and history of North Korea

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Micheal J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea: From late 19th Century to present* (Unites States of America: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers,2010),132.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid,131.

²⁶⁶ Ibid,131.

has proved that more pressure will result in to more resistance. Despite all the sanctions and international pressures North Korea has developed its nuclear program. Every move for reconciliation has failed because the timing for negotiations was not right one as the ripe moment has not been perceived by the conflicting parties.

5.2 LACK OF COHERENT POLICY

5.2.1 MISINTERPRETATIONS ABOUT NORTH KOREA

In the age of technological innovations, the world has become a global village. These advancements played a huge part in development of media and communications. It only takes minutes for any national affair to reach at the global platform. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that these innovations are playing a huge part in directing the international system and its policies. Despite such developments, there are some countries who disregard the established international norms and keep on raising challenges. One of the biggest example is North Korea and the Korean Conflict. Korean issue has not been solved due to the repeating mistakes and lack of cooperation of the stake holders. North Korea is called as a pariah state due to its unique system and policies. One of the biggest challenge in Korean issue is that the aims and objectives of North Korean national and foreign policy has always been ambiguous and unknown. One of the reason is the isolation of the state and its institutions. There is no such media platform which covers the national matters except then the state owned national news channel. Lack of information and the isolation of the regime is the biggest reason in weak understanding of policies of the state. Whenever North Korea made sudden change in its policy, the analysts began to identify the key motives of this shift but lack of resources and accurate information often generate misinterpretations whether intended or un-intended which effects the policy formation. For example, in 90's it was predicted that North Korea cannot afford nuclear weapons and its political system will collapse and the Korean issue will be resolved.²⁶⁷ Similarly, the economic sanctions and diplomatic pressures for denuclearization of North Korea were overestimated. There was no collapse of the North Korea and with time it become more

²⁶⁷Jinwook Choi, "How to stop North Korea's Nuclear ambition: failed diplomacy and future options," *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies* 7 (2018):7.

and more powerful. Other than this, all the hard policies of the adversaries. were failed to produce the desire result because they were based on either inaccurate observations or over generalizations.

Many times the North Korea intentions were misinterpreted to justify the ongoing policies and interests.²⁶⁸ The basic aim of North Korean nuclear proliferation was the security and survival of the state. The security seeking aim was mostly interpreted as the power seeker and a threat to the world peace and security. North Korea has been casted aside since its inception and has been portrayed as a pariah state to the world. With time, US and South Korean views about North Korean threat got more recognition than the actual intentions of North Korea.²⁶⁹ The efforts of South Korea and US for conciliation with North Korea were give much propagation of media while the efforts of North Korea had been disregarded For example In 1974, North Korea invited US for negotiations to replace the armistice of Korean peninsula but president Nixon did not respond to the request.²⁷⁰ Similarly the successive presidents i.e Carter, Reagan and H W Bush did not seriously considered negotiations for peace treaty.²⁷¹ When President Clinton was in the office, the Korean conflict was close to the resolution but the Bush's Hawkish policy ended the treaty. President Obama adopted strategic patience in hoping of collapse of the regime but it didn't not worked.²⁷² Trump's efforts made history in relations with North Korea as no improvement of such level has been made before but again he failed to reach on any agreement. Therefore, throughout the history US administration has never changed its policy towards North Korea. It has been given the tag of rouge state without considering the drawbacks in the options left for North Korea by the world major powers.

5.2.2 INTRA-STATE POLICY DIFFERENCES

Foreign policy of the states is often influenced by the domestic political environment. Political parties with different agendas effect the decision making of the state

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Micheal Pembroke "How 11 US Presidents failed to make peace with North Korea," *Aljazeera*, July 10, 2018, accessed April 1, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2018/6/10/how-11-us-presidents-failed-to-make-peace-with-north-korea>.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

in many ways. Sometimes, the government and the opposition agrees on the same approach and sometimes they face differences in their opinion. One of the challenge in dealing the North Korean issue is the party politics of the states. The different policies of the political parties in dealing the North Korean issue affects the nature of bilateral relations between the countries. Throughout the history, the domestic political environment of South Korea and US has huge impact on their foreign policies towards North Korea. Their relations have gone through different phases due to dissimilar agendas of the political parties.

South Korean political system is comprised of two major political parties i.e progressives and conservatives. Both political parties have same views about the North Korean threat and security concerns of the state but there are differences among them in dealing with the North Korean issue. Democratic party of South Korea (progressives) follows the pro-engagement policy towards North Korea and believe that the Inter-Korean issue can resolved through diplomatic and economic cooperation. On the other hand, conservatives support the US policy towards North Korea which include sanctions, diplomatic isolation and maximum pressure. Through the history this political split in South Korea has affected the Inter-Korean relations in many ways. In fact, lack of uniform agenda at South Korean platform is the biggest challenge in way of peace making. whenever the Inter-Korean relations move towards the betterment, the political change in the South Korea resulted in discontinuity of the engagement. One of the biggest example is discontinuity of the “Sun Shine policy” of Kim Dae Jung. The Sun Shine policy was first ever reconciliation policy of any South Korean government. The idea was promoted by the progressive president of South Korea Kim Dae Jung, who was awarded the Noble Prize in 2000 for his efforts of improving relations with North Korea.²⁷³ The First ever direct meeting was held between the leaders of Korean states in 2000 summit.²⁷⁴ The Inter-Korean relations roiled in 2003 onwards but the progressive successor of Kim Dae Jung continued his Sun Shine policy. In the time of extreme tensions of nuclear proliferation of North Korea, the Sun Shine policy continued to turn down the hostility. The next two conservative presidents of South Korea i.e Lee Myung Buk and Park Guen Hey abandoned

²⁷³ Geetha Govindasamy, “Kim Dae Jung and Sunshine Policy: An Appealing Policy option for Inter-Korean Relations,” *Sarjana* 27 (2012):7.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

the Sun Shine Policy and supported the US sanctions. From 2009-2017 no development was made to improve the Inter-Korean relations and after the Kim Jong Un coming in to power, all the doors of engagement were shut down. In 2017, the progressive leader Moon Jae In took over the office and reinitiated the Sun Shine policy of his predecessors. His approach towards North Korea is named as Moon Shine policy and series of one to one meetings were held between the leaders of the states. If Moon's approach becomes successful in building trust among the rivals, there will be skeptics about the validity of the policy in the next government of South Korea.

