

Trilateral Cooperation

: Young Professionals Research Project

Lee Dongmin, Jo Bee Yun, Kim Bo Kyung, Lee Hyuntai, Choi Eunmi



국립외교원 외교안보연구소
Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security
Korea National Diplomatic Academy

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Designing a Mechanism for Multilateral Security Dialogue in Northeast Asia

Lee Dongmin

(Associate Professor, Dankook University)

Designing a Mechanism for Multilateral Security Dialogue in Northeast Asia¹⁾

Lee Dongmin

I. Introduction

Is constructing a more cooperative form of international institution in Northeast Asia possible? The idea of a “security community” carries mixed connotations among Northeast Asian countries, as the remanence of Cold War sentiments remains strong in the region. Nevertheless, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, speculations about building a cooperative community reemerged among students of international relations.²⁾ The purpose of this paper is to propose a security community for Northeast Asia. In doing so it assesses the practicality and applicability of Karl Deutsch’s concept of “security community” in the Northeast Asian political context.³⁾

The snowballing of economic interdependencies among the Northeast Asian countries, which had been unthinkable during the Cold War era, has now become an undeniable factual trend. Thus, as economic interdependency intensifies both regionally and globally, it is inevitable that the Northeast Asian states will cooperate further, and, more importantly, ameliorate the past adversarial international political structures for the sake of maximizing growth. One salient aspect of the problem is the inadequacy of infrastructure systems that cost excessive amounts of capital among the ideologically divided states. Accordingly, it is neither too naïve nor premature to contend that the ideological incompatibilities between the capitalist and socialist systems that originally created the regional schisms, and the current balance-of-power structure, will be considered anachronistic in the foreseeable future. An initial inquiry into possible designs consists of an analysis of original ideas in Deutsch et al.’s concept of a security community and subsequent developments of theoretical frameworks to assesses their applicability in the Northeast Asian context.

1) Earlier version of this paper has been published in Dongmin Lee, “Rethinking Security in Northeast Asia: A Prospect for Security Community Building,” *Journal of Peace Studies* 15:2 (2014).

2) For example, Katzenstein questions why regionalism in Asia remains underdeveloped despite the increasing and robust growing economic interdependence among East Asian states. For more information, see Peter Katzenstein, “Introduction: Asian Regionalism in Comparative Perspective,” in *Network Power: Japan and Asia*, edited by Peter Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi (New York : Cornell University Press, 1997).

3) Karl W. Deutsch, edited., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

Hence, a substantial part of this paper is devoted to the discussion of a few contending theoretical frameworks of the security community. Subsequently, the current trends toward regional integration are observed, particularly the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to extract a few selected lessons, and also to acquire empirical evidence of the background of the present cooperative ambience, because the ASEAN case reveals the similarity in the dynamics of the states that are applicable in the Northeast Asian context and is the most progressive convener that has taken the form of the security community in the region.⁴⁾

The main body of the paper is devoted to a discussion of regional developments conducive to the construction of a viable security community. Then, the final section deals with the regional security arrangements and presents a design for a security re-alignment process involving the regional states in Northeast Asia, namely Korea, Japan and China. This paper also suggests that the U.S. should continue to play a critical role as an off-shore balancer, as a cooperative partner, and thus also benefit from a more integrated regional economy.⁵⁾ Overall, the central goal of the paper is to find policy solutions to ameliorate the current military tensions through international institutional structures. This may appear to be highly idealistic speculation, but it seeks to find a realistic gateway to a conversion of the confrontational ambience into a more cooperative one, whereby a win-win situation for the international community can be created.

II. Concepts of Security Community

In *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Deutsch, et al. present the fundamental concept of a security community. In their definition, a security community is a group of people that has become “integrated,” meaning that these people have successfully developed some kind of “sense of community.” This sense of community indicates a belief on the part of individuals in a group that they have both carrying capacity and some sort of agreed-upon framework for resolving their common problems by a process of “peaceful change,” which refers to the solving of problems by institutional procedures rather than by physical force. Therefore, a security community is a group of people living in an atmosphere of peace without any significantly bellicose tendencies among its members.

This kind of security community seems a rather unattainable aspiration in the context of Northeast Asia, especially when one considers the seven-decades of animosities and current military tensions

4) Dick K. Nanto, “East Asian Regional Architecture: New Economic and Security Arrangements and U.S. Policy,” *CRS Report for Congress* (January 2008).

5) Aaron Friedberg, “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia,” *International Security* Volume 18, Issue 3 (1994): 5-33.

embedded within a deep structural balance-of-power politics.⁶⁾ However, the dynamics of the Northeast Asian region have been changing dramatically for the past decade, particularly in the realm of international economic interdependency. The rates of regional international trade have increased strikingly with the rapprochement processes that began during the 1970s, but more concretely expedited in the 1990s onward. Due to these regional re-adjustments and developments, some of the elements of the security community, including the “institutional procedures,” became more feasible.

In an assessment of the applicability of the security community concept to the Northeast Asian political context, the “pluralistic security community” seems preferable to that of an “amalgamated security community.” In their definitions, Deutsch et al. presume that the latter refers to a formal merger of two or more previously independent units, with some type of common government, either unitary or federal. Moreover, it implies a single, supreme decision-making center. On the other hand, “pluralistic security-community” refers to an aggregate of separate governments that retain respective legal independence and supreme decision-making centers.

Considering the robust senses of national identity and the distinct characteristics of the respective governments in the Northeast Asian region, it is desirable to retain legal independence and a separate decision-making apparatus characteristic of looser organizations. In general, people are “interested in the transnational and interstate interactions that can produce a transnational community with a governance structure that is linked to dependable expectations of peaceful change”.⁷⁾ It follows that a genuine security community cannot be realized without the mutual consent of its members.

Deutsch et al. further suggest a few conditions for the establishment of a pluralistic security community. However, rather than accepting all the background conditions, it may be wiser to select only the few that are generally important and applicable to the Northeast Asian context. The selected background conditions are a) Compatibility of Major Values, b) Expectation of Joint Economic Reward, and, c) Outside Military Threat. These three conditions can be classified as essential and helpful for establishing a security community.

1) Compatibility of Major Values

Deutsch, et al., first identify the *compatibility of major values*, as one of the essential conditions for the security community. They claim that there has to be compatibility of the “main values” held by the relevant strata of all the political units involved. The main values explicitly indicate both

6) John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, N.Y.: Norton & Company, 2001).

7) Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett Edited, *Security Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 30.

basic political ideology and identical value in economics. In terms of basic political ideology, they refer to democracy. Therefore, to have the essential conditions for the establishment of a security community, each of its members must achieve a democratic governmental system that reflects a broad representation of the people, guarantees the right to organize, and exhibits a practicing devotion to the “rule of law.” Economic value refers not just to communism contrasted with capitalism, but socialism contrasted with modified free enterprise. In other words, the members of a security community must share economic beliefs and political values. The condition of compatibility of major values is a crucially important element, yet the most controversial.

It may be necessary to determine whether the political ideologies and economic beliefs of respective states matter for the establishment of a security community and if so, how relevant they are, and to what degree. It may be important to ask whether “non-democratic” countries have neither carrying capacity nor any sort of agreed-upon framework to resolve their common problems by dependable expectations of peaceful change. Although there is an overriding view that “democratic” states are intrinsically more benign and less bellicose than their counterparts in their behaviors as the democratic peace proposition claims to be, there are a few contending views of the thesis.⁸⁾

A few questions emerge from a review of Deutsch’s background conditions for building a security community. Following the logic of his arguments, no non-democratic state possesses elements that govern by rule of law. Given that democratic states exhibit the elements of “government by broad representation and by discussion, with the right to organize lawfully in opposition to government,” they have the fundamental conditions for building a “sense of community.”⁹⁾ Such a claim indirectly supports the democratic peace thesis which assumes that two democracies never fight each other, and as an end result, the international community may likely be more stable and peaceful if democracies prevail as a form of domestic government.¹⁰⁾ This claim seems to suggest that ideologically different states are inherently incompatible like oil and water.

The direct application of Deutsch’s background conditions in the context of Northeast Asia reveals some salient limitations, due to the fact that the states in the region apparently do not share the same ideological “value” of democracy. Deutsch’s background conditions have much in common with the democratic peace proposition (DPP) and, further, this proposition is heavily derived from the concepts of Deutschian integration. In his article, “Democracy and Integration,” Starr states that the

8) Bruce Russett, Christopher Layne, David E. Spiro and Michael W. Doyle, “The Democratic Peace,” *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995); Sebastian Rosato, “The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory,” *American Political Science Review* 97: 4 (November 2003).

9) Deutsch et al., 124.

10) Ajin Choi, “The Power of Democratic Competition,” *International Security* 28:1 (Summer 2003): 142-53; Christian Davenport and David A. Armstrong II, “Democracy and the Violation of Human Rights: A Statistical Analysis from 1976 to 1996,” *American Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 3 (July 2004): 538-54.

“Deutschian pluralistic security community is an outcome which is broader than, but overarches, the democratic peace phenomenon”.¹¹⁾ According to Starr, “The democratic peace proposition is a statement that claims the following: there is a virtual absence of war among dyads of democratic politics.” He further states that due to “transparency” the nature of elements of democracy, people both inside and outside of society can see and expect some fair mutual participation in the payoffs. Moreover, transparency is a prerequisite element of the free-market system. These conditions will eventually lead to the elimination of bellicose behavior among democracies.

The application of Deutsch’s background condition of “main value,” and moreover the DPP seems unworkable in the political context of Northeast Asia because there is arguably a unique mixture of both democratic and non-democratic forms of governments. In addition, as stated by Chan, the DPP is “arguably one of the most robust generalizations that has been produced to date”.¹²⁾ Thus, it is fruitless to review the feasibility of the hypothesis and conclude that the sharing of main values is essential for building a security community. As former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad once noted, “the ASEAN group is among the most dynamic in the world,” its membership consisting of many different peoples and of governments.¹³⁾ The empirical evidence of the ASEAN case validates that community-building can be accomplished even including states with a different political background.

Overall, we have evaluated the holding of “main values” in common as a precondition for building a security community. The term generally refers to political ideology, and especially to democracy. It has been argued that though the classifications “democratic” and “non-democratic” are considered important elements in building a cooperative security community, they are still highly debatable whether the ideologically different mixture of the governments may greatly hinder the region states to resolve their common problems by dependable expectations of peaceful change. The degree of democracy is still debatable among the Northeast Asian states, and moreover, the democratic perspective propositions are still in the process of debate yet to be resolved in studies of international relations.

2) Expectation of Joint Economic Reward

According to Deutsch, et al., commonly shared economic beliefs are essential as a foundation for building a security community. Shared economic belief should lead to the expectation of joint

11) Harvey Starr, “Democracy and Integration: Why Democracies Don’t Fight Each Other,” *Journal of Peace Research* 34: 2 (May 1997): 155.

12) Steve Chan, “In Search of Democratic Peace: Problems and Promise,” *Mershon International Studies Review* Volume 41, Issue 1 (May 1997): 59-91.

13) Billson Kurus, “Understanding ASEAN: Benefits and *Raison d’Etre*,” *Asian Survey* Volume 33, Issue 8 (August 1993): 828.

economic reward as a significant element in the construction of a security community, though the authors do not see “real evidence” or salient causality between the expectation and the process.¹⁴⁾ However, such conditions are an important motivational factor in the expedition of the building process. The interpretation of “joint economic reward” centers on two main nuclei.

First, “expectation” will promote cooperative behavior among the respective parties, and, second, perceptions of joint economic reward will minimize the military-security tensions for the sake of enhancing growth. Although critics have argued that regional integrations are limited and that the “ties among Asian states are much less developed, and the basis for their establishment is, in some instances, less obvious, and the possible obstacles to their growth more readily apparent,” the actual picture of economic interdependencies is less pessimistic.¹⁵⁾

3) *Outside Military Threat*

Regarding background conditions for building a security community, Deutsch, et al., consider “outside military threat” to be “somewhat unreliable as a condition helpful to integration.” Their general points are acceptable, particularly their presumption that even if there is a foreign military threat, its effects are rather transitory. However, there are numerous ways of looking at the factor of an outside military threat. Deutsch, et al., see the outside threat as a stimulus to the solidification of a regional community. Their point is well taken, and their assertion seems reasonable. However, although the effects are rather “transitory,” the aspects of military-security cooperation in a security community are not at all insignificant. As Amitav Acharya asserts, “Norms and procedures governing the prevention, management, isolation, and resolution of inter-member conflicts are as important a part of intra-ASEAN cooperation” in dealing with common external threats.¹⁶⁾ The process of constant security talks among its members does not necessarily provide them with “complete self-reliance,” but does give them an “ability to override external pressures through collective bargaining and to minimize the need for seeking external intervention in the region”.¹⁷⁾ Those aspects of collective bargaining power against external threats alone are not insignificant.

In the same vein, the security community can operate as an effective mechanism for dissuading aggression if not preventing actual aggressive behavior. One of the purposes of regional institutions

14) Deutsch et al., 144.

15) Aaron L. Friedberg, “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia,” *International Security* Volume 18, Issue 3 (Winter 1993-1994): 19.

16) Amitav Acharya, “Regional Military-Security Cooperation in the Third World: A Conceptual Analysis of the Relevance and Limitations of ASEAN,” *Journal of Peace Research* Volume 29, Issue 1 (Feb. 1992): 7-21.

17) Ibid., 17.

such as The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is also derived from the perception of outside military threats, mainly from the Soviet Union at the heydays of the Cold War. As Wallander states, “alliances can be more than simply pieces of paper or aggregations of military power: as explicit, persistent, and connected sets of rules that prescribe behavioral roles and constrain activity, sometimes alliances are institution”.¹⁸⁾ During the Cold War era, the concrete external threat glued the members of the security community together in a form of an alliance system. ASEAN also functions to secure regional stability and counter-balance any possible outside military threat, and thus, regularly holds security talks among its members.

Moreover, a key contribution of ASEAN “lies in its value as a source of psychological comfort and support for the member states”.¹⁹⁾ Friedberg however asserts that “ASEAN has never been much more than a loose collection of the region’s less powerful states”.²⁰⁾ While that may be true, if aggregates of these small and less powerful states can help each other to feel more secure, there may be room for development. Adler and Barnett have also strongly emphasized that military-security cooperation rests on “identity” rather than “external threat”.²¹⁾ The actual processes of cooperative behavior and commonly shared cognitive aspects of *group-ness* can be a more valuable goal.

The compatibility of main values is important but may not be the sole element in the building of a security community as long as respective parties are willing to resolve their common problems through peaceful change. Nevertheless, it has also been argued that the expectation of joint economic reward is a critically important motivational factor. The increasing economic interdependency, and expectations and conditions of mutual growth, will provide a common ground for more cooperative tendencies. In its discussions of an outside military threat, this paper presents slightly different aspects of external threats than those of Deutsch, et al. It asserts that cooperation depends on “identity” rather than any deterrent capability of a security community. In other words, cooperative behavior and shared cognition of group-ness can serve a more valuable purpose than the ability to confront external threats.

III. The Northeast Asian Security Community

Northeast Asia remains a dangerous place beset by hostility and animosity. It is also a region of divided countries, which still harbor bitter cold-war sentiments. From the perspective of structural

18) Celeste A. Wallander, “Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO after the Cold War,” *International Organization* 54:4 (Autumn 2000): 705-735.

19) Bilson Kurus., 824.

20) Aaron L. Friedberg., “Ripe for Rivalry,” 23.

21) Adler and Barnett, *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

realists, military tensions are temporally prevented and deterred through the balance-of-power structure, and the gloomy realities in the region seem to prove their point. In *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* Mearsheimer asserts that states still fear each other and seek to gain power at each other's expense due to the anarchic nature of international systems.²²⁾ He assumes that the nature of international politics is intrinsically predetermined without any maneuvering room for rectification or improvement. The structural realist assumption denies any possible change in world politics. As Mearsheimer argues and concludes that we are likely to see greater instability in both Europe and Northeast Asia and that a rising China is the most dangerous potential threat to the United States.

Despite the gloomy prospects of current military confrontations, the picture is not entirely bleak nor its expectations merely pessimistic. In fact, the ideas or norms of great expectation for mutual benefit transformed the entire region for the past decades. As highlighted by the Deutsch et. al., the interpretation of joint economic reward shapes the cooperative behavior among the respective parties and thereby minimizes the tensions for the sake of growth. In other words, the ideas and norms sharing matter in building a community. In the context of Southeast Asia, Acharya focuses on how transnational ideas and norms produced institutional changes in ASEAN.²³⁾

Then, it might be worthwhile to contemplate how the rising China factor plays into the security community-building efforts. Conventional clichés warn about the danger of China when it becomes a full economic powerhouse.²⁴⁾ Goldstein further warns us that although there is little likelihood that Beijing can greatly accelerate the military modernization process, both the quantitative expansion and qualitative improvements of military capabilities are endangering regional political balances.²⁵⁾ Although there are views that China has become more assertive in its international behavioral pattern,²⁶⁾ there is a certain truth that on-going regional economic interdependencies have been promoting the prospect of developing closer relationships with neighbors. In addition, China's reassurance policy in the late 1990s aftermath of the Asian Financial Crisis, brought about the sense

22) John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton & Company, 2001).

