THE FIRST STEP TO THE SOUTH AFTER HALF A CENTURY. CAN THE "SUNSHINE" POLICY MELT FROZEN RELATIONS?

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Annotation. In this article, the two countries of East Asia belonging to the same nationality, South and North Korea, and their the current social situation, their mutual relations, the existing conflicts, the historical formation of these conflicts, the tendencies towards their resolution, and the actions being taken regarding the prospective development of mutual relations will be discussed.
Key words. Korean War, Sunshine Policy, Inter-Korean Summit, Denuclearization, Cold War, Panmunjeom Declaration, Peace, New Future.

The Korean War, which lasted from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953, ended with the establishment of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) along the 38th parallel between the North and the South, in the case of killing 2.5 million people. But is this the real end, or is it only a statement presented to the world community by the two countries, which were refraining from taking steps to achieve unity, creating the ground for the wishes of external forces that use the duration of this war for their own political and military purposes? If we look at the history of the origin of the war, the Soviet troops, strengthened by the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, deployed their military forces north of the 38th parallel that separates the two countries. Concerned that the South remains empty, the United States has filled it with its military bases. The United Nations, as the supreme and arbiter, assumed control over the US zone and participated in the reconstruction of South Korea and the training of the South Korean standing army. Douglas MacArthur was in charge of the United Nations Command when the United Nations Security Council called on member states to defend South Korea. Hence, in the 1950s, the US, which was the main political actor on the Korean Peninsula, was against the other two actors that were considered its de facto adversary China and the Soviet Union, who hoped to achieve their goals by supposedly supporting North Korea caused to the three-year armed conflict, which began in 1950, claimed the lives of millions of Korean soldiers and civilians from both sides (North and South Korea), as well as hundreds of thousands of Chinese soldiers and more than 36,000 American soldiers even US never officially declared hostilities to them. The 38th parallel divides one nation into two today which established on July 27, 1953 and was famous armistice reached by the United

Nations Command with China and North Korea, the terms of which were implicitly approved, most interestingly, never officially signed by the South Korean government. Now we will dwell in more details on the measures taken by the leaders, who are concerned about the weak peace relations between the two countries, to achieve mutual agreement finally in the 21st century and their effectiveness, and what results will be expected from these actions in the future.

On April 27, 2018, the leaders of the two Koreas told the world community for the first time since the national division, it is time to bring the inter-Korean relations to the bright spots, frozen under the influence of the Cold War. It has become one of the most important historical dates for the Koreans. They announced that friendly negotiations and sincere dialogues will be held this spring in order to ease the nearly 70 years of relations. North Korea's supreme leader set foot in the South for the first time since the 1953 armistice. As usual, any important and noteworthy talks and summits were held in North Korea, especially in Pyongyang, so the summit on April 27, 2018 was the first summit held on the South Korean side of the Joint Security Area inside the Peace House. As expectedly, it brought the subject of non-stop comments and predictions of many world political analysts and mass media. The removal of mines and guard posts along the Joint Security Areas, and North Korea`s agreeing to dismantle its nuclear complex with the participation of international experts, if the United States takes appropriate measures, were among the major visible results. South Korea's president Moon Jae In became the first South Korean leader given a public speech in North Korea. This summit was the third Inter-Korean summit. Before that, in 2000 and in 2007, several contracts and agreements were reached within the framework of the first and second summits. Speaking of these summits, Kim Dae Jung, who left a significant mark on the politics of South Korea at the beginning of the 21st century, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for developing and implementing his famous Sunshine Policy and for his efforts to improve relations with North Korea. It is worth noting that he is the head of the state. As one of the promising results of the summit, we can mention the joint factory that will be launched in 2004 in the city of Kaesong on the northern border.