Other than differences in South Korean political platform, differences exist in dealing the North Korean issue in US as well. As US and South Korea are the close allies therefore any policy change from US will affect the Inter-Korean relations. The Bush declaration of North Korea as "Axis of Evil" was the biggest set-back to the South Korean Sun Shine policy. Other than this the Bush administration also ended the historic Agreed Framework of 1994. The Iraq war had further roiled the relations and North Korea withdrew from NPT and began nuclear proliferation. Obama administration adopted the "Strategic Patience" and the South Korea was under the rule of conservative leaders Lee Myung Buk and Park Guen Hye. Hence all the doors of engagement were closed. Similarly, the US North Korean policy has been transforming over the time. The "Strategic Patience" policy of President Obama was transformed in to "Maximum Pressure" by Donald Trump. The first year of Donald Trump in office was very critical in terms of relations with North Korea. The strict sanctions and threatening comments of the leaders brought both states on the brink of war. The diplomatic measures of the South Korean president Moon Jae In ease down the tensions and opened the engagement front for the states. Donald Trump met with the Kim Jong Un three times and agreements for future cooperation in denuclearization of North Korea were made. These efforts of Donald Trump were criticized at home by the Democrats and even the Republicans as well. There was no surety that Trump policies will continue by the next government of US. Just like Bush reversed the Clinton's Agreed Framework of 1994 and Trump's reversal of the JCPOA with Iran there were doubts about the Trump-Kim promises as well. Soon these suspicions become true when Joe Biden after coming in to power made statement about reversing the Trump's engagement policy of North Korea. Such political divide has been a biggest hurdle in the peace keeping efforts

of Korean conflict as denuclearization is a long process. According to the experts, denuclearization process will take 15-20 years therefore any such agreement with North Korea needs continuity at all costs. The shift in policies will not only break the trust of the rivals but will also diminish the chances of reconciliation.

5.2.3 DIVERGENT POLICIES OF REGIONAL ACTORS

The biggest challenge in solving the North Korean issue is the lack of cooperation among all important actors. Every state is dealing the issue with different approach hence there is no uniform policy with respect to North Korean issue. Every state wants a different outcome of the Korean conflict. For example, both North and South Korea wants unification of the peninsula but their different political ideologies contradict this aim. North Korean biggest concern is the security and survival of the regime and for denuclearization it wants a complete removal of US forces and its security umbrella to South Korea and Japan. US wants complete denuclearization of the North Korea but its withdrawal from the region opposes its geo-strategic interests in the region. China wants a peaceful settlement of the issue with a strong and stable North Korea which can act as a buffer state between China and US troops stationed in South Korea. Another major actor in the region is Russia who has economic ties with North Korea. Russia condemns the nuclear program of North Korea but at the same time does not support the harsh sanctions and military option for peninsula. In fact Russia and China has adopted similar North Korea policy, directed against the US-ROK alliance. Both countries oppose the deployment of THAAD in ROK and considered it a security threat.²⁷⁵ Japan supports US in its policy towards North Korea and wants to counter the nuclear proliferation of the regime.

The major disagreement lies between US and China who are currently the most active states in dealing the North Korean issue. US believes on targeted sanctions to stop the nuclear proliferation of North Korea but China disagrees with this policy.²⁷⁶ China

²⁷⁵ “The Sino-Russian Partnership and the North Korean Nuclear Crisis,” *The National Bureau of Asian Research*, accessed on March 1, 2021, <https://www.nbr.org/publication/the-sino-russian-partnership-and-the-north-korean-nuclear-crisis/>.

²⁷⁶ “US-China Cooperation on North Korea: What are the options?,” *United states institute of Peace*, accessed on March 1, 2021, <https://www.usip.org/blog/2014/06/us-china-cooperation-north-korea-what-are-options>.

believes that the possible way to solve the issue is to give security guarantee to North Korea²⁷⁷ therefore , China was never sincere in enforcing sanctions on North Korea. Despite the UNSC sanctions, China continued its economic trade with DPRK and also influences North Korean foreign policy decision making in many ways. Prior to the Kim-Trump summit, Kim Jong Un paid his first historic visit to China. Many experts believe that Kim's response towards engagement was directed by China hence Korean issue cannot resolve without the participation of China. US believes that China can play a huge part in persuading DPRK for denuclearization but Chinese non-cooperation in this matter is directed towards the geo-strategic struggle with US. Due to the competition of both powers, there has never been a mutual agreed policy for the resolution of the conflict. Similarly, the progressive governments of South Korea also oppose the harsh policies of US and often engage in negotiations with North Korea. The difference of opinion and policies is a biggest obstacle in the peacemaking of the region and the issue cannot be resolved until all the involved actors adopts a mutually agreed proposal.

5.3 HURDLES IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Conflict management has become a very common practice in international relations since late 20th century. With the rising conflicts on the globe, the pace of these efforts have also increased. Conflict management has become a common practice but it is also risky in nature because of its tendency of pushing the conflict back to the escalation.²⁷⁸ Korean conflict is also the victim of bad management and non-compatibility of the actors. Many agreements were signed to solve the issue but no success has been achieved yet as there was no legal binding of the actors towards these agreements. The only example of a binding agreement on Korean peninsula is the Armistice agreement of 1953 but it is no longer a binding since the nature of the Korean conflict has changed. There is no proper conflict management mechanism for resolution of the conflict hence it is raising the tensions and any small escalation can lead to an all-out nuclear war.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Ira William Zartman, 40.