23) Amitav Acharya, "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism," *International Organization* 58 (Spring 2004): 239-275.

24) Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011).

25) Avery Goldstein, "Great Expectations: Interpreting China's Arrival," *International Security* Volume 22, Issue 3 (Winter 1997-1998): 37; Also see, Avery Goldstein, "China's Real and Present Danger: Now Is the Time for Washington to Worry," *Foreign Affairs* vol.92, no.5 (September/October 2013): 136-44; Thomas J. Christensen, "The Advantages of an Assertive China: Responding to Beijing's Abrasive Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2011).

26) Thomas Christensen, "The Advantages of an Assertive China: Responding to Beijing's Abrasive Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 90, No.2 (March/April 2011); Jian Zhang, "The Domestic Sources of China's More Assertive Foreign Policy," *International Politics* Vol. 51 (May 2014): 390-397; Oriana Skylar Mastro, "Why Chinese Assertiveness is Here to Stay," *The Washington Quarterly* Vol.37, No.4 (2015): 151-170; Andrew Scobell and Scott W Harold, "An 'Assertive' China? Insights from Interviews," *Asian Survey* vol.9, No.2 (2013): 111-131.

of *group-ness* for the first time particularly in Southeast Asia.²⁷⁾

The situation in Northeast Asia might be explained in a similar context. During the Cold War, it was beyond imagining that China would establish economic ties with countries like South Korea. What is the role of the two Koreas in the process of building a security community in the region? Examining the possible construction of international institutions in the Northeast Asian context, Mearsheimer presents evidence that both implies and denies an optimistic blueprint. Regarding Korea, he states,

Although future relations between North and South Korea are difficult to predict, both sides are still poised to fight a major war along the border separating them, which remains the most heavily armed strip of territory in the world. Moreover, there is hardly any evidence—at least at this point—that North Korea intends to surrender its independence and become part of a unified Korea.²⁸⁾

Mearsheimer is right about the fact that the Korean peninsula remains the most heavily armed strip of territory in the world. Application of Deutsch's observation based on the empirical reality, the region is bound to fail to bring about peace and stability. In this context, one may view that without resolving nuclear issues on the Korean peninsula, it may be difficult to concretely achieve a true sense of regional integration in Northeast Asia.²⁹⁾

In terms of building a security community, although the situation has significantly improved since the end of the Cold War, one of the major obstacles is the still on-going political tension in Northeast Asia. The "Security-Triangle" constructed during the Cold War remains in place along with the philosophy of containment.³⁰⁾ Deutschian integration and its security community concept alone are lacking actual physical mechanism and apparatus for balancing each other out.

IV. Scenarios for a Northeast Asian Multilateral Security Dialogue Mechanism

This chapter analyzes the components of the Security Community proposed by Karl Deutsch and

27) Evelyn Goh, "Southeast Asian Perspectives on the China Challenge," *Journal of Strategic Studies* Vol. 30, No. 4–5 (July 2007); David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* 29:3 (2005): 64–99; Xuefeng Sun, "Why Does China Reassure South-East Asia," *Pacific Focus* 24:3 (2009): 298–316.

28) John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton & Company, 2001), 374.

29) Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, "*Engaging North Korea: The Role of Economic Statecraft*," *Policy Studies* 57 (2011).

30) The security Triangle generally refers to the military alliance among the United States, Japan and South Korea.

scrutinizes the possibility of establishing the foundation of multilateral cooperation for cooperation, peace, and stability in East Asia. Although Karl Deutsch outlined fourteen elements necessary to form a security community, this chapter focuses on three main elements which are 1) Compatibility of Major Values, 2) Expectation of Joint Economic Reward, and 3) Outside Military Threat. Northeast Asia is complex because each of its countries has clashing political values, different political enemies, and because the strategic competition between the U.S. and China is intensifying.

As Karl Deutsch emphasized, of the many prerequisites to form a security community, “major values” refers to the importance of sharing similar political values. Since Deutsch published the book in 1957 until nowadays, there have been calls even within the United States for stronger cooperation between countries that share the ‘value’ of democracy and eliminate destabilizing elements in order to protect the liberal international order.³¹⁾ On the other hand, there are those who predict the decline of the current liberal international order due to recent developments such as China’s rise.³²⁾

The purpose of this chapter is to explore practical political alternatives to establish a security community to manage peace and stability in Northeast Asia at a time of transition when the strategic competition between the United States and China is intensifying, without delving into the theoretical factors covered in the main part. Through the Covid-19 pandemic, the strategic competition between the U.S. and China is encroaching the realm of ideology. After the inauguration of the Trump administration, the United States disparaged China as a country threatening the international order by proclaiming as such via its strategic documents and bills.³³⁾ China was made clear of this problem, as the U.S. referred to President Xi Jinping as the General Secretary of the Communist Party and sought for hard-lined policy with the cooperation of the Chinese people in *United States Strategic Approach to The People’s Republic of China* published on May 20, 2020.³⁴⁾

In response to the U.S.’s hard-lined policy on China, President Xi Jinping declared to the public during a symposium commemorating the 75th anniversary of victory in the War (1931-45) and the World Anti-Fascist War staged in Beijing on September 3, 2020, that “Any attempt to distort the history of the Communist Party of China or vilify its nature and objectives, to distort or change the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, or to deny or vilify the Chinese people’s great

31) G. John Ikenberry, “The end of liberal international order?,” *International Affairs* 94:1 (2018): 7-23.

32) Amitav Acharya, “Hegemony and Diversity in the ‘Liberal International Order’: Theory and Reality,” *E-International Relations* (January 14, 2020).

33) White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (December 2017); Department of Defense, *2018 National Defense Strategy of The United States of America: Sharpening the American Military’s Competitive Edge* (January 2018); Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review* (February 2018); Office of the Secretary of Defense, *2019 Missile Defense Review* (2019); Department of State, *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision* (November 2019).

34) White House, *United States Strategic Approach to The People’s Republic of China* (May 2020).

achievements in building socialism will also be resolutely opposed by the Chinese people”.³⁵⁾

Through the speech, Xi revealed his willingness to retaliate to the U.S’s attempts to segregate the Communist Party from the Chinese people to ostracize the Party. China is proclaiming it will respond against those who threatens its 3 core interests, 1) security (regime security), 2) territory (Taiwan, Xinjiang, Tibet, and the South China Sea, etc.), and 3) growth (the economy). In the face of a new cold war centered around the Korean Peninsula, this chapter seeks for ways to establish a Northeastern cooperation regime that can form and manage peace and stability and to garner cooperation between China, Korea, and Japan. This chapter underlines the necessity to resolve security issues accumulated in the region between the three countries with a realistic approach to assure peace and stability in the region.

1) Background: South Korea’s framework for Northeast Asian Security Community

The question of whether Northeast Asian security cooperation is possible began to emerge in earnest after the end of the Cold War. The South Korean government has strived to establish a regional framework that can overcome the era of unilateralism and form a framework of multilateral cooperation within the region, since the Roh Tae-woo administration to the current Moon Jae-in administration. Table 1 summarizes each administration’s framework.

(Table 1) South Korea’s Framework for multilateral security framework since the end of the Cold War

Administration	Framework for Northeast Asian Cooperation
Roh Tae-woo administration (1988-1993)	Consultative Conference for Peace in Northeast Asia
Kim Young-sam administration (1993-1998)	Northeast Asia Security Dialogue
Kim Dae-jung administration (1998-2003)	The Six-Party Declaration for Peace and Stability in Northeast Asia
Roh Moo-hyun administration (2003-2008)	The Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative
Lee Myung-bak administration (2008-2013)	New Asia Initiative
Park Geun-hye administration (2013-2017)	Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperative Initiative
Moon Jae-in administration (2017-present)	Northeast Asia Plus Community of Responsibility

As outlined in the table, the South Korean government delved into its efforts for cooperation in Northeast Asia since the Roh Tae-woo administration that took office in tandem with the end of the Cold War. The current Moon administration is also taking steps to bring about multilateral cooperation under the vision of “Northeast Asia Plus Community of Responsibility.” As such, South

35) Mo Jingxi, “Xi; Part, people will never be divided,” *China Daily*, September 4, 2020.

Korea is seeking ways to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula and actively contribute to the international society. The Plus Community of Responsibility as envisioned by the Moon administration is focused on realizing universal values and strengthening cooperation in the region.

2) Transformation of the multilateral cooperation as a means to the U.S. and China's hegemonic competition

The problem is that during this period of intensifying strategic competition between the United States and China in East Asia, the framework of multilateral cooperation is becoming a means to the hegemonic competition among major powers (Table 2). Korea's framework for Northeast Asian security cooperation can be highlighted in the status quo without a risk management mechanism.

(Table 2) Regional Security Community as a means to hegemonic competition

	United States	China
Hedging Strategy	Anti-China alliance centered around the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (U.S., Japan, Australia, India)	Belt and Road Initiative Shanghai Cooperation Organization
Motivation for Hedging	China's military rise (missile capability)	Search for stronger international 'status' and influence
Defense Policy	John Mearsheimer (formulating an 'Asian NATO') Barry Posen (Retrenchment) Stephen Walt (New International Order)	Yan Xuetong (Hints of a Chinese-ROK alliance) Jin Canrong (Upcoming age of China) Qin Yaqing (Chinese World Order)
Military Strategy	National Security Strategy United States Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China (Offset Strategy)	Defense White Paper Strengthening military technology through military-civilian integration Policy

a) Hedging Strategy:

China expects the U.S. to attempt strategic rebalancing within the East Asian region, and thus will likely respond by recalibrating its scope of the military sphere of influence focusing on its navy, air force, and aerospace. In fact, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun announced its plans to elevate its key to India-Pacific multilateral regional security, the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between the U.S, Japan, Australia, and India), to an official international organization.³⁶⁾ This is in other words a plan to create an India-Pacific multilateral security organization parallel to NATO in Europe. Such plans might heighten the possibility of falling into a New Cold War by preparing to escalate the current encirclement policy towards China to that of containment. On the other hand, some argues that Beijing is portraying its willingness to contribute economically and also realizing through its Belt and Road Initiative,³⁷⁾

36) Lim Bomi, "Bigen, Indo-Pacific needs multilateral organizations like NATO," *Dong-A Daily*, September 2, 2020.

37) Andrew Chartzky and James McBride, "China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative," *Backgrounder*, Council on Foreign Relations (January 28, 2020); Wenjuan Nie, "Xi Jinping's Foreign Policy Dilemma: One Belt, One Road or the South China Sea?," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 38:3 (December 2016).

The initiative is expected to enhance mutual cooperation in the way of bilateral cooperation for infrastructure maintenance projects, and moreover is a means to create a new political-economic order centered around China and transform China into a global power. On the other hand, there is a view that such claim might be concept stretching and that the Chinese initiative might be reinforcing mechanism for the liberal-international order.³⁸⁾ Nonetheless, there is increasing view that China is strengthening the security community in the Central Asian-Eurasian region centered around Russia via the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, balancing the NATO and the U.S.³⁹⁾ The United States and China are both keeping a keen eye on whether other East Asian countries are going to participate in the multilateral security framework led by their rival.

b) Motivation for Hedging:

There are growing calls for deploying U.S. strategic assets in East Asia while gradually reducing U.S. troops stationed abroad. According to an annual report by the U.S. Department of Defense to the congress published in 2019, China is strengthening its missile capabilities and its Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy, achieving deterrence capabilities covering the first defensive layer.⁴⁰⁾ For the U.S., the strategic priority would be devising a way to block China militarily. In turn, China is suspecting that the Quad's marital training is steps to build a NATO in Asia, and is increasingly wary of a confrontation escalating between China and the 'free world'. As the Chinese leadership is also pushing foreign policy for its "status" in the international society instead of merely for influence, shaping the security order to its favor is an unnegotiable issue.⁴¹⁾

c) Defense Policy:

The U.S. is attempting to strengthen cooperation with East Asian countries as a new offset strategy against China. Trump administration is struggling to satisfy both realists calling for blocking China and neo-isolationists arguing for retrenchment.⁴²⁾ The dominant voice is the strategic readjustment of the liberal international order to imagine a new international order.⁴³⁾ From academic circles, there are also calls for a security community in Asia akin to NATO to respond to China's rise.⁴⁴⁾

38) Jones Lee, "Does China's Belt and Road Initiative Challenge the Liberal, Rules-Based Order?," *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* (2019).

39) Abigail Grace, "The Lessons China Taught Itself: Why the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Matters," *China Brief* 18:11 (June 19, 2018).

40) Eric Heginbotham et al., *The U.S.-China Military Scorecard: Forces, Geography, and the Evolving Balance of Power, 1996–2017* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015).

41) Yong Deng, *China's Struggle for Status: The Realignment of International Relations*, (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

42) Barry Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (2015).

43) Stephen M. Walt, "Why I Didn't Sign Up to Defend the International Order," *Foreign Policy* (August 1, 2018).

44) John Mearsheimer, "Bound to Fail: The Rise and Fall of the Liberal International Order," *International Security* 43:4 (Spring 2019).

d) Military Strategy:

Change in U.S. foreign policy since the inauguration of the Trump administration has been evident, and the hard-lined policy against China is likely to continue. That U.S. is going so far as preparing for nuclear armament in its declaration that it will continue the nuclear triad policy in the aforementioned paper on China published by the White House in May is a strong hint to a new cold war. The Chinese government under Xi, in turn, ordered that “The entire armed forces should have a correct understanding of China's security and development trends, enhance their awareness of danger, crisis, and war, and make solid efforts on combat preparations in order to accomplish the tasks assigned by the Party and the people”.⁴⁵⁾ China is claiming the increasing likelihood of military conflict in the international society and that the era of arms race including unnecessary competition in nuclear-arms is threatening the strategic stability in the international society.⁴⁶⁾ In the Xi Jinping era, China elevated the military-civilian integration policy to one of its grand strategies and has continued to invest in the high-tech defense industry.

V. Policy Alternatives


The global strategic competition between the U.S. and China is structurally complicating the formation of regional cooperation in Northeast Asia. In order to peacefully resolve problems in the region in a multilateral framework, we must refrain from spiraling into the strategic competition between the U.S. and China, and avoid the confusion caused by the hazing strategies employed by the two superpowers. To solve the structural problem, Korea, China, and Japan must seek ways to cooperate. The three policy alternatives proposed here may be taken into consideration.

First, the recalibration of U.S. military strategy is inevitable in the face of China's new height in missile capability. The U.S. will likely relocate its strategic assets to East Asia to respond to China's military rise. To avoid such extreme confrontation and the tragedy of great power politics, international community may need a new security regime that can take the place of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty. A new missile treaty that ensures international cooperation on security instead of resolutely refusing U.S.'s security asset relocation to South Korea and Japan should be considered.

In East Asia in the status quo, there are no security regimes to fill the place of the Intermediate

45) Li Jiayao, “Xi orders armed forces to enhance combat readiness,” *Xinhua*, January 4, 2019, http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2019-01/04/content_9396346.htm.

46) The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defense in the New Era* (Beijing : Foreign Languages Press Co. Ltd., 2019).



Nuclear Forces Treaty once signed and held up by the U.S. and the Soviet Union. In September 2005, six concerned countries had agreed on the “September 19, 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks” to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. This history is proof that countries can peacefully gather to tackle the most complicated problems threatening the security environment in Northeast Asia such as North Korea nuclear tests or nonproliferation. As Karl Deutsch explained, if countries have the ability to resolve issues through conversation instead of resorting to violence, we may be able to pursue the formation of a security regime in the region.

Next, while the aforementioned ‘security regime’ is to pave the way for countries in the region to find consensus, the countries may also attempt regional ‘security dialogues’ to oversee denuclearization and control the nuclear-military arms race between the U.S. and China. For example, security dialogue between the U.S., China, Korea, and Japan could be held on a regular basis to exchange views on critical issues. As the current strategic competition between the U.S. and China is hindering security and policy experts from visiting their rival country, the role of third party country is more than ever important. All security dialogue channels between China and the U.S. are currently suspended and the experts are unable to visit due to visa restrictions. To address the structural problem, the region should promote security dialogues at lower levels.

Third, non-traditional security is gaining significance in the post-COVID19 age. Korea, Japan, and China may take an institutional approach in the future to adjust their roles in the region, and exchange ideas and concerns to foster peace and security. As such, the countries should seek ways to enhance bilateral and trilateral cooperation including but not limited to three-party talks.

VI. Conclusion

This paper took as its initial task the speculative design of a security community in Northeast Asia. Borrowing the conceptual lenses of Deutsch, et al., it first discussed the applicability of the theoretical frameworks and related hypotheses. It concluded that the formation of a security community is a highly plausible scenario for the region. In addition, due to the dynamics of political structures and robust national characteristics, it concluded that the concept of a pluralistic security community is a more appropriate and realistic approach to the regional state of affairs.