The second summit was held in Pyongyang on October 2-4, 2007, between then North Korean President Kim Jong Il and South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun. In 2007, Ro Moo Hyun, who successfully continued Kim Dae-jung's conciliatory policy, crossed the North border to meet with Kim Jong Il, not by air, but by car, unlike his mentor. However, the purpose of organizing this summit was not only about easing relations and good neighborliness, but because of a

more important political event. In addition, the meeting was a sign that the relations between the members of the Six-Party Negotiations (US, China, Japan, Russia and the two Koreas) have reached their peak, and how much active work is being done on the implementation of the agreement signed in September 2005. It is not an exaggeration to say that it was another confirmation of control. Based on the 2005 six-party agreement, in exchange for large economic and energy assistance, Pyongyang was expected to give up its nuclear program and put an end to diplomatic isolation. However, on October 9, 2006, North Korea's announcement that it had successfully conducted its first nuclear test was not only contrary to the 2005 Six-Party Agreement, but also to the joint declaration signed by the two Koreas on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. North Korea lost a number of guarantees given in exchange for aid to stop the production of nuclear weapons, in connection with the partial successful detonation of its nuclear device. And this was one of the main reasons for the second Inter-Korean summit meeting. Furthermore, there are strong opinions that this summit took place under the political and economic pressure of the US, China and Japan, the members of the 2005 negotiations. The two leaders also managed to reach an agreement on replacing the armistice signed after the current Korean War with a permanent peace regime, along with re-committing to resolve the nuclear issue by implementing the 2005 agreement.

The Panmunjeom Declaration remains the most relevant and important of these reforms implemented in recent years. We will speak a liitle bit about what are the main prominent demands and proposals have in this declaration. The Panmunjeom Declaration consists of three sections, the first of which is devoted to Inter-Korean relations. The leaders of the two Koreas were committed to the irreversible development of Inter-Korean relations, and that was recognized the importance of dialogue and negotiation on resolving existing problems and establishing the principle of compliance with all previously reached agreements. Greater attention was paid to finding solutions to humanitarian problems through Inter-Korean Red Cross talks. The second part was the foundation of the momentum to put an end to the war and establish a period of permanent peace. In the third section devoted to denuclearization and driving forces of advanced Inter-Korean relations, the commitment to build a nuclear-free Korean peninsula was fully confirmed. The terms of denuclearization were discussed, taking into account the results of the previous negotiations, the commitment to the truth, as well as the positions of the United States and the North. After the 2018 Inter-Korean Summit on April 27, the successful holding of the US-North Korea Summit,

the China-North Korea Summit and the South Korea-China-Japan Summit on May 7, Chairman Kim Jong Un In's meeting with the US secretary of state, and the May 10 release of three detained Americans from North Korea and repatriation, were hailed as a warm welcome ahead of the June 12 US-North Korea summit in Singapore.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the works of President Kim Dae Jung, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to the reconstruction and development of relations between North and South Korea, and especially as a developer the Sunlight Policy, served as the theoretical basis of South Korea's foreign policy towards North Korea. Its official title is the Policy of Reconciliation and Cooperation towards the North and it is also known as the Operational Policy towards the North. While North Korea, which has spent an inordinate proportion of its budget on its military and nuclear programs, was in serious economic decline and facing bankruptcy, the South was experiencing a period of economic prosperity that began under President Park Chung Hee. The Sunshine policy also appeared in the context of the growing economic gap between the two Koreas. Korea University researcher Son Kee Young, in his book, South Korea's Engagement Policy and North Korea: Identities, Norms, and Sunshine Policy, argues that South Korea is engaging North Korea through cooperation rather than maintaining its past conservative stance. It is considering that the background of the decision to do so also points to changes in domestic politics, - ,, Sunshine policy ultimately emerged as evidence of the development of South Korean national identity since the Cold War. "It started an unprecedented period of confusion in the matter of defining it as an enemy or not" he said. Also some historic moments in Inter-Korean relations that we covered earlier, including three Korean summits in Pyongyang (June 2000, October 2007, and September 2018) and two meetings in Panmunjom (April 2018 and May 2018), as well as several high-profile business initiatives and short meetings of family members are recognized as a successful result of the Sunshine policy, but there are also opposing opinions against it. In particular, Sunshine policy is often compared to West Germany's foreign policy in the early 1970s. Willy Brandt, the chancellor of West Germany at the time, implemented his "Ostpolitic" (Eastern) policy of detente in hopes of improving relations with East Germany, the Soviet Union, Poland, and other Soviet countries. After Kim Dae-Jung, President Roh Moo Hyun continued his predecessor's policies, and relations on the divided peninsula have warmed somewhat since 2002. In 2003, the issue of North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons was raised again. Despite the non-compliance with the requirements of