5.3.1 INVALID AGREEMENTS

The validity of any bilateral or multilateral agreement depends upon the structure of ground realities. If the gap between the diplomatic imagination and reality is too high, then any signed agreement will become invalid within a shorter period of time. This situation clearly describes the problem in the Inter-Korean diplomacy. Since the division of the peninsula, the Inter-Korean treaties and agreements were unsuccessful because all of them were unrealistic in nature. States made promises for cooperation and peace but failed to address the ground issues. The events of diplomatic engagements in the history of Inter-Korean relations are very rare. The face to face meetings between the leaders of both states are only held three times. The efforts of rapprochement occur when their relations reach on the height of hostility, therefore any diplomatic breakdown during critical time period is considered as an historic event. Such occasions get much propagation on media which raise expectations for conflict resolution. To ensure sincerity of resolving the mutual issues and to gain international attention such declarations and joint statements are released which shows that Korean issue will be solved easily. In reality, the binding on paper contradicts the actual intentions of the states. All agreements signed between the states without addressing the main issues always ended up in failure. In the 2018 efforts for Inter-Korean rapprochement, states signed agreements for the complete denuclearization of Korean peninsula, but no side was clear about how to achieve this goal? Therefore, failure in addressing the main issue led towards the deadlock again.

Such errors in policy formation were made in the past as well. First the ceasefire agreement of 1953 has not been updated with the changing nature of the conflict. It means that the Korean peninsula has been in the state of war since last seven decades. According to armistice, a conference will be held among the members for the peaceful settlement of the issues. The conference was held in 1954 but it failed to produce any positive results.²⁷⁹ Since then, no other conference was held to solve the Inter-Korean issues. Secondly, the Joint commission of the armistice failed to observe the violations of states. The armistice regulated the arm's control between the states but it failed in controlling the military built

²⁷⁹ Hong and Yong Pyo, "Why Have Attempts to Settle Inter-Korean Conflict Failed," *The Korean Journal of International Relations* 48 (2008):141.

up on the peninsula.²⁸⁰ Afterwards three historic Inter-Korean agreements were signed in 20th century, i.e The Joint Agreement of 1972, Basic Agreement 1992 and Joint Declaration of 2000²⁸¹ but none of them addressed the main issue. All three agreements highlighted the peaceful unification of the peninsula but it was not discussed that how? The intentions of the leaders were different from the proposal made on the paper. For-example in the 1972 declaration, the point of unification was differently interpreted in both countries, North Korea declared it a sign of US withdrawal from Korea and South Korea rejected the coexistence with the North. Similarly, the idea of co-federation was proposed in 1992 declaration but states failed to address the military and economic issues. Unfortunately, all these agreements ended before moving in to the next stage of negotiations. The 21st century changed the dynamics of the Korean Issue as North Korea revealed its intentions of nuclear program. With the efforts of China, six parties talks begin. The negotiations remained active for six years and due to lack of trust, parties failed to reach on any solution. The second Inter-Korean summit held in 2007 in North Korea and another peace agreement was signed between the leaders of both states. Again the agreement remained on the paper and no further development was made in improving relations.

5.3.2 REPETITION OF FAILED POLICIES

The most important element of policy formation of a state is the national interest, but another important aspect is the history. History helps us to learn from the past experiences to avoid failures in the future. One of the biggest disadvantage in dealing the North Korean issue is that no lesson has been learnt from the past experiences. There has been no change in South Korean policy towards North Korea since decades. South Korean diplomacy is following a similar pattern for so long. The progressives support the engagement with the North while the conservatives oppose them. The Sunshine policy of Kim Dae Jin 2000 has still been in practice by the successive presidents. Three summits were conducted under the Sun Shine policy, i.e Summit of 2000, 2007 and 2018. All the Inter-Korean summits under Sun Shine policy had few things in common. The meetings between the leaders, promises for betterment of ties, impermanent and unsuccessful. The

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

2018 revocation of Sun Shine now called as Moon Shine has opened series of on front meetings and for the first time the military issue between the states was discussed. Both states signed the Inter Korean Comprehensive Military Agreement to address the issues across DMZ. This agreement created a buffer zone around the DMZ to avoid artillery, air-zone and maritime clashes.²⁸² The agreement was successfully implemented but in the response of breaking down of the engagement, North Korea begin to violate the agreement. Many experts believe that this agreement will be successful in defining the future peace treaty on Korean peninsula.

The biggest factor which affects the progress of Inter-Korea agreements is the Washington factor. No Inter-Korea military agreement will be applicable without the full support of the US. In fact, North Korean biggest concern is the military threat of US. Therefore, it will be more interested in finalizing a military deal with US then South Korea. Over the last three decades, US North Korean policy has achieved no success. The targeted sanctions and diplomatic isolation were not suitable policies to contain the Nuclear Program of North Korea. North Korean successful missile testing is the biggest proof of the US failed policies towards North Korea. US insists North Korea for unilateral denuclearization without any reciprocal commitment of security²⁸³ and this policy has persistently failed over the years. This problem has been on the table since the beginning of North Korean nuclear program and all the former US governments failed to address this issue. The 2018 thaw in US-North Korea relations raised expectations about resolution of the issue but Donald Trump's withdrawal from striking a deal in Hanoi Summit shows that there is no change in US policy towards North Korea. The nature of the North Korean conflict has not transformed therefore, following the failed former policies will bring no result in the future.

²⁸² Mats Engman, "Towards a New Conflict Management System on the Korean Peninsula: A military Perspective," *Institute for security and development policy*, July 20,2020, accessed April 1,2021, <https://isdp.eu/publication/towards-a-new-conflict-management-system-on-the-korean-peninsula-a-military-perspective/>.

²⁸³ Ibid.

5.3.3 ROLE OF THIRD PARTY

The role of third party in conflict resolution is very important. One of the proponents of the ripeness theory suggests that the ripe moment can be cultivated by the outside parties through various means.²⁸⁴ These measures can be in the form of political, economic, military punishments and rewards.²⁸⁵ In case of Korean Conflict, the role of the third parties is vague and imprecise. The Joint Korean Commission who was responsible for peaceful unification under the Armistice agreement withdrew from it. The other possible third parties who can play their part in the conflict resolution are United Nations and European Union. United Nations has imposed multiple sanctions to stop the violations of Arms Control Regimes. European Union has also played a huge part in providing humanitarian aid to North Korea but due to its nuclear proliferation the prominent members of EU i.e France, Germany, Spain, Portugal and former member UK had imposed restrictions on many sectors of North Korea. European Union although was not the part of any diplomatic moves of the main actors but it supports the policies of its allies. China has played a mediatory role between the Korean States in the past. The longest Six Party Talks were initiated with the collaboration of China. China does not entirely support the nuclear proliferation of North Korea as its growing provocation will result in US strengthening its defense in South Korea and Japan. US military build up will raise security concerns for China as well as Russia. South Korea on the other hand is also playing the role of mediator between US and North Korea. As North Korean testing of ICBM's has challenged the security environment of US therefore it is assured that the Inter-Korean relations can never get improved without the betterment of US-North Korean relations. Finally, US military presence in South Korea and Japan is not entirely for security purpose but it is directed towards balance of power with China and Russia in the region. For denuclearization North Korea wants complete removal of the US troops from the region but withdrawal of US troops undermines its geo-political interests.