Out of the fourteen background conditions for building a security community presented by Deutsch, et al., this paper exclusively analyzed the three main areas of conditions: political ideology, economic aspects, and security-military background conditions for a security community. In reviewing all of these generalized aspects, it consistently argued that the economic aspect is a critical motivational

factor for the development of a security community. It asserted that ever-increasing economic interdependencies among the Northeast Asian countries have now become realities after a series of regional rapprochements, and the region has been gradually evolving from a bitter Cold War battleground into a marketplace.

Therefore, as economic interdependency intensifies, it is expected that the regional states will cooperate, and, more importantly, ameliorate the current adversarial international political structures for the sake of further mutual economic enhancements. Furthermore, the present common problems, such as the energy predicament, can be crucial independent variables for bringing regional members to the table in seeking a possible solution. Because of the expectations of joint economic growth, regional integrations are becoming a certain trend, and the behaviors of respective states in the region are changing. Although there are too many variations and difficulties for generalization, the Northeast Asian states are converging toward economic integration.

Apart from political confrontations, economic conversions are becoming a factual trend. For the past decade or so, China has increased its market shares vis-à-vis the other Northeast Asian states. Despite the political differences, the shared norms and ideas may have provided the ground for future community-building efforts. For the development of the infrastructure systems and furthering economic integration, the regional security arrangements and re-alignments are inevitable. This paper asserted that the U.S. would also play a critical role in regional integration, and continue to be a cooperative partner, and also a beneficiary from a more integrated regional economy. This study seeks to find a realistic way to a conversion of the confrontational ambiance into a more cooperative one with the concept of security for the community of Northeast Asia.

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Trilateral Cooperation

: Young Professionals Research Project

The Future of ROK-China-Japan Trilateral Security Narrative: Emerging Technologies and Increasing Arms Control Void in Northeast Asia

Jo Bee Yun

(Associate Research Fellow, Korea Institute for Defense Analyses)

The Future of ROK-China-Japan Trilateral Security Narrative: Emerging Technologies and Increasing Arms Control Void in Northeast Asia

Jo Bee Yun¹⁾

I. Introduction

On December 24, 2019, the leaders of Republic of Korea (ROK), Japan, and China have convened in Chengdu for the Eighth Trilateral Summit. Chaired by the ROK President Moon Jae-in, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, the trilateral leadership announced their Joint Declaration, entitled, “Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade.” Out of a total of eight major points of commitments, the trilateral leadership announced “complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” and seeking peace and security of the Northeast Asian region as their common security goals.²⁾

While the joint declaration seemed to carry new “hope” and trilateral “resolution” for “peace and stability in the region,” little prospect can be expected in enhancing trilateral progress on the traditional security realms. As the increasing US-China competition stimulates investments in both new nuclear and conventional technologies,³⁾ North Korea has found lesser incentive in foregoing its de facto nuclear capabilities, ushering non-nuclear states like Japan and the ROK to more armaments in efforts to offset their asymmetric disadvantages.

Hard security issues, indeed, have always been the rarest topic among the trilateral leadership. As Andrew I. Yeo assessed, although the accumulations of cooperation in “non-controversial” or non-traditional security realms have had some “positive effect” in building “low levels of trust” among the trilateral leadership, the “overriding weight of bilateral tensions”⁴⁾ has limited the room for even

1) This article was written under the support of TCS and KNDA, in affiliation as research professor at the Institute of International Affairs (IIA), Seoul National University.

2) The 8th Trilateral Summit, held in Chengdu, China, December 24, 2019.

3) Odd Arne Westad, “Has A New Cold War Really Begun?” *Foreign Affairs*, March 27, 2018. Robert D. Kaplan, “A New Cold War Has Begun,” *Foreign Policy*, January 7, 2019.; Rick Gladstone, “How the Cold War between China and US Is Intensifying,” *New York Times*, July 22, 2020.

4) Andrew I. Yeo, “China-Japan-Korea Trilateral Cooperation: Is It for Real?” *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 18, no. 2 (2017): 69-76.

regular trilateral dialogues on hard security issues. Despite the establishment of over 21 ministerial meetings and more than 70 dialogue mechanisms over the past 20 years since the Asian Financial Crisis, traditional security issues have been put aside.

As to excavate new trilateral security topic, this study proposes to construct ROK-Japan-China trilateral wisemen table for building a common understanding on how the current Northeast Asian security environment and emergence of new technologies are rapidly diminishing the value of arms control in this region. Although arms race has never an “easy solution,”⁵⁾ efforts to discover the main drivers of the vicious cycle can lead to discovery of new common research agendas, extending the discursive space for trilateral security initiatives.

This study is structured as the following: 1) observations on the challenges and prospect of trilateral security cooperation; 2) analysis on increasing ‘arms control void’ in Northeast Asia, engendered from the limits in security cooperation; then 3) building upon literatures on rhetorical inventions in international relations, the study urges for building trilateral security narrative on arms control; lastly, 4) the study concludes with suggestions for practical action plans for constructing trilateral wisemen table, bringing together network of security policy-makers and experts in the field from the three countries.

As outcomes, the study aspires to 1) excavate new research agenda and contribute in promoting continuity in trilateral security initiatives, 2) promote the value of arms control among the ROK-Japan-China security specialists, 3) encourage multi-level exchanges between experts, scholars, and officials among the three countries, and 4) thereby serve as channels to refashion current strategic security environment to be more amenable in implementing the Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade.

II. Challenges of Trilateral Security Cooperation

Security cooperation has shown limited progress among the trilateral leadership of the ROK, Japan, and China. While the accumulations of cooperation in non-traditional security realms have had some effects in building trust among the trilateral leadership, the continued bilateral tensions have remained firm hindrances to building durable peace and stability in the region.⁶⁾ Despite the establishment of over 21 ministerial meetings and more than 70 dialogue mechanisms over the past

5) Christopher Griffin and Joseph E. Lin, “China’s Space Ambition,” *Armed Forces Journal*, April 28 (2007).

6) Yeo, “China-Japan-Korea Trilateral Cooperation,” 69-76.

20 years since the Asian Financial Crisis,⁷⁾ the realms of traditional security, in particular, have remained as hindrances to avoid than tackle as the new areas for trilateral cooperation. According to the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) database, out of a total of 541 high-level programs and meetings – trilateral summit, ministerial-level, senior officials’ meeting, and director-generals’ meeting (excluding working-level meetings, other activities) – from 2000-2020, only thirty-eight occasions (seven percent) were security-related. And, out of these thirty-eight occasions, as Table 1 shows, the topics were limited to ‘soft’ or ‘non-traditional’ security issues such as cyber policy, disaster management, and counter-terrorism. The topic of nuclear safety, which was first envisioned during the Trilateral Summit in May 2011, remains limited in fulfilling the initial aspiration to extend the trilateral cooperation from nuclear safety to nuclear security⁸⁾

(Table 1) List of ROK-CHI-JAP Trilateral Meetings in Security-Related Areas

Date	Level	Title
2008-09-03	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2009-08-27	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2010-11-25	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2011-03-17	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Counter-Terrorism Meeting
2011-11-29	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2012-07-18	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Counter-Terrorism Meeting
2012-11-29	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2013-01-10	Ministerial-level Meeting	Tripartite Meeting on Earthquake Disaster Mitigation
2013-11-28	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2014-03-28	Working-level Meeting	Trilateral Expert Meeting on Disaster Management
2014-09-02	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2014-09-02	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2014-10-21	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Cyber Policy Consultation
2014-11-26	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2015-05-15	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Counter-Terrorism Meeting
2015-10-15	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Cyber Policy Consultation
2015-10-21	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2015-10-22	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2016-06-22	Working-level Meeting	Trilateral Table-Top Exercise (TTX) on Disaster Management
2016-11-15	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Counter-Terrorism Meeting
2016-11-15	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Counter-Terrorism Meeting
2016-11-22	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Consultation among Police Authorities
2016-11-29	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2016-11-30	Senior Officials’ Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2017-02-10	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Cyber Policy Consultation
2017-02-10	Director Generals’ Meeting	Trilateral Cyber Policy Consultation

7) As announced in the Joint Declaration of the 2019 Trilateral Summit.
8) Nuclear safety has been newly stipulated in Trilateral Summit Statement in May 2011, agreed by Chinese premier Wen Jiabao, Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, and ROK President Lee Myung-bak (“safety regulations, emergency preparedness, emergency response measures, information sharing and exchange”) – a new beginning of trilateral cooperation in nuclear affairs with the aspiration to extend trilateral cooperation from nuclear safety to nuclear security.

Date	Level	Title
2017-11-14	Director Generals' Meeting	Trilateral Consultation among Police Authorities
2017-11-16	Director Generals' Meeting	Trilateral Consultation among Police Authorities
2017-12-05	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2017-12-06	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2018-11-06	Working-level Meeting	Joint Emergency Drill
2018-11-27	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2018-11-28	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2019-11-28	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety (TRM)
2019-11-28	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety
2019-11-29	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2019-11-29	Senior Officials' Meeting	Top Regulators Meeting Plus on Nuclear Safety (TRM Plus)
2019-12-05	Ministerial-level Meeting	Trilateral Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management

Source: Listed by author, in reference to the TCS database.

Although the latest trilateral Joint Declaration has elaborated on their commitment in “complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” and “maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula as well as in Northeast Asia” as their common security goals, highlighting their support for implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration,⁹⁾ the significance should not be exaggerated. Taking into the consideration of how the ROK-China relations have faltered since the ROK’s deployment of the US’s missile defense system (THAAD), not to mention the increasing historical grudges between the ROK-Japan relations, North Korea issue was more of a search for leeway to escape the vicious cycle of bilateral grudges. Denuclearization and Panmunjom Declaration seemed to be the only topic that the three parties can at least accept and put down on paper. Realistically, there seems to be little prospect for further progress in trilateral cooperation on North Korea, as China continues to realign with North Korea. On August 16, 2019, North Korean General Political Bureau Director Su Gil Kim met with Miao Hwa, Director of the Political Work Department of the Chinese Central Military Commission in Beijing. They agreed to “develop bilateral military cooperation to the highest level in accordance with the intentions of their leaders.”¹⁰⁾

In-depth trilateral security cooperation is likely to be difficult because the key factors that have drawn wedge among the three countries’ security interests have intensified than lessened in the recent years. At the foremost is the growing strategic competition between the US and China in the region. Although there is nothing atypical about the US-China rivalry, the heightened competition has begun to unfold into thorny regional security issues. The ROK’s deployment of US’s missile

9) Previously, in 2018, the trilateral leadership released Joint Statement on the ‘2018 Inter-Korean Summit,’ endorsing the implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration.

10) Yonhap News, “Military Leaderships from China and North Korea Met in Beijing... Promoting a Higher Level of Coordination,” August 18, 2019.

defense system THAAD in 2017, for instance, has brought about a full stop in any in-depth security cooperation between the ROK and China. As Choi Kang, Shin Beomchul, and Kang Jae-Kwang described, the great power competition is “no longer just diplomatic issues,” but now spilling over rapidly to diverse domains including the security realms.¹¹⁾ The fiercer military competition gets between US and China, they will have more incentives to exert pressure on the ROK and Japan to take sides. As the ROK and Japan continue to falter between their economic ties with China and security relations with the US, the US-China competition will lull any significant security initiatives among the trilateral leadership.

Furthermore, the ROK-Japan relationship has also significantly exacerbated in the recent years. Due to intensifying chasms over their historical disputes, threats from North Korea are no longer enough to bring them to dialogues and cooperation. The 2018 decision by the Korean Supreme Court, which announced victims’ individual rights to claim compensations from the Japanese government for forced labor during the colonial period, has resulted into Japan’s economic sanction on Korean exports to Japan, followed by the ROK’s “No Japan” movement in response. As historical problems have resurfaced, such turn of relations has also led to the ROK’s decision to end General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) in 2019. Although the ROK government reversed its decision to end the intelligence-sharing pact with Japan in December 2019, historical grudges continue to make security cooperation a daunting task between the two. Moreover, even if such issues can be resolved, the security “intimacy” between the ROK and Japan is what would arouse China’s security concerns as the two linchpins of the US’s regional security policy in Northeast Asia. Ironically, improvement and deterioration in the ROK-Japan relations can both hinder the progress in security cooperation among the trilateral leadership.

Without significant deepening in trilateral security initiatives, what is growing in its place is the so-called ‘arms control void.’ As the following section would elaborate, the leaders are inclined to ‘prepare for the worst.’ In the midst of strategic divergence and unresolved historical grudges, the leaders are placing more emphasis on the efforts for capability build-up, while seeking for diplomatic means *when* they can.

III. Increasing Arms Control Void in Northeast Asia

One of the increasingly conspicuous security phenomena in the Northeast Asian region is the

11) Kang Choi, Beomchul Shin, and Jae-Kwang Kang, “The Shifting Environment in Northeast Asia and Our Responses,” *The Asan Institute*, September, 30, 2019.

‘arms control void.’ As Tanya Ogilvie-White observed, the Northeast Asian states have shown surprisingly quiet response to the recent breakdown of the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.¹²⁾ Although it may be understandable as China, Japan, and the ROK have not been the direct signatories of the INF Treaty, the relative reticence – in comparison to Europe – manifests how arms control value or leadership is more lacking in Northeast Asia.¹³⁾ Amongst the three, China may have been the loudest as it announced soon after that “China will not stand idly by and will be forced to take countermeasures if the United States deploys intermediate-range ground-based missiles in this part of the world.”¹⁴⁾ Yet, as the statement suggests, the response entailed less of a call for arms restraint but more of a military admonition against the US. Unlike how some of the US strategists have expected the breach of INF and creation of new uncertainties would induce Beijing to engage in formal arms control negotiations with the US, as in the case of US-USSR’s arms control agreements of the Cold War era,¹⁵⁾ it seems that the breakdown of INF has only exacerbated China’s security competition with the US. In the shoes of ROK-Japan-China cooperation, China’s increasing military competition with the US cannot but further constrain the already limited room for security cooperation as both the ROK and Japan are the US’s central bilateral security linchpins in the region.

Instead of security cooperation and/or co-efforts to ameliorate incentives for armaments, what we are observing in Northeast Asia is the increasing “surge” for armaments.¹⁶⁾ Although we are not facing the Cold War’s level of arms race, the region has become a ‘hot spot’ for global military expenditures, Figure 1. As President Xi Jinping pushes forward with his goal of building a world-class military,¹⁷⁾ the US and Japanese military capabilities are also expanding to confront North Korea and curb China’s growing military presence in the region. We also observe continuous military buildup on both sides of the Korean Peninsula. Particularly in the areas of ballistic missiles,

12) Tanya Ogilvie-White, “It’s Time to Fill Asia’s Arms Control Void,” *The Interpreter*, November 16, 2018.

13) As Eugene Rumer called it, “A Farewell to Arms Control,” the two hegemonic powers of the Cold War period – the US and Russia (Soviet Union) are leaving the agreements aside, which were once forged on the conviction that arms control can serve as means for security and diplomacy. The 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty between the US and Russia (Soviet Union) is already no longer in force as the US withdrew from it back in 2002. Upon culminations over disagreements and contestations over ‘who violated first,’ the US announced its formal withdrawal from the INF Treaty in August 2019. On May 21, 2020, the US further left the 1992 Open Skies Treaty, which was put into effect since January 1, 2002. Now, the New START treaty, also set to expire by February 2021, remains as the only barrier to the two powers’ competition in intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).; Eugene Rumer, “A Farewell to Arms Control,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, April 17 (2018).; See also, Andrey Baklitsky, “Arms Control is Dead. Long Live Arms Control,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, March 21 (2019).

14) China’s Director General of the Department of Arms Control Fu Cong, See Tong Zhao, “China in a World with No US-Russia Treaty-Based Arms Control,” *The Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy*, April 1, 2019.; Tanya Ogilvie-White, “Post-INF Arms Control in the Asia-Pacific: Political Viability and Implementation Challenges,” *IISS*, June 30 (2020): 2.