the Joint Declaration on Denuclearization, President Roh continued to deliver humanitarian aid to the North, remaining true to the policy. Despite North Korea's non-denuclearization policy, South Korea still maintains a policy of stability and cooperation? If we turn to the question, this situation has also been evaluated differently with different political views. American political scientist, academic S.P. Huntington pointed out in his work "Clash of Civilizations", South Korea, on the other hand, viewed the bomb in relation to its regional interests. Many South Koreans saw a North Korean bomb as a Korean bomb, one which would never be used against other Koreans but could be used to defend Korean independence and interests against Japan and other potential threats. South Korean civilian officials and military officers explicitly looked forward to a united Korea having that capability". Thus, it is possible that the South Koreans' tolerance of the North's nuclear tests is because they hope that the same nuclear will be used externally for the common Korean interests in the future. As Jungmin Kang wrote in the Atomic Scientists Bulletin, "Because of the 'Sunshine Policy' after 1998, many South Korean NGOs and the public believed that Pyongyang would never use nuclear weapons and that North Korea's threats were not against them. In this regard, two the government opened the Kaesong industrial plant, continuing cooperation on projects begun under Kim Dae Jung. However, relations between Seoul and Pyongyang became more strained after North Korea's nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009. Many political analysts have pointed out that Korea's Sunshine Policy was flawed due to its too soft approach to serious situations. It brought the policy to an end in 2010, but this end did not last long.

After Moon Jae In was elected president in 2017, he initiated a revival of the Sunshine Policy, once again trying to reach a compromise with North Korea. Moon Jae In's success in marking the two summits held in Panmunjeom (April 2018 and May 2018) as the first held outside of Pyongyang is a result of his efforts to improve Inter-Korean relations. President Moon was recognized as the first president to hold several inter-Korean summits in one year, and his policy was symbolically known as the "Moonshine Policy". Under President Moon, South Korea's National Security Policy had three main principles:

- No armed provocation by the North will be tolerated;
- The South will not try to assimilate the North in any way;
- The South seeks active cooperation and compromise.

These principles, according to Moon's concepts, should served as a signal that the South does not want to subjugate the North or undermine its government.

Although President Moon is recognized by the world community for all the peace-making activities he has done for the entire Korean Peninsula, Inter-Korean relations have deteriorated since 2019 as a result of increased military hostility with the United States. Since then, attention to military development has increased, and it is no secret that military equipment and weapon tests have increased too.

It is important to recognize that in today's intense and changing times, it is appropriate for the generation of the North and the South, who are representatives of the same nation and people, to fight together against any external distracting forces, using each other. Admittedly, with its new technologies, the formation of a large-scale production system, the value of GDP increasing year by year, and the economy reaching a stable level, South Korea already has the respect and strategic partners it deserves in the world community. North Korea, on the other hand, refrains from the process of globalization and continues to isolate itself from international integration. China, which was once its supplier of food and oil, can take countermeasures at any time. In fact, there is no consensus between China, Japan and Korea. The joining of these 4 major countries into a single coalition to jointly fight against the economic and military challenges expected in the future can bring great positive results. However, whether this process will be realized or not will be determined by the future political strategies of the East Asian countries and their position in each other's foreign relations.

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