²⁸⁴ I. William Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," in *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, ed. Paul C. Stern and Daneil Druckman. (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 2000), 225-245.

²⁸⁵ Marieke Kleiboer, "Ripeness of Conflict: A Fruit Notion," *Journal of Peace Research* 31(1994):111.

All the parties who have played role of mediator are the main actors of the conflict. Such actors will always keep their interest on the forefront during negotiations instead of solving the issue with sincerity. Another problem is with the dealing of the issue. All major actors are pursuing the same policy towards North Korea i.e to punish with sanctions and isolation. These policies have failed to prevent North Korea from its aims as it has become resistant to all sanctions and no threat is credible against it.²⁸⁶ The tough resistance of North Korea to the hurting stalemate should be taken as a lesson of failing the policies and new strategy should be devise to solve the problem.

5.4 RIPENESS IN MULTILATERAL CONFLICT

The Ripeness theory has been tested by many IR scholars and with time many new elements has modified the classic version of the theory. All these practitioners proposed different models with respect to the theory in order to find out the reasons of unsuccessful conflict resolutions. O' Kane examined the ripeness theory at different level of analysis and highlighted its effectiveness in the multilateral setting. According to him, one of the biggest impediment in ripeness in the involvement of many actors in one conflict because, it becomes really hard to identify that which party needs to realize the hurting stalemate first. For example, in War of Terror in Afghanistan, there are Taliban's on one side and United States, NATO Forces and the Afghan government are on the other²⁸⁷. In this situation it is very difficult to reach on a bilateral setting of negotiation as all these sides have opposite policies with regard to the resolution. In such situations, it gets difficult to identify that which party needs to feel the hurting stalemate first before ripeness.²⁸⁸ Korean peninsula has also been the victim of the foreign influences and many actors are involved in the conflict i.e US, China, North Korea, South Korea and Japan. The involvement of many actors has not only intensified the conflict but has also complicated the peace making process in the region.

²⁸⁶ Ira William Zartman, "Negotiating About the Republic of China and Democratic People's Republic of Korea," in *Conflict Prevention and Management in Northeast Asia: The Korean Peninsula and Taiwan Strait in Comparison*, ed. Niklas Swanstrom et al. (New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010),40.

²⁸⁷ Dietrich Gunther, "The Combined Ripeness Model: Becoming a Ripeness Generalist" (Master diss., Saint Paul University, 2011).

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

VI. PROSPECTS FOR INTER-KOREAN RAPPROCHEMENT

The Inter-Korean rapprochement in 2018 was a significant event in the history of North-South Korean relations. The on front meetings between the leaders had changed the political environment of the peninsula. The moment of warm ties between the Korean leaders begin to pave the way for US-North Korean engagement. Soon the leaders of the both countries were seen shaking hands in Singapore. Trump and Kim meetings raised hopes for the solution of the North Korea problem. Both states vowed for the denuclearization of the peninsula. There were three historic meetings between Trump and Kim but parties did not reach on any solution. The Hanoi summit resulted in failure. The diplomatic channels remained opened in 2019 but relations began to thaw again in 2020. North Korean self-proclaimed deadline for resumption of talks ended in 2019 and so did North Korean engagement posture. The breaking of US-North Korean engagement also ended the improving ROK and DPRK ties and parties reached on the deadlock again. In the beginning of 2020, North Korea closed the border due to Covid-19 and the activities of Joint Liaison Office were also stopped. Meanwhile, due to lack of US response for further talks, North Korea resumed the missile testing. In June 2020, the relations got critical when South Korean defectors send leaflet balloons quoting anti-regime slogans in North Korea. North Korea condemned such acts and called it the violation of Panmunjom declaration of 2018.²⁸⁹ The North Korean students held a rally denouncing the leaflets from the South Korea.²⁹⁰ Tensions further escalated when North Korea blew up the Joint Liaison Office at Demilitarized zone and cutoff all the communication lines with South Korea.²⁹¹ Similarly, heavy military was sent on the border by North Korea. In August US and South Korea

²⁸⁹ “Tension on Korean Peninsula Rise,” *Arms Control Today*, accessed April 10,2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-07/news/tensions-korean-peninsula-rise>.

²⁹⁰ “North Korea halts all communication with South in row over Leafleting,” *BBC News*, accessed on 10 April, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-52974061>.

²⁹¹ “North Korean Blows up Joint Liaison office with South in Kaesong,” *BBC News*, , accessed on 10 April,2021 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-53060620>.

conducted joint military exercises and in response North Korea fired short range missiles. The government in US got changed after the 2020 presidential elections and the new administration has not revealed the North Korean policy yet. In the result of the unsuccessful US-North Korea talks, the hostile posture of the North was an expected one. Even before the summits, there were assumptions about the consequences of the failure of the talks. First one was the breaking down of the relations with South Korea. After the failure of Hanoi Summit, when president Moon Jae In observed the breaking down of the progress, he immediately approached US for resumption of the talks but Trump lost his interest in North Korea.²⁹² North Korea did not like the Moon's interference and issued a warning statement about refraining from mediating between US and North Korea. This behavior assures that North Korean first priority in dealing with the Korea issue is US not South Korea. Later the North Korea issued a statement blaming South Korea for failing to comply with the commitments and failed to reduce sanctions. Breaking down of all the communication channels was disappointing for Moon Jae In administration. Many in the ruling party blamed US for failure of the Inter-Korean developments in relations.