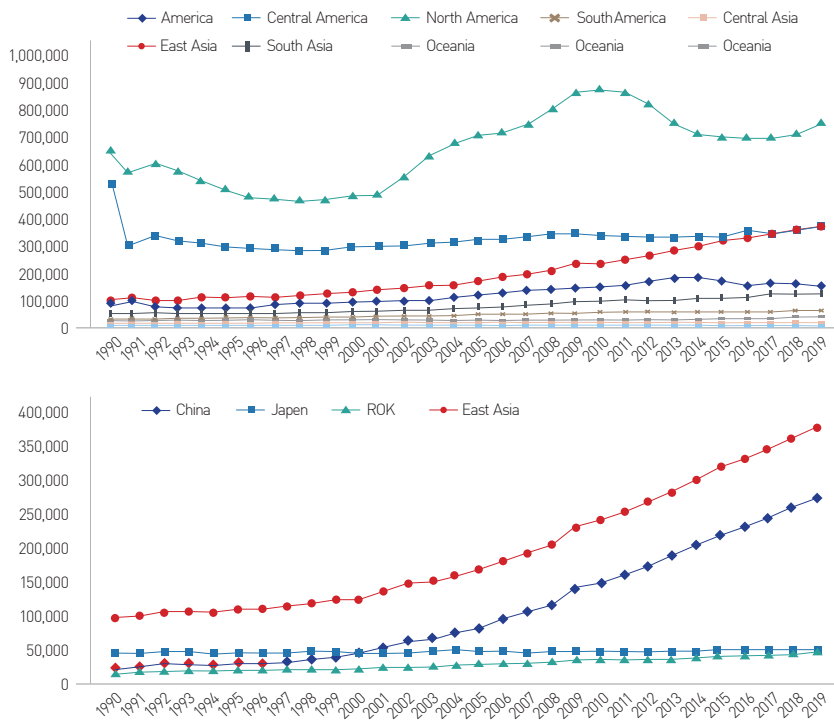
15) Ogilvie-White, “Post-INF Arms Control in the Asia-Pacific,” 2.

16) Andrew Salmon, “Northeast Asia Arms Race Surges in 2019,” *Asia Times*, January 24, 2019.

17) United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Transcript of the Hearing on a ‘World-Class’ Military: Assessing China’s Global Military Ambitions, June 20, 2019.

for instance, China has launched more ballistic missile tests and training than “the rest of the world combined” in 2019.¹⁸⁾ China’s 2020 defense budget, according to China’s Thirteenth National People’s Congress held on May 21, will show 6.6 percent increase from the previous year. Although the increase rate is smaller than the 7.5 percent increase in the year before, China seeks to continue its military aggrandizement, going against some experts’ anticipation that the increase rate will fall to about three percent ranges due to the COVID-19 situation. Likewise, Japan in 2019 has pushed for US\$ 47 billion for defense budget. It is known to be the largest amount and also 1.3 percent increase from the previous year, marking the rise in defense budget for the seven straight years. More significantly, 2019 marks the first year in a five-year defense budget plan of US\$ 250 billion. On part of the ROK, it placed US\$ 42 billion in 2019 for defense budget – an increase of 8.2 percent, reportedly the largest increase since 2008. According to the latest budget plan approved by the National Assembly, defense spending for 2021 has been set at US\$ 48 billion, another 5.4 percent increase from 2020.

(Figure 1) East Asia & Global Military Expenditures (1990-2019), in US\$ millions (Constant 2018 USD)



Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database

18) US Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Environments Involving the People’s Republic of China 2020* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2020).

Of course, the interrelationship among the drivers of arms build-up of the three countries are complex and intertwined. In case of China, the intensification of US's "competitive approach" to China in the recent years has been one of the conspicuous drivers.¹⁹⁾ As the US places China as the "top priority" of the US's national defense strategy,²⁰⁾ including its declaration on possible stationing of intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) in their Asian military bases, just one day after the US's formal withdrawal from the INF in August 2019, China has exerted more emphasis on armaments as reflected in its boost in the 2020 defense budget.

In the realms of nuclear armaments, according to *South China Morning Post*, China is reported to have conducted over 200 simulation of nuclear weapons from September 2014 to December 2017, about an average of five times more frequency than the case of the US. According to *The Wall Street Journal* on April 15, 2020, China is suspected to have also conducted low-yield nuclear test at China's Lop Nur test site.²¹⁾ Modernizations in nuclear triads – delivery systems – are also in progress, including the nuclear-capable refueling H-6N bomber first revealed during the military parade in October 2019. The investments also continue in the construction of third aircraft carrier, J-20 stealth fighter-jets, and H-20 strategic bombers. As the latest 2020 US Report to Congress reported, China is anticipated to double its nuclear arsenal by the next decade. Such developments mirror the Trump administration's push for the US's nuclear modernization. As outlined in the US's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), the US has begun to direct their attention to modernizing their nuclear arsenal. Including the development of low-yield nuclear warheads (below twenty kilotons), the US announced to restore the nuclear-capable Tomahawk cruise missiles. Recapitalizing its nuclear triad, the US has set about US\$ 28.9 billion for FY2021 budget, submitted on March 9, 2020, which is about eighteen percent increase from the previous year despite the COVID-19 situation at home. The budget for National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), has also shown continuous increases since 2010, extending to about US\$ 9.3 billion dollars in 2017, US\$ 10.3 billion dollars in 2018, to US\$ 11 billion dollars in 2019.²²⁾

The recent defense white paper of the ROK states that the "adversaries" are those who "threaten and violate the ROK's sovereignty, territory, its people, and assets." Apart from the ongoing critiques on how the latest defense white paper has deliberately avoided stating North Korea as its major security threats,²³⁾ North Korea's continued military advancements are critical stimulus to South Korea's

19) US Department of Defense, *United States Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China*, May 28, 2020.

20) US Department of Defense, "The Honorary Mark T. Esper Secretary of Defense – NDS Implementation: First Year Accomplishments," July 17, 2020.

21) Michael R. Gordon, "Possible Chinese Nuclear Testing Stirs US Concern," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 15, 2020.

22) Amy F. Woolf and James D. Werner, "The US Nuclear Weapons Complex: Overview of Department of Energy Sites," *Congressional Research Service*, September 6 (2018): 3.

23) DongA, "North Korea is the adversary statement again excluded in the 2020 Defense White Paper," January 7, 2021.

armaments. One of the most alarming developments is North Korea's intention to further expand its nuclear arsenal. The North's Supreme People's Assembly recently announced its unanimous support for "modernization of the nuclear force" with plans to develop "ultra-modern tactical nuclear weapons including new-type tactical rockets and intermediate-range cruise missiles," including hypersonic weapons, and also "complete the development of a super-large hydrogen bomb." Indeed, despite the Inter-Korean Military Agreement signed on September 19, 2018, we find that North Korea has reverted to missile tests. In year 2019 alone, North Korea is reported to have conducted nineteen short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) tests and one submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) test.²⁴⁾ As the latest military parade in January 2021 illustrated North Korea's continued advancements in its missile capabilities – new SLBM (Pugguksong-5 SLBM, a new addition to Pugguksong-4 shown during October 2020 parade) and two new road-mobile, solid-fuel SRBMs (larger version of previous KN-24 SRBM and longer version of the KN-23 SRBM) – the ROK's arms build-up has little room for restraint.

Moreover, what is noticeable from the ROK's 2020 defense white paper is the emphasis on the "intensification of US-China's strategic competition" and ensuing "uncertainties" in the region.²⁵⁾ While the conflicts are expanding and spilling over to politics, economies, and military realms, the "dynamics of the US-China-Japan-Russia" are aggravating the uncertainties and military tensions in the Northeast Asian region.²⁶⁾ If seen with how the defense white paper downgraded the position of Japan from previous description as "partner" to "neighboring country"²⁷⁾ and the ROK's ongoing territorial disputes with Japan, the ROK government's current threat perceptions expand beyond the traditional threat from North Korea. Identification of new threats can again stimulate more armaments.

On the part of Japan, as stated in its latest defense white paper, China ranks at the top of its list of priorities. Continuing its emphasis on "proactive efforts" to strengthen Japan's capacity to deter and its alliance with the US,²⁸⁾ the 2020 defense white paper placed emphasis on the increasing "Uncertainty over the existing order" and China's efforts to develop cutting-edge technologies.²⁹⁾ Although many Japanese military officials would refrain from naming their potential adversaries, Japan's recent decisions for armaments are mostly "trigger[ed]... straight out [from] China." As Keitaro Ohno stated, Parliamentary Vice Minister for Defense for Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic

24) NTI Database; CSIS Database.

25) The ROK Ministry of Defense, *Defense White Paper 2020* (Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 2020): 8.

26) The ROK Ministry of Defense, *Defense White Paper 2020*: 11.

27) The ROK Ministry of Defense, *Defense White Paper 2020*: 173.

28) Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan 2013* (Tokyo: Ministry of Defense, 2013).

29) Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan 2020* (Tokyo: Ministry of Defense, 2020).

Party, Japan's armaments are driven by "The expansion of China... There is no need for us to operate such kind of aircraft carrier if we don't have to respond to China in the Pacific Ocean."

Briefly put, it seems to be that as Craig Caffery described, the three countries are "preparing for the worst."³⁰⁾ In the midst of strategic divergence, military threats, and unresolved territorial and historical grudges among themselves, the leaders cannot but place more emphasis on efforts for capability build-up, while seeking for diplomatic means when they can.

IV. Arms Control Void in the New Emerging Technologies

One of the under-recognized areas of growing arms control void is the new emerging technologies. While existing studies have densely deliberated on how development of new technologies and revolution in military affairs can significantly alter states' existing nuclear and conventional means for security, comprehensive studies on states' pursuit for the state-of-the-art technologies have been limited. Aside from nuclear capabilities, what are the state-of-the-art emerging technologies that are pursued by ROK, Japan, and China? Although arms race has never an easy solution, particularly in the Northeast Asian region, the answers to the question may assist in discovering new research agendas and extending our discursive space for trilateral security initiatives, which can in turn work to alleviate increasing incentives for arms race than arms restraint in this region. Precisely because arms race is governed by security dilemma, shared awareness and recognition on the main drivers of the cycle can lead to possibility for new rhetorics and interpretations of present that can steer the region away from slipping into the vicious cycle of arms race.

As Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press put, in the "age of accuracy," where adversaries can easily identify, locate, and precision-strike the strategic forces, with new emerging precision and sensing technologies, the states' assurance in both nuclear and conventional deterrence cannot but be weakened,³¹⁾ as the new technologies make states' hardening (protecting their forces from destruction)³²⁾ and concealment³³⁾ of their strategic forces more vulnerable than before. Ranging from the hypersonic (precision strike capabilities), anti-space, anti-missile (BMD), anti-satellite, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), to cyber operations, these new cluster of high-precision and

30) Salmon, "Northeast Asia Arms Race Surges in 2019."

31) Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, "The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence," *International Security* 41, no. 4 (2017): 9-49.

32) Concrete overlay, underground construction, etc.

33) Means to prevent adversaries from locating and identifying the nuclear forces (e.g. camouflage, decoys etc)

accurate technologies have penetrated³⁴⁾ in states' both nuclear and conventional measures, wherein nuclear threats no longer have to be deterred by equivalent nuclear arsenal.³⁵⁾

Interrelated, the perception that the lead in such new emerging technologies will decide the outcome of future wars is fueling the regional arms race. The strategists of all three countries are in alert of each other's military plans to achieve, sustain military superiority, and/or deny other powers from acquiring it. Differently put, new technologies are seen as part of asymmetric strategy in offsetting both nuclear and conventional military advantages.³⁶⁾ For non-nuclear states like the ROK and Japan, the rational for acquisition of these new technologies are very strong.

As exemplary case, the concerns of vulnerability have been foundation to China's investments in development of hypersonic weapons.³⁷⁾ Flying over Mach 6 (6,120 kilometers per hour), the hypersonic missiles are designed to strike any target on the globe within one hour, disabling the effectiveness of adversaries' missile defense and other anti-access and anti-denial (A2/AD) capabilities. As listed in Table 2, China is reported to have succeeded in test-launch of its hypersonic Starry Sky-2 missile (Xingkong-2) in August 2018. During military parade held on October 1, 2019, to celebrate its seventieth anniversary of the founding of PRC, China also showcased its DF-17, which is to be equipped with the DF-ZF Hypersonic Glide Vehicle (HGV).³⁸⁾ According to Kelley M. Saylor, China has conducted at least nine times test-launch of DF-ZF HGVs from January 2014.³⁹⁾

In response to "new round of technological and industrial revolution" that are "intensifying" the military competition,⁴⁰⁾ China have justified its development of new range of technologies including the hypersonic glide vehicles as "necessary to counter US and other countries' BMD, ISR, and precision strike systems."⁴¹⁾

34) Anil K. Maini, *Handbook of Defence Electronics and Optonics* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), preface.; see also, US Congressional Research Service, "Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Design for Great Power Competition," June 4, 2020.

35) Daekwon Son, "Flawed Assumption in Pro-Nuclear Arguments and South Korea's Strategic Choice," *Asian Perspective* 43, no. 1 (2018): 123-144.

36) Ashley J. Tellis, "China's Military Space Strategy," *Survival* 49, no. 3 (2007): 44-45.

37) Hypersonic weapons include hypersonic glide vehicles (HGV) and hypersonic cruise missiles (HCM), see, Kelley M. Saylor, "Hypersonic Weapons: Background and Issues for Congress," *CRS Report*, March 17 (2020): 2.

38) US Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2019* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2019).

39) Saylor, "Hypersonic Weapons," 13.

40) The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defense in the New Era* (July 2019).

41) US Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Environments Involving the People's Republic of China 2020*: 87.

(Table 2) Hypersonic Missile Developments in Asia

Country	Weapons System	Deployment
US	Hypersonic Conventional Strike Weapon (HCSW) ⁴²⁾ Air-Launched Rapid Response Weapon (ARRW)	Deployment by 2022 Deployment by 2021
Russia	Kinzhal (Kh-47M2) Hypersonic Missile Zircon Hypersonic Cruise Missile (3M22)	In service since 2017 In production
China	Starry Sky-2 DF-ZF Hypersonic Glide Vehicle	In test In development
Japan	Hypersonic Cruise Missile (HCM) Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile (HVGP)	Deployment by 2026
ROK	Hypersonic Missile	In development, test-flight by 2023

In correspondence, we can observe parallel initiatives in pursuit of hypersonic weapons in both Japan and the ROK. Japan's latest defense white paper recognizes "The United States indicates that China and Russia are developing advanced hypersonic weapons that challenge existing missile defense systems" – as one of the "trends concerning new domains" of "military science and technology."⁴²⁾ To do all its efforts to promote its "hybrid warfare" capabilities and prepare for China's acquisition of cutting edge technologies, Japan has outlined its own research and development roadmap for two hypersonic systems – the Hypersonic Cruise Missile (HCM) and the Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile (HVGP) to be first deployable by 2026, according to the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency.

The ROK's latest defense white paper included its observation on how China's response to the US's regional BMD architecture has entailed development of new MRBM equippable with the hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV).⁴³⁾ The defense white paper also notes on Russia's hypersonic cruise missile Zircon and nuclear-capable Kalibre-M.⁴⁴⁾ According to recent report released by the National Assembly Research Service, in June 2020, the ROK's Agency for Defense Development (ADD) has conducted several initial researches in the relevant technology since 2004. Recent address to ADD by the ROK Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo, on August 5, 2020, in commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of ADD reaffirmed the ROK's plans to fasten its plans to develop state-of-the-art military weapons systems including the hypersonic missiles, completing possibly the test-flights by 2023⁴⁵⁾: "From now, our military will accelerate the development of technologies on guided weapons with precise guide function, long-range and hypersonic missiles, high-power warheads and a Korean-style satellite navigation system to further upgrade our missile capabilities."

42) Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan 2020*: 22.

43) The ROK Ministry of Defense, *The 2020 Defense White Paper*: 15.

44) The ROK Ministry of Defense, *The 2020 Defense White Paper*: 17.

45) Hyuk-Kyu Hyung, "International Development Trends of Hypersonic Weapons Systems and Their Military Implications," *National Assembly Research Service*, June 9 (2020);; Chang-won Lim, "S.Korea Joins Arms Race in Northeast Asia to Develop Hypersonic Missiles," *Aju Business Daily*, August 6, 2020.

V. Reviving the Trilateral Security Narrative on Arms Control

In this backdrop, this study finds that the value of arms control or restraint may be revived through inventing a new trilateral security narrative on such new emerging technologies. Putting through “rhetorical intervention” in constructing arms control as the new trilateral security narrative will be critical in sustaining ROK-Japan-China’s commitment in maintaining “durable peace and security,” and justifying the grounds to work with North Korea towards “complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” – visions and goals reconfirmed in the latest Eighth Trilateral Summit, held in Chengdu, China, December 24, 2019.

Yet, for clarification, this study’s suggestion for arms control narrative does not emerge from constructivist understanding of the international relations. Rather, the study’s argument is inspired from Vibeke Schou Tjalve and Michael C. Williams’ reevaluation of classical realism, wherein they found strong rhetoric of “politics and responsibility” in realism. Although we tend to perceive realism as to be against or not about language, narrative, nor social construction, but about pure materialism, rationalism, and structural determination, Tjalve and Williams have found that the classical realists like Hans Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr have always deliberated on the “political and ethical theory of rhetoric” at the “very center” of their studies.⁴⁶⁾ While their observations and conclusions of the world are zero-sum, their works are “marked by [their] engagement with grand politics,” seeking to “develop an alternative rhetoric that could insulate [the state] from destructive tensions and provide the basis for robust and responsible action in world affairs.”⁴⁷⁾ As Chun Chaesung also put, a correct understanding of Niebuhr’s realism should stress how Niebuhr strived to “maintain realist analytical perspective,” without becoming entrapped in realist determinism or cynicism – “without losing interests in the normative.”⁴⁸⁾

In this backdrop, this study finds that despite increasing arms race, competition, and diminishing room for trilateral cooperation, political leadership and strategists of the three countries should seek ways to build and sustain collaborative “rhetoric of responsibility.”⁴⁹⁾ Although the structural pressures from US-China rivalry and rapid transformation in technologies are likely to push the states to vie to survive the ongoing arms race,⁵⁰⁾ we should continue diplomatic efforts to curb the vicious cycle of arms race.