As the core argument of this research is that the Inter-Korean efforts for rapprochement will be a failure until the conflict gets ripened. The Inter-Korean states are in stalemate since the end of Korean war but the conflict has not been resolved because the parties are not in a hurting stalemate. Until the parties do not perceive a dead-end in meeting their interests, they will not sit on a negotiating table with the will to resolve the conflict. The breaking down of inter-Korean engagement process in 2020 has reversed the hostile relations among the states. Therefore, the following chapter highlights the future possibility of Inter-Korean engagement by analyzing the elements of ripeness among the states.

The first step towards ripeness is the perception of a mutually hurting stalemate based on the objective evidence of loss. Since the end of Korean war, there has never been any major mutual loss of the states whether in the form of human casualties or collateral

²⁹² "Trump's Personalized North Korea Policy:2018-2020 and the way forward," *E-International Relations*, accessed on April 12,2021, <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/09/08/trumps-personalised-north-korea-policy-2018-2020-and-the-way-forward/>.

damage therefore the perception of pain is feeble. In the wake of current deadlock in Inter-Korean relations, the prospects of ripeness in the Korean peninsula are as follows.

6.1 PROSPECTS OF RIPENESS FOR SOUTH KOREA

According to ripeness theory, the timing of the mediation is important for the resolution of the conflict, therefore failure of Moon's 2017 peace process with North Korea shows that the timing was not the right for the rapprochement. Inter-Korean engagement in remain active for one year but ended without any outcome in 2019. South Korean activities of conciliation with the North remain low in year of 2020 as the pandemic took rise again in the state therefore the leadership kept busy in dealing the national issues. After the change of the US government, South Korea looked forward to the new administration's North Korean policy but failed to get any positive response. In contemporary political environment of South Korea, the possibility of approaching North Korea in near future is very less. The first reason is the lack of objective evidence of the loss and pain for South Korea. There are no evident signs of human, military loss or economic burden on the state which can cause pain and suffering. As South Korean policy towards North Korea is dependent upon the US-North Korea relations, therefore its very clear that South Korea will always consider US approach and support as its first priority of the state. Under the Trump's presidency, South Korean relations got stained with America due to the failure of US-North Korean talks and Trump's insistence for increasing the burden sharing of troops. Trump's imprudent politics was a serious concern for South Korea as incase of the loss of US support, South Korean security becomes a challenge. At the same time the deployment of US THAAD system was also a challenge for South Korea in maintaining normal ties with China. Meanwhile, the growing inflation rate in South Korea was also a raising concern for the presidency. Above all the opposition in South Korea begin to take momentum through criticizing the Moon's economic policies as well. In the middle of all these challenges in 2020, dealing with North Korean issue has been on the sidelines because none of these problems were related with the Korean conflict. Therefore, economy and realigning with US had become the top most priority of the state and the Biden-Moon's meeting in 2021 had cleared the future approach of South Korea.

Moon Jae In in his new year address of 2021 holds the aspirations for Inter-Korean rapprochement again. The next expectation for improvement in Inter-Korean relations will be the Tokyo Olympic Games 2021. In 2018, South Korean Olympic games were the impetus for improving Inter-Korean ties.²⁹³ During the address at independence day, Moon expressed hope that the Tokyo Olympics will open up an opportunity for dialogue with North Korea.²⁹⁴ In case of North Korea participation in the Olympics, there might be a chance of resumption of US-North Korea dialogue. All the hopes for resumption of talks ended when on 6th April 2021, North Korea announced to skip Olympic games due to Covid-19 fears.²⁹⁵ North Korea has closed its borders a year ago due to pandemic and it has become a first country to skip the Olympic games.²⁹⁶ In the meanwhile, South Korea also showed lack of interest in forcing on the pro-North Korean engagement policy. Similarly, in May 2020, Moon Jae In met with the US president Joe Biden and both countries signed a new accord to strengthen their alliance.²⁹⁷ In the Summit South Korea agreed to adopt US led Indo-Pacific policy which aimed at containing Chinese expansion in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait.²⁹⁸ At the same time South Korea also urged to begin the joint military exercises with US. During the meeting, Moon was also able to resolve the burden sharing of US troops stationed in South Korea and was able to get vaccine shipment for the state. Moon's sudden shift in the policy was taken as a surprise because throughout his presidency, he has been busy in maintain balance in relations with China, US and North Korea. Now as this is last year of his presidency, therefore one reason for this posture might be the strengthening the party's position for the next year elections. The most important part of the meeting was the approval of Moon Jae In to follow a similar policy as of USA towards North Korea. Although Moon still emphasizes on opening of talks with North Korea but his efforts are a bit skeptical. If Inter-Korean talks begin under Moon administration, it will have positive and negative impact. On one side it might help

²⁹³ "President Moon hopeful Tokyo 2020 will be opportunity for dialogue between North and South," *Inside the Game*, accessed on April 12,2021, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1104841/moon-hopeful-of-north-korea-dialogue>.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ "Tokyo Olympics: North Korea to skip Games over Covid-19 fears," *BBC News*, accessed on April 12,2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56645611>.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ "How the Biden-Moon Summit Reset the South Korea-US Alliance," *The Diplomat*, accessed on July 15,2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2021/05/how-the-biden-moon-summit-reset-the-south-korea-us-alliance/>.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

in maintaining Moon's predecessor's legacy or in case of failure his party might lose the public support. Despite all these reasons, if South Korea was able to bring North Korea on the negotiation table again, the result will be a failure because there are no just objectives evidences present which might push the states to go for solution sincerely.

6.2 PROSPECTS OF RIPENESS FOR UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

American presence in the Korean peninsula and its strongest alliance with South Korea and Japan are not only directed towards the North Korea threat but it is the geo-political rivalry with China. Hence US is using these allies as its proxies for supporting its own interests. Currently US is providing military backup to its allies against any kind of communist aggression. Zartman said that if the allies in a conflict begin to suffer the cost of the conflict, it might cause hurting stalemate for them and hence this concern can be conveyed to the conflicting parties which might lead towards the conflict resolution.²⁹⁹ In case of Korean conflict, the allies are US and China, and both are involved in the conflict as proxies. US as a superpower aims to maintain its presence in the region to contain China regional hegemony while China aims to keep its influence on North Korea to use it as a leverage and buffer zone between US and itself. This geo-political rivalry is one of the reason for protracted Korean conflict. For America, the objective and subjective elements of ripeness are non-existent. A state with the title of world's hegemon, with strongest economy and military cannot be challenged with any small conflict. However, if there might be any small case of stalemate exists, it might not be perceived by US as a challenge. One of the biggest threat for America might be the North Korean ICBM's which can reach up to the US mainland. Although US has a missile defense system to divert any such attack but as it has not been tested before, therefore its validity is in question. US will never accept the North Korean ICBM's as a threat for its main land but if it happens than this threat will be considered as the hurting stalemate for US. The most important factor in this case will be the role of a mediator who can make parties to realize the nature of threat and pain for them in case of a war. Without the realization of the hurting stalemate the parties can never

²⁹⁹ I William Zartman and Alvaro De Soto, "Timing Mediation Initiatives," 6.

reach on a meaningful negotiation hence conflict can never be resolved. Trump's failure to meet the deadline and no response of Biden's administration are the biggest hurdles in the way of peace making between the two states. What policy Biden adopts towards North Korea will decide the future of the Inter-Korean relations as well but the prospects for improvement in relations seems very less.

First reason is the Biden's criticism of Trump's engagement with North Korea. During the presidential debate, Joe Biden slammed the Trump's friendship with Kim Jong Un. According to him friendship with the Kim Jong Un is like having Hitler as your friend before he captured half of the Europe.³⁰⁰ He states the Trump's diplomacy with North Korea as complete failure. He said that he would not meet North Korean leader without the preconditions of denuclearization.³⁰¹ He also shared his policy of dealing the North Korea issue through pressurizing China and allying South Korea and Japan.³⁰² These policies of Biden met with the harsh response of North Korea. Kim Jong Un called Biden as a "rabid dog, who should be beaten to death".³⁰³ Such statements from both sides roiled the possibility of improvement in North Korea relations with the upcoming US administration. Experts believe that Biden will likely to reverse the Trump's policies.³⁰⁴ As the policies of all the former US presidents had failed to deal with the North Korean issue therefore it will be a challenge for Biden administration to form a policy which can deal the North Korean nuclear issue seriously through addressing the security problem of the states.

In 2021, Biden administration is standing at a similar point of relations with North Korea as Trump was standing when he took over the office in 2017. North Korea has resumed the testing of the Short Range ballistic missiles crossing over South Korea and Japan. In 2021 address Kim Jong Un talked about a surprise weapon. In January 2021 parade, North Korea revealed the submarine launch ballistic missile for the first time along

³⁰⁰ "Joe Biden Slams Donald Trump's friendship with Thug Kim Jong Un," *Deccan Herald*, accessed on April 12, 2021, <https://www.deccanherald.com/international/world-news-politics/joe-biden-slams-donald-trumps-friendship-with-thug-kim-jong-un-905900.html>.

³⁰¹ "Biden: No meeting with Kim Jong Un Absent Preconditions," *Voice of America*, accessed on April 12, 2021, <https://www.voanews.com/usa/biden-no-meeting-kim-jong-un-absent-preconditions>.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ "Experts: Biden Thought likely to reverse Trump's North Korea Policies," *Voice Of America*, accessed on April 12, 2021, <https://www.voanews.com/east-asia-pacific/experts-biden-thought-likely-reverse-trumps-north-korea-policies>.

with the other missiles.³⁰⁵ It was a huge military showcase on media with thousands of people with no masks or SOP's as North Korea claims having no Covid cases yet. After taking over the white house, Biden administration has not shared North Korea policy yet. In response to the latest missile tests, Biden called it a usual practice of North Korea and warned it that in case of further escalations, there will be consequences. Biden's response shows that US will not rule out the sanctions policy from North Korea in near future. Although Biden has stated that he has kept the option of diplomacy in the table but the meeting with Kim will only be made possible over the condition of denuclearization. Along these verbal confronts, US and South Korea are planning for the joint military exercises. In such case, hostile response from North Korea is an expected one therefore, in such course of these events, the prospects for peace in Korean peninsula seemed bleak.

6.3 PROSPECTS OF RIPNESS FOR NORTH KOREA

Among all the actors of the Korean conflict, North Korea is the only state where we can find the moments of ripeness again and again, but due to the failure in approaching North Korea on the right time and lack of mediator is one of the biggest obstacle in conflict resolution. As the moment of ripeness can be identified with the help of objective and subjective evidences therefore, the analyses of North Korean political and economic sectors will help to identify the right time for negotiations. It's been evident that North Korea has been suffering from economic and food crisis. Therefore, one aspect which might alter the North Korean current behavior or might provide an opportunity to resume the Inter-Korea talks in near future is the economic crisis of North Korea. The North Korean economy is in stagnation since decades but the Covid lockdowns in states has not only affected the global economies but also the trade between the states. Although North Korea claims that it has no Covid case in the state but to avoid the further spread, it has closed down its borders. This decision halts all the cross border trade from China. Currently, North Korean trade is highly dependent on China and closure of the border will have a huge impact on North Korean economy. In fact, negative impacts of this policy begin to upsurge within two months of the border closure. Due to the shortage of supplies

³⁰⁵ "North Korea unveils new Submarine-Launch Missile," *BBC News*, accessed on April,12,2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-55671745>.

in local markets the prices of staple foods have risen up to 50%.³⁰⁶ Nearly half of the North Koreans earn from private economy and the blockade had largely affected their source of income.³⁰⁷ Already engulfed in unlimited number of sanctions the border closure will affect the state's economy more than ever before. There have been speculations about shortage of food in the state. Such economic crisis will put the North Korean people on the brink of worst famine. In October 2020 parade's speech, Kim Jong Un apologized to the people for not fulfilling his promises. Here the promise means that economic development along with the military first policy. Kim's apology highlighted the economic instability of the country and his failure to achieve any of the sanction relief from his diplomatic ventures. The most critical point is April 2021 address when Kim Jong Un called his people to prepare for hard times ahead as the country faces the food shortages and economic instability.³⁰⁸ He called on the officials to start the "Arduous March" in the country.³⁰⁹ Arduous March is a term used to refer the 1990's famine of the Korean history. All the given situation highlights the economic difficulty of North Korea and in the theoretical terms, this is the moment of ripeness in the state.