46) Vibeke Schou Tjalve and Michael C. Williams, “Reviving the Rhetoric of Realism: Politics and Responsibility in Grand Strategy,” *Security Studies* 24, no. 1 (2015): 38.

47) Tjalve and Williams, “Reviving the Rhetoric of Realism,” 37.

48) Chaesung Chun, *Is Politics Moral? Reinhold Niebuhr’s Transcendental Realism* (Paju: Hangilsa, 2012): 29.

49) Tjalve and Williams, “Reviving the Rhetoric of Realism,” 38.

50) Griffin and Lin, “China’s Space Ambition.”

As in the case of the series of arms control treaties emerged in the Cold War period between the US and Soviet Union, the political will and compromises of the leaderships have played the critical role. Although the past years of arms control have not been free from disagreements and violations, the agreements nonetheless have continued to survive upon the two leaderships' continued commitment and political will to keep them intact. Furthermore, the arms control architecture has manifested how the value of arms control could be sustained against new technological challenges. Despite emergence of new technologies, such as reentry vehicles, missile defense systems, and cruise missiles, the US and Russia have managed to find a mutually acceptable solution. Another notable case is the past adjustment by the US during the Obama administration, to curb missile defense, which was fundamental in venting the rapid escalations surrounding the situation in the Taiwan Strait.

Trilateral Rhetorical Intervention for Arms Control

The leaderships and strategists of the three countries may adopt from how post-war realists have “placed questions of oratory, affect, and mass appeal” at the center of their analysis,⁵¹⁾ and how the use of communicative actions can “persuade” the actors and/or (re)fashion the given situation. From the “preferred course of action,” “principled commitments can motivate participants.”⁵²⁾ Even in new areas where no full comprehension or promoted values exist among the actors, creation of new rhetorics can influence the existing political debates.⁵³⁾ Also, as Scott Consigny noted, particularly in the situations marked by “indeterminate context” and “troublesome disorder,” leadership (“rector”) can play critical role in structuring the debate, providing a viable momentum for rhetorical intervention.⁵⁴⁾ Here, as James Martin also put, the “skills and creativity” of the leadership will be important in “shaping the situation.”⁵⁵⁾

In the realms of new emerging technologies, where no dominant perspectives have yet to be established, our trilateral construction of narratives can become “projectile-like ideas,”⁵⁶⁾ that can direct our comprehension of the pros and cons of increasing arms control void in this region. And in the process, we will be able to “disclose... ‘the truth’ of the situation and determin[e] the issues at stake.” Our choice of structural resources and problematization will (re)shape our parameters of choice.⁵⁷⁾

51) Tjalve and Williams, “Reviving the Rhetoric of Realism,” 38.

52) Jean L. Cohen, “Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements,” *Social Research* 52, no. 4 (1985): 663-716.; Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996): 141.

53) Ronald R. Krebs and Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, “Twisting Tongues and Twisting Arms: The Power of Political Rhetoric,” *European Journal of International Relations* 13, no. 1 (2007): 36.

54) Scott Consigny, “Rhetoric and Its Situations,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 7, no. 3 (1974): 178.

55) James Martin, “Situating Speech: A Rhetorical Approach to Political Strategy,” *Political Studies* 63 (2015): 30.

56) Martin, “Situating Speech,” 31.

57) Martin, “Situating Speech,” 33. See also, Nick Turnbull, “Problematology and Contingency in the Social Sciences,” *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 61, no. 4 (2007): 451-472.

We can aspire to achieve three major points. First is enhancing the trilateral performance in the security initiatives, which have largely lagged behind in comparison to other domains of cooperation. As described above, among the total 541 trilateral high-level programs/meetings from 2000-2020, only thirty-eight occasions (seven percent) were security-related.⁵⁸⁾ Out of the thirty-eight occasions, as Table 1 shows, the topics were limited to ‘soft’ or ‘non-traditional’ security issues such as cyber policy, disaster management, and counter-terrorism.

Second, restoring the space for trilateral talks over security issues. As the trilateral endorsement for 2018 Panmunjom Declaration was largely driven by the three countries’ consensus that the three should be at least talking to each other, newly excavated issue for discussion – the new emerging technologies – can assist in reviving the continuity in trilateral diplomatic talks over security issues. Given the grim prospect for trilateral security cooperation, new trilateral rhetorical inventions will be ever more critical in reminding the value of reciprocity and arms restraint among the trilateral leadership.

Third, without global norms governing those new emerging technologies, without equivalent form of NPT or Chemical Weapons Convention or Biological Weapons Convention, this may be one of the key areas in which Northeast Asia urgently needs new diplomatic initiatives. Also, in the long-term, the trilateral efforts on the new emerging technologies can seek to overcome the current perceived limitations that the arms control measures and discussions have been largely West/US-dominated, as in the case of the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC).⁵⁹⁾

VI. Suggestions for Action Plans

At the foremost, building upon the need for ‘rhetoric of responsibility’ and ‘rhetorical leadership’ – formulation of new interpretation of a situation – which are done in “relatively closed, elite settings,”⁶⁰⁾ this study proposes the trilateral organizations like the TCS to subsidize research projects and operation of trilateral research group/wisemen tables on the topic of emerging technologies in this region. The width of spectrum of new emerging technologies may include the domain of precision-guided firepower (missiles, artilleries, munitions), hypersonic, laser systems,

58) Counted by author in reference to TCS database. Aside from thirty-eight non-traditional security realms of cooperation, the trilateral meetings were dominated by the fields of economy (223), environment (77), health (49), culture (49), foreign affairs (47), education & exchange (43), tourism (9), and sports (6).

59) Ogilvie-White, “Post-INF Arms Control in the Asia-Pacific,” 5.

60) Martin, “Situating Speech,” 30.

optic sensors, radar systems, and satellites that are founding blocks to both nuclear and conventional capabilities. As no one military equipment dominate military operation, the discussions should not center on single form of weapons system or technologies, but a ‘host’ or ‘cluster’ of technologies that are diversely land-, sea-, air-, and/or space-based systems.

Inviting individual researchers from the three countries, scholarly debates on the thorny security issues can be encouraged than evaded within the trilateral framework. The wisdom tables can be operated by direct utilization of Trilateral Cooperation Fund under TCS or can be operated as sub-programs under the current module of NTCT National Focal Points Meetings.

With the aggravating strategic rivalry between the major powers and prominent arms control void in this region, it is difficult to anticipate big strides in trilateral security initiatives. Nonetheless, while this study does not seek breakthroughs, the main caveat of building trilateral narrative on emerging technologies lies in the conviction that the trilateral leadership cannot overlook the issue of increasing arms control void in this region. While state-level efforts preconditioning arms control would be infeasible wherein most of the countries are becoming more preoccupied with the increasing nuclear and missile developments in the region, this study believes that a collaborative individual-level, expert-oriented research agenda and occasions under the name of TCS is important as symbolical action. Also in practice, the regular, face-to-face (online & offline) dialogues under TCS and/or trilateral settings will contribute in sustaining the value of arms control as means of security in this region.

More importantly, discrete trilateral platform should be also established that bring together high-level policy makers of the three countries. Practical roadmap for Northeast Asian, trilateral version of arms control or restraint can be designed.

The possibility of any meaningful implementation of the trilateral Joint Statement on the ‘2018 Inter-Korean Summit,’ as well as the “Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade” will remain ever more remote, without striving to alleviate increasing arms control void in this region. As result, this study aspires to 1) construct the value of arms control among the ROK-Japan-China security specialists, 2) promote multi-level exchanges between experts, scholars, and officials among the three countries, 3) thereby serve as channels to recall the trilateral commitment in denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as announced in the Joint Statement on the ‘2018 Inter-Korean Summit,’ and, 4) contribute in implementing the “Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade.”

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Trilateral Cooperation

: Young Professionals Research Project



Synergy Effects of Trilateral+X Cooperation: Collaborative Platforms for Effective Development Cooperation in Asia

Kim Bo Kyung

(Postdoctoral Fellow, Seoul National University)

Synergy Effects of Trilateral+X Cooperation: Collaborative Platforms for Effective Development Cooperation in Asia

Kim Bo Kyung

I. Introduction

Finding grounds for trilateral partnership among Republic of Korea, China, and Japan (CJK) has been a long journey since their first trilateral summit meeting in 1999. After approximately two decades, the “Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade” was adopted as an outcome document of the 8th Trilateral Summit in 2019. With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed on in 2015 as a global agenda aimed to be achieved by 2030, ‘development cooperation’ is included as one of the eight key areas to seek CJK trilateral partnership (TCS, 2019c). Under such setting, traditional means of bilateral aid have become insufficient for meeting development needs of the regional specificity. Thus, partnership among actors, not only between donors and partner countries, but also among global agencies, private sectors, and multi-stakeholders is regarded essential. With the recent resurgence of aid nationalism spreading throughout the donors’ community that can potentially hinder global partnership, it has become important to strengthen the means of implementation and to streamline cooperation on regional levels (Langford 2016; Igoe 2019).

Regional and subregional partnerships often exert a great extent of influence over intra-regional affairs on issues such as supporting marginalized partner countries in specified sectors (Keast et al. 2007; Bellini et al. 2012). Under such premise, more light is shed on the significance of collaboration among CJK for development cooperation in the Asian context. The fundamental idea is to seek partnership among intra-regional countries and to tackle issues of local urgency, in line with SDG 17.¹⁾ As top donors and contributors of the region, joint efforts among the three East Asian countries is expected to create synergy effects of trilateral cooperation in terms of achieving goals related with governance and global partnership. Under the slogan of ‘East Asian Community’ promoted since the 2005 East Asian Summit, modalities of joint action have been gradually shifting towards enhancing effective development cooperation on the regional level. In this regard, characterizing

1) SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

and devising platforms for regional partnership among the ROK, China, and Japan has become an indispensable part of tripartite cooperation.

To find potential pathways for CJK partnership on development cooperation, this study proceeds as follows. First, a brief overview will be given on current aid flow patterns from the CJK towards Asia to identify key partner countries and sectors of interest or negligence. Second, modes of cooperative governance as an analytical framework are introduced to show how collaboration dynamics must be coupled with partnership in order to achieve the status of *collaborative platform* on the regional level. Third, existing consultative groups will be examined in line with the recent ‘Trilateral+X’ cooperation model of CJK. Next, a ‘trilateral challenge fund’ and an operative body called ‘TCS-Plus’ are proposed as a short-term action plan to launch pilot projects in Far East Asia and South Asia. Lastly, mid to long-term blueprints are suggested: deriving successful pilot projects that can be represented as best practice examples of SDG 17, forming platform-to-platform partnership by institutionalizing the Trilateral+X cooperation model, and expanding the role of the collaborative platform for solidifying trilateral cooperation. The study concludes by suggesting that a collaborative platform for dialogue and action can enhance the effectiveness of development cooperation in the Asian context through trilateral cooperation among CJK.

II. Focus Areas of Aid and Collaborative Governance Regime

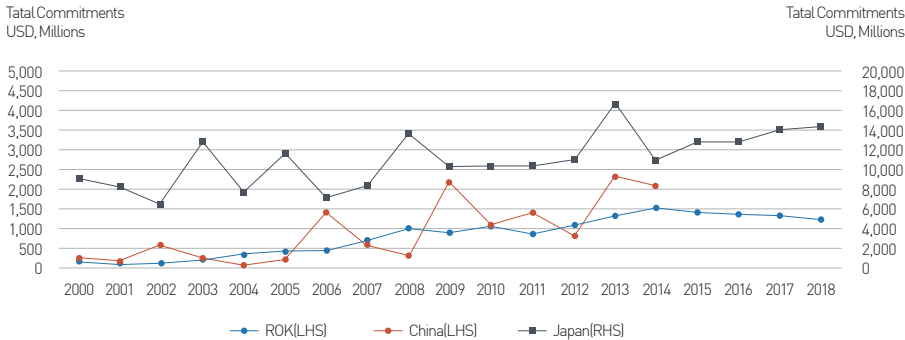
1) *Convergent Aid Flows to ASEAN and South Asia*

The ROK and Japan are currently top donors providing aid to partner countries in the Asian region as members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC). Although a non-member of OECD DAC, China’s commitment is also largely concentrated on intra-regional countries next to Africa. A considerable proportion of China’s focus areas coincide with key partner countries of the ROK and Japan, which are clustered around Southeast Asia and parts of South Asia. More specifically, the recent diplomatic strategies of CJK have a thread of connection in terms of policy directions. Though specific motivations and priorities may vary, this is well illustrated by keynotes of the ROK’s New Southern Policy, China’s Belt and Road Initiative, and Japan’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy.²⁾ For all three donors, solidifying relations with its key partner countries is both a means and a purpose to maintain influence over the region. Typically, the opportunities and/or constraints of participation,

2) <http://www.nsp.go.kr/eng/main.do>; <http://english.www.gov.cn/beltAndRoad/>;
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page25e_000278.html.

the so-called political opportunity structure of incentives, are likely to coincide among countries sharing geopolitical conditions (Tarrow 1996). From this viewpoint, countries essentially reflect and adopt development goals by adjusting them to their national contexts and priorities. Thus, duplications are likely to occur in aid practices among actors from the same regional bloc.

(Figure 1) CJK's Total Aid Flow Patterns to Asia



Source: OECD Statistics & AidData.

<Figure 1> denotes CJK's aid flows toward the Asian region. The overall trend shows increasing amounts of commitments for nearly two decades. In terms of the aid that was given to Asia from 2010 to 2014,³⁾ the three donors converged to common patterns of allocating approximately 80 percent of their bilateral ODA commitments toward countries in the regions of Far East Asia and South Asia.⁴⁾ Top recipients were concentrated on 'emerging economies' that are of utmost concern to the three donors. These include India and Pakistan of South Asia, alongside with some of the ASEAN countries of Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam). Aid volumes fluctuated over the years with a sharp increase or decrease depending on certain events. However, as for the governments of CJK, the ten recipients are defined as strategic corridors in achieving the aforementioned diplomatic key goals within the regional

3) Although the ROK and Japan's aid data availability spans up to 2018, analysis is confined to years up to 2014 due to limitations in retrieving recent data on China. Overall trends of aid flows from the ROK and Japan from 2014 to 2018 converges to the trend prior to 2014. The starting year is set to 2010, the year when TCS was established for trilateral cooperation to begin in earnest and the year when the ROK became a member of OECD DAC. Aid flows are based on commitments (instead of disbursements) for compatibility with Chinese aid data.

4) OECD statistics classification of Far East Asia includes countries of Southeast Asia. OECD Recipients by Regional Groupings are as follows: Central Asia (Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan); South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan); Far East Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, Myanmar); Middle East (Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, West Bank and Gaza Strip, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen). Singapore and Brunei are classified as 'More advanced developing countries and territories (MADCTs).'

sphere. A dissection of the sectors that were granted most attention from each contributor finds that all three countries showed interest in certain areas, whereas some were relatively neglected as shown in below <Table 1>.

(Table 1) CJK's Key Partner Countries and Focus Aid Sectors⁵⁾


Key Partner Countries Focus Sectors		Myanmar	Laos	Cambodia	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Vietnam	India	Pakistan
Social infra. & services	Education										
	Water supply and sanitation										
Economic infra. & services	Energy										
	Transport and communications										
Production sectors	Agriculture, forestry, fishing										
	Industry, mining, construction										
	Trade and tourism										
Multisector											
Programme assistance											
Action relating to debt											
Humanitarian aid											
Unallocated/unspecified											

■: China's bilateral ODA commitment with focus on specific countries and sectors in Asia
 ■: Japan's bilateral ODA commitment with focus on specific countries and sectors in Asia
 ■: ROK's bilateral ODA commitment with focus on specific countries and sectors in Asia

Source: Author (Data: OECD Statistics & AidData in <Appendix 1>).

Based on bilateral ODA commitment with focus on specific sectors by the three contributors as shown in <Table 1>, countries and sectors can be roughly narrowed down into three groups: Tier 1, where focus areas and partner countries overlap among CJK; Tier 2, where two or more donors are committed to sectors of specific partner countries; and Tier 3, where all three countries are relatively negligent. As for Tier 1, four countries and sectors are counted in, with Myanmar (energy), Cambodia (water supply and sanitation; transport & communication), Philippines (agriculture, forestry, fishing), and Pakistan (transport and communication). In the case of Tier 2, Myanmar (transport and communication), Laos (energy; transport and communication), Cambodia

5) Full lists of aid by sectors delivered to the ten key partner countries by the ROK, China, and Japan are respectively shown in <Appendix 1>.