North Korea has a history of opening to the diplomacy in case of dire needs of economic relief. The 1990's famine was the worst humanitarian disaster in the history of the North Korea, which make it to review its military policy in order to get foreign aid to relieve the suffering of the people. The economic aid of US and South Korea was able to change the attitude of the state and they reached on the historic "Agreed Framework". As the result of this agreement, there was a détente in US-North Korea and Inter-Korean relations for half a decade. Many experts believe that this agreement would have worked out in resolving the Korean issue if US will not withdrew from it. Similarly, South Korea had been providing aid to North Korea through UN aid program of North Korea. Due to border closure UN committee and other foreign NGO's left the country. In this time of crisis, North Korea might again request the world for humanitarian assistance. Here a

³⁰⁶ "How Covid-19 is Affecting North Korea's Economy," *The Diplomat*, accessed on April 15, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/how-covid-19-is-affecting-north-koreas-economy/>.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ "Kim Jong-Un warns of North Korea crisis similar to deadly 90's famine," *BBC News*, accessed on April 15, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56685356>.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

mediator needs to analyse the subjective perception of pain for North Korea. This can be done through observing the statements and comments of the leader of the state. As North Korean leader has mentioned in new year speech about the Arduous March therefore this is an indication of pain for the state. This is a moment of ripeness for North Korea where striving further will be going to cause huge suffering and chaos.

The first country who would grab this opportunity will be South Korea. As Moon Jae in said many times that he will make “Last Ditch” effort for North Korea breakthrough.³¹⁰ He has been striving hard to bring North Korean on negotiating table since the closure of communication channels between the both states. So South Korea might call the meeting with regime to ease down the tensions. On the other side as Biden administration is in the middle of forming North Korean policy, so this is a wonderful opportunity for US to offer help to North Korea in order to breakdown the present state of hostility among them. Chinese factor is also very important in the whole situation. The first ally North Korea will look in to will be China. If communication resumed between the Korean states, then China will be the part of aid to North Korea. In such case a temporary peace is expected on the peninsula but for the permanent peace, the security issues of North Korea need to be addressed. As all the state’s approach for calling North Korea has not made progress before therefore, it is important for mediator to play an active role in bringing parties to the negotiations table. The mediator can induce the perceptions of Mutually hurting stalemate among the parties which might lead them to the resolution of the conflict.

As far as the nuclear program of North Korea is concerned, the probability of complete denuclearization is currently low due to many reasons. Firstly, North Korea has gone through very critical times in terms of economy and suffering of people in order to get the weapon. There is a long history of this struggle along with enormous of capital invested. Therefore, denuclearization is not an option on the table for North Koreans. Second is the mounting distrust between the involved actors. The parties at conflict do not trust each other due to a continuous history of withdrawing from the signed agreements.

³¹⁰ “South Korea’s Moon says will make Last Ditch effort for North Korea Breakthrough,” *US NEWS*, accessed on April 15, 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2021-01-10/south-koreas-moon-says-will-make-efforts-for-breakthrough-in-inter-korean-ties-nkorea-us-talks>.

As North Korea and US can't be trusted due to their non-compliance with the treaties so any deal between them will be temporary. Third, the accumulation of nuclear weapons is important for the regime's survival of North Korea. US response towards Saddam Hussain and Muammar Al-Qadhdhafi are clear lessons for the North Korean regime and the only card for their survival is the nuclear weapon. North Korean nuclear weapons is threat for South Korea-Japan and US. US presence in the region is threat for North Korea. In the presence of complexities of interests, the solution of Korean problem seems vague in near future.

CONCLUSION

The Korean conflict has been a bone of contention since seven decades and all the efforts for solution got failed because these efforts were not made on the right time. The protracted conflicts are subjected to resolution when the ripe moment arrives. As the Inter-Korean conflict has not ripened yet therefore, all the conflict resolution efforts were a failure. Throughout the history of the conflict, North Korea had been in ripeness many times but as this moment was one sided only therefore the perception of pain was weak. At the same time, other actors of the conflict failed to identify such moment of opportunities, hence ripe moments were lost. The clashing interests of the parties had been the biggest obstacle in the way of the conflict resolution therefore the identification of ripeness has been feeble. The main focus of this study was to find out the dynamics of Inter-Korean and North Korean-US détente of 2017-2020 and to identify the future of these improvements within the context of ripeness theory. In 2018, when Inter-Korean negotiations begin, it was not a ripe moment. Korean states were not in Hurting Stalemate and neither they had any clarity about how the conflict should be resolved. As the time passed, the relations again deteriorated and all the channels of cooperation were shut down. Hence the Zartman's insight about the significance of timing in the conflict resolution justified the reason of failure of Inter-Korean conflict resolution efforts.

The event of Inter-Korean and North Korea- US rapprochement was not a new phase in the history of their relations. The high level meetings were happened before as well. The different aspect were the dynamics which compelled parties to leave their hostile policy tentatively. In 2018 for first time Kim Jong Un came out of isolation for meetings with the leaders of regional and super powers. Similarly, for the first time in the history, an American president had face to face meetings with a North Korean leader. All these actors had different hidden agendas, therefore the dynamics of these improvement in relations were thoroughly analyzed in this research. As North Korea has been striving for the Nuclear weapons for so long therefore the successful test of Hydrogen Bomb in 2017 had raised its confidence for interaction. For international recognition North Korea sought for bigger stage and had one on one meetings with leaders of US, China and Russia. Such high level meetings gave recognition to North Korea on the world platform. Despite these

improvements the policies of North Korea were seen with suspicion as well therefore there were many skeptics about the North Korean behavior. The on-ground situation of North Korea showed a complete different picture, as just like before this opening of the diplomatic doors were another form of the deception. The failure on reaching on any solution proved the fact that Kim Jong Un used the same card that his ancestors also played in the past. For South Korea, inviting Kim for Olympics and then for summits were the part of Olympic diplomacy as South Korea wanted this biggest event of Olympics to be free of all threats from the Northern neighbor. Finally, with North Korean's participation, the Olympics were held peacefully. Another reason for South Korean approach to North Korea was to strengthen its position and fame in the conflict resolution efforts. The 2017 US-North Korean hostility marginalized South Korea position in the conflict therefore, with conciliation with North Korean and through peace-making efforts, South Korea reassured that no progress in the US-North Korean relations can make without its participation. For America, Donald Trump used the media politics to gain attention worldwide. First through war rhetoric with Kim and then engagement with North Korea played a huge part in curbing news which were harmful for his candidacy. Hence Trump's involvement in the conciliation were based on his personal interests and not on the aims of resolving the conflict.