(agriculture, forestry, fishing), Indonesia (water supply and sanitation; energy), Philippines (transport and communication), Vietnam (education, water supply and sanitation, energy, transport and communication; multisector), and Pakistan (energy, humanitarian aid) are included as sectors of interest by two among CJK. Tier 3 is represented by the areas left blank. The general trend shows that most marks are concentrated on economic infrastructure & services, with Vietnam receiving support from more than two donors on almost half of all the sectors.

Indeed, generalizing aid tendencies need careful analysis. Certain sectors may receive temporal attention due to sporadic events such as natural disasters or diplomatic tensions. Moreover, trends can change drastically and can be interpreted differently depending on standards of analysis such as durability, consistency, and absolute-relative terms. Accordingly, attempts to single out a specific sector to seek trilateral cooperation may be misleading. Furthermore, unlike education or humanitarian aid of which joint efforts are more likely, the economic sector including energy and transportation can be areas where cooperation is deemed difficult to realize. Such sectors are heavily interrelated to donor's economic motivations that are sensitive towards preoccupying the competitive market with early entry points. This is well illustrated by CJK's approach to aid, characterized as a larger economic package that entails favorable chances for foreign direct investment and trade on areas regarded as advantageous for its regional production networks in Asia (Sohn et al. 2020). Even among the selected ASEAN countries, only few specific sectors considered worthy of investment benefit from the concentrated devotion. Unlike Nordic donors known to have humanitarian motivations, CJK's aid is given more in the form of loans rather than grants with only small proportions allocated to social sphere purposes. At times, aid is given preferably to middle to upper-middle income countries for a donor's risk leverage rather than based on rigorous assessment on development needs (Kim and Oh 2012; Stallings and Kim 2015).

Disparities among recipients on the regional level in terms of aid received by their donors have gradually generated development gaps, leading to the so-called 'two-tier ASEAN' (Severino 2007). Since the 2000s, the term has been used to address the divide between the ASEAN-6 and CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam) countries (Cho 2008). Attempts to close this gap were made early on with the launch of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) in 2000 and the subsequent adoption of the Hanoi Declaration in 2001. Nevertheless, without a counterpart consultative body to accept development needs and demands agreed among ASEAN countries, it is difficult to bridge the gap under current bilateral aid practices. Though it requires an intricate process to form a platform to group the three donors, there is a need for further analysis on whether joint assistance strategies can apply in actual terms. In this regard, the mutually interdependent aspects of development cooperation commitments call for a different tool that can explain motivational incentives to bring donors into collaborative efforts: the *collaborative governance regime (CGR)*.

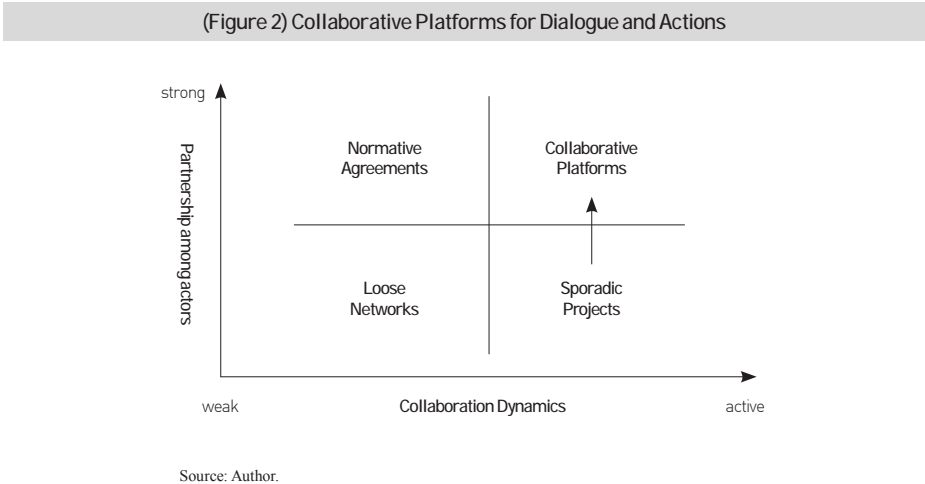
2) Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) for Regional Cooperation

‘Collaboration’ and ‘cooperation’ are interchangeably used to explain joint action among multiple entities to achieve a common goal. However, there exists a slight semantic distinction. Whereas cooperation connotes aggregating individual outcomes of allotted tasks, collaboration is closer to solving complex problems and promoting agendas as a group. Multiple stakeholders work together from the initial stage to build a consensus and to deliver accompanying results as a team under collaboration. Thus, cooperation is generally used as a broader term that encompasses collaboration since multiple collaborative efforts can coexist within a single cooperative framework. In this context, there can be subsets of thematic collaborative governance under a single core agenda of trilateral cooperation. Here, collaborative governance refers to the “processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished” (Emerson et al. 2012, 2). It is a forum for deliberation, problem solving, and dispute resolution among participating actors.

Collaborative governance shares its theoretical root with a well-known body of literature that explains the logic of collective action, the prisoner’s dilemma, and common-pool resource problems (Olson 1965; Axelrod 1984; Ostrom 1990). In particular, Ostrom (1990) lists conditions for governing finite yet extractable common-pool resources: defining group boundaries, identifying local needs, participation by the affected, external legitimation, monitoring and sanctioning, and bottom-up responsibility. The key idea is that cooperation is inevitable once parties start using jointly procured common resources repeatedly. To apply the notion of common-pool resources in local communities to explaining inter-state interactions, collaborative governance regime (CGR) is useful to define the multi-partner governance system (Emerson et al. 2012). Another noticeable aspect of collaboration is that it involves “developing internal agreements that are implemented through external networks” (Gray 1985, 912; Margerum 2011, 6). This points to an important underlying condition that CJK agreements on joint efforts for regional development policies may not even be pushed forward without the grand agenda of sustainable development on the global level. Likewise, although global partnership among states is non-binding in nature, it functions as a complementary element for dynamism on the regional level. The logic reinforces the core of CGR which examines whether dialogues and action enter the virtuous circle of ‘collaboration dynamics’, with strong partnership formed among group participants (Ansell and Gash 2008).

The circular progression of collaboration dynamics depends on three sufficient conditions and whether underpinning elements are consecutively met and expansively iterated over time. The three conditions and subsets of elements agreed in the CGR literature are as follows: i) principled

engagement: discovery, definition, deliberation, determination; ii) shared motivation: trust, mutual understanding, internal legitimacy, commitment; and iii) joint capacity: procedural and institutional arrangements, leadership, resources, knowledge (Emerson and Nabatchi 2015, 57-86). As shown in <Figure 2>, the critical threshold of CGR lies on two factors. On the one hand, the horizontal axis indicates whether an iterative dynamism occurs with the aforementioned three elements. On the other hand, the vertical axis denotes whether partnership among actors is strong enough to accomplish shared goals and targets (Thomson and Perry 2006). The combination of the two factors results in a typology of collaboration with four quadrants as visible in the figure. The least desired form of cooperation would be ‘loose networks’, where both partnerships and dynamics are relatively dormant. Here, parties follow their own lines of conduct, with their interests often overriding greater cause of the group. ‘Normative agreements’ and ‘sporadic projects’ can be regarded as only half of systematic cooperation, as the former lacks a catalyst for action and the latter is limited by insufficient solidarity (Sørensen and Torfing 2009; Lundin and Söderholm 1995).



The current aid practices of the ROK, China, and Japan for the Far East and South Asian countries anchor its features in the ‘sporadic projects’ quadrant. Temporary national interests delimit their participation patterns into confined boundaries of specific projects in selected partner countries mainly on a bilateral basis. As shown from the previous section through <Table 1>, the three donors show a certain degree of activeness with selected partner countries with focus on some sectors. Yet, no consistent forms of cooperation patterns or mutual interdependence among them can be found. Thus, the long term aim for CJK collaborative governance is to head towards the last and most ideal form of cooperation in the upper-right quadrant indicated as ‘collaborative platforms’. It is also the prospective end goal where the ROK, China, and Japan’s cooperation model shall gradually move

up towards from the current form of ‘sporadic projects’. Based on the terminology used in CGR, a *collaborative platform* is “a stand-alone organization, but may also be a program or a subunit of an organization. It is an organization or program with dedicated competences, institutions and resources for facilitating the creation, adaptation and success of multiple or ongoing collaborative projects or networks” (Ansell and Gash 2018, 20).

In order for collaborative governance to function within the CGR, a collaborative platform must be created with ‘active collaboration dynamics’ coupled with ‘strong levels of partnership’ among actors sharing common objectives (Thomson and Perry 2006). By introducing this kind of CGR approach into the Asian context, the framework signifies that a working forum should be re-established to achieve trilateral cooperation on certain themes. Collaborative platforms are to perform as an instrumental body, delivering actions and embracing adaptation. Retracing back to the blank areas classified as Tier 3, establishing a collaborative platform among CJK opens the possibility to seek a joint support strategy for the so-called neglected and marginalized countries. Particular issues, specific sectors, or temporal aid can be collectively delivered without the sole burden on a single donor. Aside from fragmentary aims to competitively win over a lucrative partner country, CGR suggests different tools to analyze motivational incentives of the three donors. Taking into account that there exist regional agendas that require CJK cooperation, an alternative lens is needed to look at how collaborative governance on the regional level operates. The reason for this assumption is rooted in the framework’s focus: once participants start to use jointly-pooled common resources under iteration, cooperation based on strong partnership leads to a win-win for all.

III. Creating Collaborative Platforms among ROK-China-Japan

1) *Regional Consultative Groups and ‘Trilateral+X’ Cooperation Model*

Outside the trilateral cooperation, the ROK, China, and Japan are individually engaged in and have fostered several consultative groups to advance integration on the pan-regional level. A few examples of communities include: the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), representing cooperation among emerging donors; MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, Australia), a consultative body among middle-range powers; and the TPP11 (Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Canada, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Australia, New Zealand) as a free-trade zone among trans-Pacific countries. The long-standing ASEAN Plus Three (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the ROK, China, Japan) functions as a group that was arranged through an economic concert among inter-Asian countries, borne with the mission to realize Asian-based

multilateralism. Several other models have been established to share information and to tackle challenges that matter most to participating countries of Asia. Extensional modes of consultative groups have gradually been made in various forms to expand the domain of regionalism such as the RCEP (ASEAN+3, India, Australia, New Zealand), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) that broadened its scope beyond Oceania by including the United States, Canada, Mexico, Peru, Russia, and other countries that are non-members of the regional community.

Nevertheless, the ROK, China, and Japan believe their roles to be more proactive in dealing with regional affairs that require quick responses and joint action from major actors. After their initial attempt towards tripartite cooperation with the first trilateral summit meeting on the occasion of ASEAN+3 that took place in 1999, it was almost a decade later that the 1st independent Trilateral Summit was held in 2008. The meetings were institutionalized with establishment of an intergovernmental organization named the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) in 2011 to further promote cooperation among CJK (TCS 2016). With the TCS, initial expectations were that the Secretariat would enable policy implementation mechanisms and mediate among the three countries. However, the organization has been criticized for its weakness for being easily interrupted by bilateral undercurrents, and for its functions that go nowhere beyond vain, rudderless discussions. Even during its earlier phase, there were already “sixty trilateral consultative mechanisms, eighteen ministerial meetings, and over one hundred cooperative projects,” which raised doubts toward its effectiveness (Yeo 2017, 71). Though its effectiveness as an organization has been questioned, one of the few encouraging achievements was the renewal of CJK’s commitment to the region since the 7th Trilateral Summit Meeting in 2018. The commitment was to take place in the form of exploring a ‘Trilateral+X’ cooperation model for inclusive and sustainable development in the region. The modality was introduced as a cooperation framework that enables mutual complementarity in promoting development plans in the yet-unnamed countries of the region, left as an undecided-X. Major ‘cooperation areas’⁶⁾ and key ‘principles’⁷⁾ of the model were later derived as an outcome of the 9th Trilateral Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in August 2019 as a joint statement (TCS 2019a).

In December 2019, six ‘early harvest projects’ were proposed as pilot cases that were selected out of the seven major cooperation areas stipulated in the Trilateral+X concept paper. The preliminary selection of the undecided-Xs and respective projects were as follows: i) Trilateral+Mongolia in sandstorm prevention and control; ii) Trilateral+Myanmar and Cambodia in the prevention and

6) Major cooperation areas include: 1) sustainable economy; 2) ecological and environmental conservation; 3) disaster risk reduction; 4) health; 5) poverty alleviation; 6) people-to-people exchange; 7) other areas (TCS 2019b).

7) Six principles include: voluntary; equal-footed; open; win-win; transparent; and sustainable (TCS 2019a).

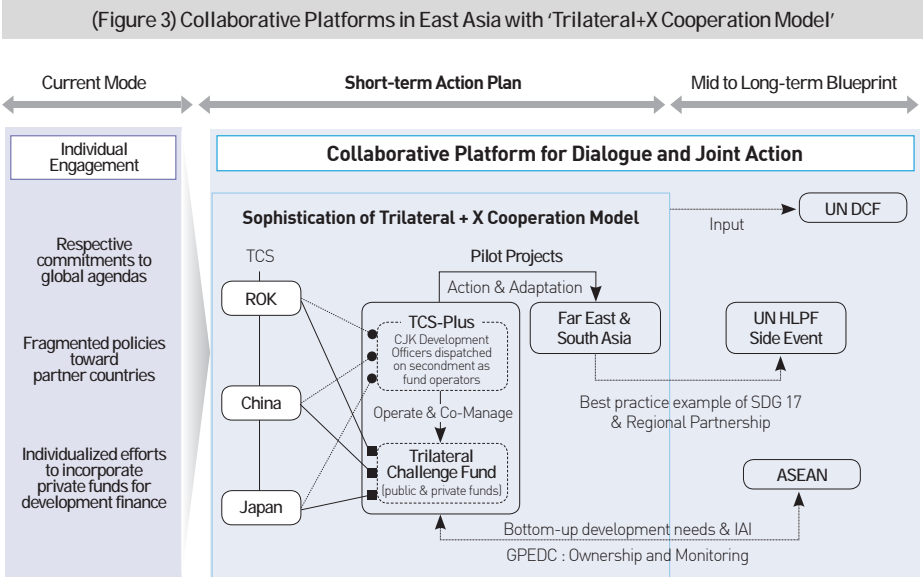
control of tropical diseases; iii) Trilateral+ASEAN countries in a cancer registration capacity improvement project; iv) Trilateral+ASEAN countries in dealing with marine plastic litter; v) Trilateral+X in low carbon city development; and vi) Trilateral+Mongolia, the Philippines and Indonesia in capacity development of technology for disaster risk reduction (TCS 2019b). Unfortunately, minimal progress has been made, since the inception of the projects were interrupted by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early-2020, hindering the active implementation of the harvest projects. Still, the most remarkable aspect of the new attempt was that multiple layers of partnerships were taken into account: first among the ROK, China, Japan (Trilateral); second between Trilateral and individual developing countries; and third between Trilateral and the ASEAN as a collective group. Partnerships were not exclusive to the tripartite cooperation, and the core of the '+X' concept was to fulfill development needs prioritized by the beneficiaries.

Recalling that the CJK members are characterized as having aid-oriented foreign policy based on mercantilism, their intentions often encounter critical commentary, especially by humanitarian donors. From a certain aspect, their cherry-picking of partner countries and focus sectors is specifically targeted to “promote the economic development of their poorer neighbors and to integrate them into the thriving Asian regional economy” (Stallings and Kim 2017, 227). Thus, a new collaborative platform is expected to be a great opportunity for CJK to clear their names and to establish a foothold within the donor’s community by manifesting themselves as donors responding to regional development needs that stem from the most underdeveloped countries. Undeniably, it will not be easy to unanimously determine on the '+X' candidates and areas of support in the earlier stage. Nevertheless, compromise on proposals can begin with CLMV countries or Tier 3 areas where projects are relatively less costly with a pooled fund, and where trilateral cooperation is viable in the short-term. Yet, practical cooperation at this level can only be effective when a solid cooperative platform for dialogue and joint action exists as a consultative body. In order for the trilateral cooperation platform to fulfill the role as a vehicle to mediate parties, there needs to be a firm organization for working-level talks supported by all three countries. The body must serve as a collaborative platform not only for dialogue, but also for joint action such as fundraising and operating projects. For this reason, the substance of the collaborative platform cannot be realized without forming a common-pool resource, a *‘trilateral challenge fund’*.

2) Collaborative Platform with ‘Trilateral Challenge Fund’: Short-term Action Plan

Seeking and successfully locating niche areas that need cooperation is the winning way to achieve public purposes under restrained financing. In order to realize coordination among CJK to achieve SDGs in the Asian context, a collaborative platform needs to execute and deliver outcomes, while fully reflecting specific needs of the region. The platform not only indicates simple participation

from the three governments. Instead, the collaborative platform needs to be a mechanism that can execute joint aid projects, satisfy regional development needs from marginalized areas, operate pooled funds transparently, and monitor implementation status of projects. Against this backdrop, a small-sized ‘trilateral challenge fund’ is suggested for execution of short-term action plans. It is a fund basin for managing pooled resources contributed by multi-stakeholders from both the public and the private, including governments of CJK as shown in <Figure 3>. The challenge fund is to invite private sector participation to conjointly address development needs from marginalized sectors and countries in Far East and South Asia that were formerly neglected in bilateral aid of CJK. For instance, social infrastructure sector in Laos and Pakistan, humanitarian aid in Cambodia and India, economic infrastructure and services sector in Malaysia, or any other areas of Tier 3 can be feasible pilot projects to begin with.



Source: Author.

To implement globally agreed norms and rules, building an internal consultative body for regional partnership elevates the chances for alignment at the project level. Though TCS exists, delicate orchestration of the newly founded trilateral challenge fund will require an independent body to operate and to manage the fund that is overseen by development specialists. In this context, a spinoff organization provisionally titled in this study as ‘TCS-Plus’ can be formed as an affiliated unit outside the TCS to operate and co-manage the ‘trilateral challenge fund’. The subsidiary organization need not be a subunit of the TCS; however, it can be placed within the Secretariat to utilize the already-existing regional dialogue platform. To supplement expertise, the TCS-Plus can be staffed with CJK’s

development officers respectively dispatched on secondment as challenge fund operators. The main Secretariat may secure channels for dialogue and institutional grounds for the organization to stand. Dispatched development officers as working-level operators can collaborate in designing actual projects on practical dimensions under TCS-Plus. As delegates of CJK, officers of TCS-Plus are to implement selected pilot projects in Far East and South Asian countries and to lead course corrections through iterated process of action and adaptation. Thus, in the short-run, the original +X projects that were curbed due to the pandemic can be elaborated with feasibility-oriented examination based on the newly devised Trilateral+X cooperation model. Therefore, as shown in the ‘short-term action plan’ area in <Figure 3>, the collaborative platform can be established by first, organizing an operative body, second, forming the trilateral challenge fund to execute pilot projects, and third, selecting target sectors and countries of the region that have received comparatively little attention by donors so far.

The current mode of CJK’s development practices is based on respective commitments to global norms and agendas, fragmented engagement with partner countries, and individualized efforts to incorporate domestic private funds for development finance. As a facilitator of the Trilateral+X cooperation model, the collaborative platform is expected to conjointly manage common funds to engage in areas that were ruled out in bilateral assistance. At the same time, the platform is expected to seek effective development cooperation by additionally inducing partner countries’ active participation based on partnership in line with SDG 17. Here, a noteworthy aspect of partnership is its strength in explaining the multi-partner governance system. Though partnerships cannot be forced, and although the ties heavily rely on voluntarism, it is the key complementary factor for a chain of dynamics as in <Figure 2>. Applying the framework to the Trilateral+X cooperation model, the most important risk factor is the issue of securing stable procurement of the pooled funds. Seeking innovative measures for development financing has been a standing issue, as aid is never sufficient in comparison to the amount in need. With widespread consensus on the importance of the private sector’s role for international development, donors around the world are seeking ways to induce synergistic and effective participation from the private sector, not only those of donor countries, but also private sectors from developing countries.

Diversification of development financing invites a wider range of participation for achieving post-2015 agenda of SDGs. It includes actors such as donor governments and partner countries, global development agencies, the private-business sector, civil society, and many other multi-stakeholders engaged in procuring international public finance. Financing for development has diversified with resource mobilized through both public and private channels ever since the 2002 Monterrey Consensus and 2008 Doha Declaration as outcomes of the 1st and 2nd International Conference on

Financing for Development.⁸⁾ Moreover, at the 2011 High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan, the private sector's participation in development cooperation was discussed as a major issue at the HLF-4 Private Sector Forum, which led to its quick emergence as a key actor of development. Later with the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development, resourcing through additional public and private funds was once again emphasized and encouraged (United Nations 2015a).⁹⁾ Since then, donors' policy-level assistance and institutional support were emphasized for expanded participation by the private sector, as in the recent exemplary case of USAID's Private-Sector Engagement (PSE) Policy (USAID 2019).

According to the OECD definition, PSE is “an activity that aims to engage the private sector for development results and involves the active participation of the private sector” (OECD 2016, 1). It is a term that indicates the strategic and systematic partnership between businesses and donors to realize goals of sustainable development. As for large corporate actors, their interest in such PSE stems from the expanding awareness towards corporate social responsibility (CSR). Even for small-sized businesses, their recognition of the positive correlation between corporate philanthropy and long-term market share induces them to seek growth by participating in such challenge fund projects (Pompa 2013; USAID 2019). So far, multiple innovative methods for financing development have been introduced, such as blended finance, impact investing, ODA modernization that re-defined ODA with measurement standards adjusted to grant equivalent system, etc. The range of aid was expanded with TOSSD (Total Official Support for Sustainable Development) supporting the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for mobilizing additional finance for development; Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) as intermediary organizations between public aid and private investment; and support for private sector development (PSD) in developing countries. These are some of many approaches that incorporate the private sector into international development, all of which the trilateral challenge fund must examine for reference in terms of pooling funds.

3) GPEDC Principles & HLPF Side Events: Mid to Long-term Blueprint

Indeed, multiple dialogues and consultations will be required during the process of trilateral cooperation, while selecting countries and sectors of primary target, forming the challenge fund and TCS-Plus operators, and inviting private sector engagement in financing the fund. Nevertheless,

8) “We shall also pursue enhanced collaboration at the country level with the private sector, non-official donors, regional organizations and official donors” (United Nations 2008, 14).

9) “We recognize that both public and private investment have key roles to play in infrastructure financing, including through development banks, development finance institutions and tools and mechanisms such as public-private partnerships, blended finance, which combines concessional public finance with non-concessional private finance and expertise from the public and private sector, special-purpose vehicles, non-recourse project financing, risk mitigation instruments and pooled funding structures” (United Nations 2015a, 15-16).

once the regional collaborative platform settles in, it can further connect with the South-South cooperation platforms of the region such as the ASEAN. Partner countries can be required to collectively exercise a decent level of country ownership and follow the Monitoring Framework of Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC, Global Partnership) in the longer run. Such ownership concept and tools for voluntary monitoring have been developed from an array of High Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness (HLF) in Rome (2003), Paris (2005), Accra (2008), and Busan (2011) that marked occasions for the global community to touch upon the fundamentals of aid effectiveness and the validity of traditional aid modalities.¹⁰⁾ The HLF gradually expanded the boundaries of participation by embracing not only donors, but also the civil society based on the Istanbul Principles, the actors of the South-South cooperation based on the Bogota Statement, and the fragile and conflict-affected states based on the Dili Declaration.¹¹⁾ In addition to the range of alliances among development partners, the new paradigm stressed “inclusion of new actors based on shared principles, common goals and differential commitments for effective international development” (OECD 2011, 4). This keynote induced diverse forms of cooperation which stressed participation alongside with ‘partnership’ among actors in order to make timely and sufficient response to meet the ever-proliferating development needs.

The Global Partnership is an “inclusive multistakeholder partnership that provides as a platform to enhance development cooperation effectiveness for achievement of SDGs and for the shared benefit of people, planet, prosperity, and peace.”¹²⁾ The focus of GPEDC lies largely in eleven areas,¹³⁾ of which the Monitoring Framework functions as a main instrument for reviewing the status of aid practices in developing countries.¹⁴⁾ The Global Partnership Monitoring Framework not only emphasizes results and outcomes, but also contributes to achieving SDGs especially on Goal 17 that deals with partnership among multi-stakeholders (OECD/UNDP, 2019).¹⁵⁾ The journey from the

10) <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/>.

11) <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/thehighlevelforaonaideeffectivenessahistory.htm>

12) Agreed as an outcome of HLF-4 in 2011, the GPEDC principles were signed by more than 161 countries and 56 organizations. It was devised on four principles including: i) Country ownership, ii) Focus on results, iii) Inclusive partnerships, and iv) Transparency and mutual accountability.

13) Focus areas of GPEDC include: demonstrating the impact of effectiveness; statistical capacity and data, private sector engagement (PSE), triangular development co-operation, South-South co-operation, civil society partnerships, philanthropic engagement, development effectiveness at subnational level, multilateral support, Monitoring Framework, and leveraging monitoring for action.

14) The Monitoring Framework relies on voluntary reporting based on ownership, which is well projected in the ‘Focus on Results’ principle under Indicator 1a: “Development partners use country-led results frameworks,” which measures the alignment of development partners’ programme with country-defined priorities and results, and progressive reliance on countries’ own statistics and monitoring and evaluation systems to track results. The indicator is the source for reporting on SDG 17.15 (GPEDC 2017b; 2018; see also Woo et al. 2020).

15) The contribution is especially reflected in SDG 17.15 and 17.16: “The Global Partnership measures progress on SDG Target 17.16 on enhancing multi-stakeholder partnerships for development in support of the achievement of the SDGs; Target 17.15 on respecting a country’s policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for the SDGs” (OECD/UNDP 2019, 22).

Paris Declaration to the most recent Kampala Principle was an action-oriented roadmap to enhance quality of aid, to increase country ownership, to expand roles of the civil society and private sectors, and to establish development cooperation principles with GPEDC. 2014 Mexico Communiqué and 2016 Nairobi Outcome Document were drawn from the First and Second High Level Meetings of GPEDC (GPEDC 2016; 2017a). As a result, effective development cooperation was anchored into the directionality of achieving SDGs and solidified ‘partnership’ as a driving force to stimulate complementary contribution.¹⁶⁾ In particular, the 2019 Kampala Principle was derived from the first Senior-Level Meeting, which reaffirmed the gravity of ‘effectiveness’ in development cooperation, while linking Nairobi outcomes to the Third High Level Meeting expected to be held in 2021 (GPEDC 2019).

In regard to such GPEDC principles, the ROK and Japan showed strong alignment with their voluntary initiatives submitted to the Mexico Communiqué. Japan reviewed and revised its basic ODA Charter into a direction that would correspond to the GPEDC principles as early as 2014. To inherit the Busan outcomes, the ROK has been hosting annual workshops to provide training programs for public officials from partner countries (GPEDC 2014, 14). As the ROK and Japan have been making efforts on the global level, China also officially stated its commitment to exchanges for development cooperation efforts. This is shown in its White Paper on foreign aid in 2014: “the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, UN Development Cooperation Forum, UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries, High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation, G20 Summit, WTO’s Aid for Trade Global Review, and High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness” (White Paper on China’s Foreign Aid 2014).¹⁷⁾ Such movements by CJK illustrate that they all by and large embrace the need for aligning actions with principles for effective development cooperation. Thus, the decade-long vision of trilateral cooperation should pursue the following: first, sophisticating collaborative platforms from the smallest unit of trilateral cooperation, second, coupling it with regional platforms such as the ASEAN using ownership and monitoring, and third, thereby eventually bridging the cooperation model to the global partnership requirements of SDG 17.

Effective development cooperation can more easily be achieved through adaptive measures based on regional solidarity. The groundwork is halfway done, with the already-existing mechanisms of regional cooperation and willingness for joint actions through Trilateral+X model. Thus, it is worthwhile to reflect GPEDC principles of country ownership and its Monitoring Framework

16) The GPEDC supports effective development cooperation with several approaches including country-led contributions, knowledge-sharing and peer-learning, engagement of the private sector, strengthening political momentum, and learning from all types of development cooperation.

17) http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/08/23/content_281474982986592.htm.

to tailor collaborative platforms into the Asian context. Once the virtuous cycle begins to turn with numbers of successful project cases, the whole collaborative platform that conjoins two sub-platforms of Trilateral Cooperation and ASEAN can be exemplified as best practice for partnership reflected in SDG 17. Seeking collaboration with partner country governments and diverse development partners will synchronize expected outcomes of regional development cooperation as well as maintain quality level of results-based management. Outcomes of the pilot cases may be shared by hosting a ‘side or special event’ at the 2021 HLPF,¹⁸⁾ with long-term action plans to institutionalize the role of TCS-Plus as a facilitator of the joint initiatives based on CJK collaborative platform. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, there seems to be no better time for deriving a consensus on the +X factor.¹⁹⁾ Moreover, such collaborative platforms will function as a mediating agency that enhance trilateral cooperation outcomes, facilitate long-duration incubation of pilot projects, and encourage GPEDC spirits to developing countries. As a longer-term blueprint, the platform may then be able to provide complementary input into the UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) (Kim 2015). Such interaction is expected to lead regional development cooperation towards seeking trade-off between merits and demerits of aid practices that have been conducted segmentally by each donor (Brinkerhoff 2002). It can also present best aid practice examples under collaborative approaches for new opportunities.

IV. Conclusion

The international development community has witnessed various patterns of change for the past two decades. Aid practices have rapidly shifted, and the range of multi-stakeholders have expanded with the adoption of SDGs. Although developing countries have agreed to the global norms in general, specific goals, targets, and indicators are yet to be adopted to the fullest scale. Implementing SDGs can be costly, and development gaps among developing countries hinder them from seeking ownership and partnership. Thus, catalytic support from donors is necessary to stimulate the Global South to incorporate SDGs into their national development strategies (OECD 2019). To remedy such issue on the regional level, this study suggests that a collaborative platform for dialogue and action can enhance effectiveness of development cooperation in the Asian context. Cooperation among

18) The 2021 HLPF theme is expected to be “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”. Its focus will be placed on SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 3 (health and well-being), SDG 8 (decent work and growth), SDG 10 (inequality), SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 13 (climate action), SDG 16 (peace and justice), and SDG 17 (partnership).
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2021>.

19) https://tcs-asia.org/en/board/news_view.php?idx=3562&pNo=1

the ROK, China, and Japan can maximize the quality of development inputs and can change the landscape of their complementary roles while enhancing aid effectiveness within the region (United Nations 2015b; Beisheim and Simon 2016). Building on the recently introduced coalition framework of CJK's Trilateral+X cooperation model, short-term action plans and mid to long-term blueprints are proposed for partnership modality of the tripartite cooperation.

To resolve issues of less favored areas that are marginalized in existing flows of bilateral aid, the collaborative platform can be an alternative to induce both the donors and partner countries to seek joint efforts to find their own preferred solutions within the region. In this context, proposals and implications can be summarized as follows: CJK should 1) form a trilateral challenge fund pooled by both public and private sectors to facilitate pilot projects in Far East Asia and South Asia for fulfilling regional development needs; 2) establish an operative body, staffed with government-dispatched development officers and specialists on secondment as operators of the trilateral challenge fund to manage pilot projects; 3) successfully derive pilot projects into a best practice example of implementing SDG 17 into regional cooperation and bringing it forward to the development society (i.e. UN HLPF side event); 4) institutionalize the collaborative platform to seek long-term synergy effects through partnerships, not only with individual recipients, but also with other forms of regional partnerships for inter-platform cooperation (i.e. ASEAN); and 5) pursue longer-term blueprints for settlement of dialogue that can foster inclusive partnerships.

Therefore, in order to realize coordination among the three countries to achieve SDGs in the Asian context, formation of a *collaborative platform for dialogue and action* is found to be necessary. The *platform* must be based on collaborative modes of governance with dynamics to execute and to deliver outcomes, coupled with strong partnerships that can fully reflect needs of regional specificity. Sorting out and typologizing sectors for the challenge fund will be another issue to reach an agreement on among contributing parties. Funding the pooled fund, and using common-pool resources may lead to consuming debates; nevertheless, it is the most important stage to pinpoint where collective action on the regional level is needed the most: possibly identifying the +X factor to begin with. Effectiveness of development cooperation in the region will be further enhanced into an Asian development model once the partnership practices become exemplary. It will also require developing countries to facilitate on the principles of country ownership and the idea of Monitoring Framework by the GPEDC in future prospects. Seeking effective development cooperation on the regional level in line with SDG 17 can be viable once cooperation initiates with the smallest unit of collaborative platform to identify development needs of the region. Trilateral cooperation among CJK and its partnership with regional actors will be able to open doors for the sophistication of an Asian model of regional development cooperation.