There are number of challenges in the way of peace making in Korean peninsula. According to Zartman, the biggest obstacle for ripeness is the lack of perception of hurting stalemate. In Korean peninsula the hurting stalemate is there but it is not being perceived by the conflicting parties. One of the reason is the clash of interests and the true believer culture. Due to the one sided pressure on North Korea, it considers a tough resistance as the only survival option. Another challenge is the misinterpretations about North Korea in the world. Due to lack of communication, actors of the conflict interpret the North Korea policies differently, therefore there is no uniformity in policy formation of the states which affects the peacemaking efforts. Similarly, all the former agreements between the states became invalid because they failed to address the main issues of the states. Each time the actors sign agreements for their own interests due to which the validity of such bindings remain tentative. One of the biggest obstacle in dealing the North Korean issue is that no party have learnt any lesson from the past and states follow the similar policies which had

failed previously. The maximum pressure policy of US could not stop North Korea from nuclear proliferation. South Korea has also been following the same policy since decades. The political differences of progressives and conservatives in South Korea are also a biggest obstacle in the way of peace keeping with North Korea. Their opposing foreign policy behaviors had been the reason behind invalidity of the Inter-Korean agreements. All former US presidents also altered the state's foreign policies agendas towards North Korea. Only President Clinton and Trump had opened bilateral diplomatic channel with North Korea but their successors had changed the policies. Such behavior affected the validity of agreements and the level of trust between the states.

The beginning of 2020 did not bring good signs for improvement in relations as North Korea shut down the doors of negotiations for US. The breaking down of US-North Korea relations also affected the Inter-Korean relations. US new administration's criticism of Trump's North Korean policies and the cold attitude had roiled the chances of any further improvements. As North Korea had closed the borders due to pandemic therefore no engagement can be expected in near future. There are two aspects which might open up doors of opportunities for the states. First is the Tokyo Olympics of 2021, as the Seoul Olympics of 2018 had deescalated the tensions on the peninsula and opened up a series of dialogue therefore an invitation to North Korea in current phase of deadlock might opened a way for diplomatic engagements. Another opportunity will be the understanding of Ripe moment in North Korea. Since the 2020 North Korea had raised food shortage concerns and the closing of borders due to pandemic had further worsened the situation. In 2021 North Korean regime warned public about another famine in the country, therefore there are chances of ripe moment for North Korea. If parties seized this opportunity, then the chances of a negotiating a deal will be positive.

Overall, the actors of the Korean conflict need to address the issues of concerns first. States are pressurizing North Korea for denuclearization without addressing the security concerns of the regime. The utmost aim of North Korea is the regime survival and nuclear weapons are the key to maintain this survival. Therefore, offering sanctions relief in response to denuclearization is a failed approach. The sanctions of the states on North Korea had also failed to stop North Korea from achieving its aim. American maximum

pressure policy could not stop North Korea from going nuclear therefore it has proved that hard approach had no effect on North Korea. Hence there has been a repetition of same policies and approaches to deal with Korean issue for decades.

As ripeness theory defines the reasons of failure of conflict resolution efforts in Korean peninsula, it also opens a way forward for solution of the conflict. Ripeness theory emphasizes on the importance of the ripe moment for states but it is not necessary that ripe moment occurs on the form of a catastrophe always. Readiness theory justifies this situation by stating that the motivation for ending the conflict can also lead to the meaningful negotiations. Dean J Pruitt, the founder of Readiness Theory proposed a “Compensatory Model” in which he combined the elements of ripeness and readiness for identification of ripe moment in the states. According to this model, the motivation to end the conflict can be different in each party.³¹¹ For example, for one party the motivation of negotiations might be the result of loss, for other it might be the cost of conflict or fear of future destruction. In Korean peninsula, North Korea is in hurting stalemate due to high cost of conflict and economic crisis i.e food shortages etc. As South Korea does not have a cost burden but it is under the direct threat of North Korean short range missiles. There is a fear of future catastrophe in the region. US on the other side also does not in hurting stalemate but the threat of North Korean ICBM’s is still there. China on the other hand is also under huge criticism for its support to North Korea and US growing military influence in the region is a threat for China. Hence all the involved actors of the conflict have point of concerns and threats. Finally, there is a need of strong neutral third party which can use these ripe moments to bring conflicting parties on negotiating table. All states needs to adopt engagement as a first policy and this measure will only be success, if the actors guarantee to remain persistent with negotiation process. Above all, the motivation to end the conflict should prevail in the meetings and third party can play a huge role in maintaining this optimism.

Ripeness theory not only defines the reasons of a conflict but also highlights the role mediators can play to induce the recognition of MHS and a way out to the conflicting

³¹¹ Dean G. Pruitt, “Whither Ripeness Theory,” *Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution Working Paper 25* (2005):9-12.

parties. Mediators through skillful arbitration can highlight the presence of the objective and subjective indicators in the parties. Mediators should be the keen observers to identify and grasp the opportunity for bringing parties to the negotiation table. He should identify the cost of the conflict to the parties and should divert their attention towards the future opportunities. He can suggest the possible solution to all actors of the conflict and persuade them about the mutual perception of all parties. In short, the role of third party is mandatory for identification of ripe moment. Parties at conflict will only look towards the mediators if they believe that he is a neutral body, aiming at solving the conflict disregard of any personal gain. Therefore, the trust factor is very important. In case of Korean conflict, the third parties failed to build such trust level as the mediators were involved in the interest game instead of sincere will for conflict resolution.

In order to raise confidence building, it is important to adopt a different approach from traditional hard methods towards North Korea. The most important aspect is that confidence building and economic sector can play a huge part in it. As North Korea is struggling with the economic sector therefore through creating enticing opportunities, North Korean hopes for the solution of the conflict can be raised. As trust making is a long term process but it helps countries to find common grounds for resolution of the conflict. More importantly the states should focus on the previous failures in dealing the issue and take them as lesson to devise a policy with mutual agreements.

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