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(Appendix 1) ROK, China, Japan's Bilateral ODA Commitments by Purpose

Donor		Korea									
Year		2010-2014 (Average)									
Unit		US Dollar, Millions									
Sector	Partner Country	Myanmar	Laos	Cambodia	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Vietnam	India	Pakistan
1000: Bilateral ODA Commitments by Purpose (CRS)		91.29	36.48	106.10	69.89	0.90	109.43	3.33	253.68	0.69	54.26
100: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES		9.20	12.41	35.82	55.36	0.71	31.26	1.95	88.98	0.50	14.63
110: Education		6.70	2.99	9.47	3.23	0.66	5.97	1.54	28.60	0.42	1.58
140: Water supply and sanitation		0.08	0.97	16.04	33.43	0.01	19.93	0.02	22.61	0.08	2.21
200: ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES		69.45	7.42	61.54	5.01	0.07	21.10	0.39	137.28	0.04	35.87
230: Energy		20.00	0.26	0.14	0.11	0.01	0.81	0.04	2.71	0.00	0.00
215: Transport and Communications		49.39	6.84	60.75	4.37	0.08	20.20	0.35	134.09	0.04	34.42
300: PRODUCTION SECTORS		7.32	14.39	5.89	4.37	0.12	51.22	0.76	6.59	0.12	2.12
310: Agriculture, forestry and fishing		6.13	14.07	5.35	2.15	0.09	50.73	0.51	4.17	0.07	0.96
320: Industry, mining and construction		0.43	0.25	0.32	2.06	0.02	0.41	0.58	2.19	0.07	1.31
330: Trade and tourism		0.76	0.07	0.22	0.16	0.01	0.09	0.02	0.23	0.01	0.04
400: MULTISECTOR		4.95	2.16	2.61	4.80	0.01	2.84	0.16	20.59	0.02	0.34
500: PROGRAMME ASSISTANCE											
520: Food Aid											
600: ACTION RELATING TO DEBT											
700: HUMANITARIAN AID		0.19	0.18	0.09	0.25		3.00	0.35	0.15	0.05	1.23
998: UNALLOCATED/UNSPECIFIED		0.43		0.26					0.24		0.19

Donor		China									
Year		2010-2014 (Sum)*									
Unit		US Dollar, Millions									
Sector**	Partner Country	Myanmar	Laos	Cambodia	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Vietnam	India	Pakistan
110: Education		0.25	0.12								
120: Health			6.00				2.00		0.01		
150: Government and Civil Society			0.50	0.71							125.20
160: Other Social infrastructure and services		14.32									
210: Transport and Storage			66.23	350.91	92.71						
220: Communications											56.78
230: Energy Generation and Supply				570.64	506.01						430.87
310: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing				371.78							
320: Industry, Mining, Construction			82.00	0.47							
520: Developmental Food Aid/Food Security Assistance				0.50							
530: Non-food commodity assistance											29.34
600: Action Relating to Debt				200.00							
700: Emergency Response		5.26	0.35	10.32	1.48	0.03	1.61	7.20	0.02		34.91
920: Support to NGOs and Government Organizations				0.02							

Donor	Japan									
Year	2010-2014 (Average)									
Unit	US Dollar, Millions									
Sector \ Partner Country	Myanmar	Laos	Cambodia	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Vietnam	India	Pakistan
1000: Bilateral ODA Commitments by Purpose (CRS)	1,216.66	140.62	221.01	634.49	38.97	733.60	139.50	1,786.66	2,838.75	277.03
100: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES	107.58	42.53	84.29	103.85	30.23	52.32	32.18	198.41	375.43	61.46
110: Education	23.16	16.04	16.97	25.44	26.57	10.77	21.55	28.48	53.23	9.83
140: Water supply and sanitation	53.21	8.24	34.43	29.08	1.32	7.15	4.85	127.99	314.37	19.23
200: ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES	134.13	72.58	78.52	259.16	1.10	344.27	60.28	1,228.69	2,158.63	113.58
230: Energy	45.55	29.10	17.54	173.55	0.14	5.20	1.73	206.47	431.04	65.41
215: Transport and Communications	76.32	41.69	59.25	82.98	0.55	337.18	57.67	1,018.22	1,727.22	47.41
300: PRODUCTION SECTORS	99.56	8.63	33.63	25.59	2.32	49.08	8.27	99.94	247.19	4.28
310: Agriculture, forestry and fishing	38.14	5.75	30.16	8.20	0.57	43.92	3.93	73.86	85.38	1.94
320: Industry, mining and construction	52.66	1.96	2.34	13.78	1.19	3.56	3.59	16.62	161.40	1.84
330: Trade and tourism	8.75	0.92	1.13	3.61	0.56	1.59	0.74	9.46	0.41	0.50
400: MULTISECTOR	41.25	8.17	20.87	117.31	3.49	73.62	8.46	175.00	56.49	2.54
500: PROGRAMME ASSISTANCE	418.43	11.34	4.38	295.12	-	96.38	10.02	103.03	0.00	17.99
520: Food Aid	7.34	2.83	2.11	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.56
600: ACTION RELATING TO DEBT	1,945.38	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
700: HUMANITARIAN AID	26.63	1.91	0.20	10.53	1.83	137.22	28.27	2.21	1.02	77.19
998: UNALLOCATED/UNSPECIFIED	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.21	-	-	-

*For ROK and Japan, aid amounts during 2010-2014 are displayed in average numbers. Due to limitation of data, figures for China are displayed in sum amount during 2010-2014 to derive a certain level of tendency of China's focus country and sectors.

**Sectors retrieved from AidData for China are selectively displayed (codes that are compatible with OECD's classification used for ROK and Japan).

Source: OECD Statistics (ODA by sector & Aid(ODA) commitments to countries and regions); AidData.

Trilateral Cooperation

: Young Professionals Research Project



CJK's economic cooperation through the Belt and Road Initiative in the post-COVID-19 era

Lee Hyuntai

(Assistant Professor, Incheon National University)

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Lee Hyuntai

I. Introduction

President Xi Jinping announced the Belt and Road initiative (BRI) in Kazakhstan in 2013. Since then, the Chinese government has evaluated that the initiative has been producing rich results. However, the internal and external environment surrounding BRI is becoming increasingly difficult. Several projects have been caught up in the "debt trap diplomacy" debate, and as the US–China dispute intensifies, the US checks against BRI intensify. In addition, COVID-19 has hit China and the rest of the world. As a result, the driving force for BRI is declining due to the Chinese economic downturn. How BRI will evolve in the face of these challenges is a global concern. In this regard, the Chinese government expressed its intention to pursue a “high-quality” BRI in the second BRI International Forum in 2019. Furthermore, the Chinese government emphasized BRI solidarity to overcome COVID-19 during the high-level video conference for BRI International Cooperation held in June 2020.

The future development of BRI is also important to Korea and Japan. The two countries are developed countries, which are rare in the region. They have rich experiences in external cooperation and implement independent external cooperation strategies. Korea and Japan have penetrated Eurasian countries through trade and investment. However, to expand regional economic cooperation in the future, expanding opportunities in cooperation with China's BRI is necessary. As the rapid infrastructure construction in this region intensifies competition between the three countries, proper coordination and policy cooperation between them can prevent excessive competition. If BRI evolves in the process of responding to changes in the internal and external environment, then Korea–Japan's BRI cooperation strategy should change as well. Therefore, this paper attempts to discuss the economic cooperation between China, Japan, and Korea (CJK) through BRI in the post-COVID-19 era.

II. Challenges facing BRI

1) Intensifying international debate over BRI

The Western perspective, led by the US, is negative toward BRI. International disagreements on BRI began shortly after the initiative was presented, but the debt issue in some recipient countries has intensified the debate. The debate started from whether the cause of bad debt was due to BRI. However, the concern is expanding to several issues, ranging from whether BRI originated in China's neo-imperialism, or whether Western criticism was unjust from envying China's rise.

The West argues that China will maximize its diplomatic and security interests through BRI at the expense of deepening the debt problem of some recipient countries ("debt trap diplomacy"). In fact, as the debt problem of some BRI countries such as Pakistan worsens, such criticism is becoming increasingly prominent. In March 2018, the US think tank Center for Global Development (CGD) reported that some BRI countries may have difficulty repaying their debts. On the basis of the Debt Sustainability Analysis by the World Bank (WB) and the IMF, CGD found that 8 of 68 countries participating in BRI (Djibouti, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Pakistan, Montenegro) will have difficulty repaying the debt (Hurley, Morris, and Portelance, 2018). WB also predicted that 12 out of 43 countries will increase their debt to GDP ratio in the medium term, and 11 out of 30 countries will increase their debt to GDP ratio due to BRI projects. In addition, several Western research institutes and the media continue to raise the issue.

China is actively responding to this criticism. At the Boao(博鳌) Forum held in April 2018, President Xi Jinping directly refuted that BRI was not a "Chinese plot" (Reuters, April 11, 2018). Other researchers also assert that the Western criticism of BRI is an unfounded argument (Wignaraja, G., et al, 2020). During the second BRI International Cooperation Summit Forum (一带一路国际合作高峰论坛) held in Beijing in April 2019, President Xi lauded the achievements of BRI over the past six years, and declared that BRI will further advance in the future. To date, if outline plans have been established under macroscopic and strategic considerations, then BRI has entered the so-called "BRI 2.0" stage. This phase achieves concrete results in detailed business areas. Moreover, at the summit forum, the Chinese government announced the "Guiding Principles on Financing the Development of the Belt and Road(一带一路融资指导原则)" and the "Debt Sustainability Framework for Participating Countries of the Belt and Road Initiative (一带一路债务可持续性分析框架)," which responded to criticism. The Guiding Principles, which includes 15 key points, is a joint agreement

between governments, financial institutions, and companies in 28 countries¹⁾ under the principle of “equal participation, profit sharing, and risk sharing.” In addition, the Framework is the debt sustainability framework uniquely devised by BRI. Both policies will support the qualitative development of BRI projects as important guidelines for BRI 2.0 in the future.

The conflict between the West and China over BRI is not limited to “debt trap diplomacy.” As China gained control of the Greek port of Piraeus in 2016, the port of Gwadar in Pakistan, and the port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka in 2018, and as a naval base in Djibouti opens, Western alertness was amplified. In addition, some BRI projects were stranded due to friction with stakeholders in the recipient country. In 2017, construction of dams for hydroelectric power in Pakistan, Nepal, and Myanmar were delayed and canceled due to environmental deterioration, opposition from residents, and ignorance of laws. The occurrence of problems in some projects gives the West a good opportunity to criticize the entire BRI. As a result, the international debate over BRI has spread over a variety of topics such as debt trap diplomacy, Chinese style “new expansionism,” and negative social and environmental impacts. The debate is expected to expand as the global order fluctuates and the US–China strategic competition intensifies.

The evaluation and outlook for the BRI debate is beyond the scope of this paper. Despite problems in some of BRI’s projects, which heated up criticism from the West, China is trying to correct them. At the second BRI Summit Forum in 2019, China expressed “observance of international norms,” “debt soundness,” “transparency in business,” and “environmental protection.” This move has driven BRI’s evolution into a better shape through the past seven years of successes and mistakes.

2) Intensifying strategic disputes between the US and China

The recent intensification of strategic competition between the US and China will have a significant impact on BRI. The US Department of Defense Report in June 2019 shows that the US Indo-Pacific strategy defines China, North Korea, and Russia as revisionist countries in the regional system, and China as a de-facto enemy. The report stated that the US and China had begun a strategic competition and argued that China is seeking supremacy by changing the current order. The Economic Prosperity Network (EPN), recently promoted by the US, is a US-centered economic block promoting the exclusion of China. Secretary of State Pompeo said in April 2020 that the US seeks to form an EPN with Australia, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea (ROK), and Vietnam. The EPN includes companies from around the world, civil society organizations, and

1) Argentina, Belarus, Cambodia, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Serbia, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, and the UK.

businesses engaged in digital technology, energy, research, trade, education, and commerce. It aims to weaken the global supply chain that includes China, the basis of China's economic prosperity. Neither the Indo-Pacific Strategy nor the EPN hides an obvious opposition to the China-centered BRI. The US believes that China is using an economic strategy to lodge recipient countries through BRI or trap them in debt. The US Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China, announced by the White House in May 2020, also bluntly criticizes BRI. This report criticizes that the BRI project causes poor quality, corruption, environmental pollution, lack of public surveillance and community participation, opaque loans, governance and fiscal problems. Additionally, BRI is used as a tool for expanding China's political influence and military approach. The US pressure on BRI inevitably weakens the willingness of various countries to cooperate with BRI. Such pressure is greater for countries like Japan and Korea, which are heavily dependent on the US diplomatically and militarily. In the end, the dispute between the US and China is likely to become an obstacle to BRI's expansion.

3) COVID-19 and the crisis of connectivity

The core of BRI is the expansion of "connectivity" within the BRI region. In 2015, China's "Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road (推动共建丝绸之路经济带和21世纪海上丝绸之路的愿景与行动)" presented "connectivity in five aspects (五通)" and "Six Major Economic Corridors (经济走廊)" as the expansion of connectivity. BRI aims to pursue common prosperity while promoting infrastructure, trade, finance, policy, and humanities exchange centered on the six economic corridors penetrating Eurasia. Accordingly, as of May 2020, China has signed BRI cooperation documents with 138 countries and has carried out over 2,000 joint projects.

However, the spread of COVID-19 in 2020 is an obstacle to strengthening connectivity. Cross-border logistics, people-to-people exchange (tourism, labor, and education), infrastructure construction, industrial cooperation, and policy exchange are facing challenges due to border closures. Since March of this year, construction activities of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Indonesia High Speed Rail Corporation, and Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone in Cambodia have been suspended. Projects in Bangladesh, Kenya, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Saudi Arabia, and Sri Lanka have also been delayed (Shepard, W. 2020; Wheeler, A. 2020). In addition, since March 2020, the government's strict control and management have been underway as pressure from COVID-19 inflow mounts at the border of China's Yunnan Province Mohan, Guangxi Province Dongxing, and Neimenggu Manzhouri.

Although COVID-19 cases in China have recently been contained, the regular influx from abroad continues according to the global COVID-19 spread trend. In particular, the situation at the borders is severe; hence, strict immigration and quarantine management are necessary. The current situation

is a huge ordeal for BRI, which sought to increase connectivity by lowering the border barrier between BRI countries. Accordingly, countries along the border of China are forced to review some of large infrastructure projects, such as transportation and logistics, industrial complexes, special economic zones, and human mobility. In a crisis situation in which businesses are suspended, the likelihood of problems related to business profitability, transparency, and environmental and social impacts increases. If the economies of developing countries, which comprise the majority of BRI countries, are adversely affected by COVID-19 in the long term, then the burden of repaying debts increases. Hence, pursuing additional projects will be a challenge. In April 2020, Pakistan has requested China to ease the payment obligations of over USD 30 billion in the power projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is the flagship project of China's BRI.²⁾ In addition, COVID-19 may change the trajectory of BRI. COVID-19 accelerates the transition from a face-to-face economy to an "untact" economy, which means online and unmanned consumption and automation and robotization of production. Non-face-to-face exchange can be activated between countries, and strong quarantine activities can become routine. Therefore, keeping an eye on how COVID-19 affects the current and future deployment of BRI is crucial.³⁾

4) Slowing China's economic growth and promoting the "internal circulation strategy"

The Chinese economy is suffering due to the US–China dispute and the COVID-19 pandemic amid the intensifying structural low growth called the "new normal." Of course, compared with other countries, China has succeeded in containing COVID-19 faster and has since made an economic recovery. However, the economic growth rate in 2020 is expected to record a low growth rate (2%–3%), which has not been experienced in a generation. After 2020, the growth rate may increase due to the base effect, but regaining the previous vitality will be difficult. Above all, internal and external challenges abound. Internally, changing the economic structure from quantitative growth to qualitative development is a challenge. The growth of the service industry, which has been ambitiously promoted, was slower than expected and was hit hard by COVID-19. The national debt accumulated from overcoming the global financial crisis in 2008 amounted to 257% of the GDP as of September 2019. In particular, the rapidly increasing corporate debt is causing concern. The inefficiency of state-owned enterprises that could not be liquidated persists. Externally, the dispute between the US and China intensifies. The US goes beyond economic issues such as trade imbalances, future technologies, and industrial policies; it also raises the issues on Hong Kong,

2) Egypt postponed the world's second-largest thermal power plant construction project (\$4.4 billion) in February 2020. In April 2020, the Tanzanian government cancelled the \$10 billion Bagamoyo Port construction project, claiming that it had an unfavorable contract with China, including a 99-year lease.

3) In line with this trend, China emphasizes the "Health Silk Road" as well and supports health and medical supplies, such as masks, protective clothing, diagnostic kits, and medical staff.

Taiwan, and COVID-19 accountability. Moreover, the US checks and pressure to prevent the rise of China in future industries such as artificial intelligence, big data, and 5G communications are intensifying. The US tariff bomb has made business environments difficult in China, pushing domestic and foreign companies to leave China. Prime Minister Li Keqiang warned that “the future external environment is more complex, uncertain, and challenging” at the 14th Five-Year plan preparation meeting held in November 2019.

To cope with internal and external difficulties, the Chinese leadership developed an unconventional strategy. It is a dual circulation model focusing on domestic circulation. President Xi Jinping mentioned a new development mode that promotes dual circulation between domestic and international centering on domestic circulation in a meeting of economic experts on August 24, 2020. The intensifying conflict between the US and China and the spread of COVID-19 hinders China's exports and reduces the existing global value chain. China is devising a response strategy to replace the decline in exports with the expansion of domestic demand through an internal circulation strategy, which creates a complete industrial ecosystem in China for important industries. It does not mean a complete domestic circulation of self-sufficiency, but it can be considered a strategy that puts the center of gravity of dual circulation on the domestic side. If so, how will the slowdown in the growth of the Chinese economy and the internal circulation strategy impact BRI? China's promotion of internal circulation may mean reducing external orientations such as BRI. With limited resources and difficulties in the domestic economy, the economic stamina to promote the drastic overseas expansion as in the past is limited. In the end, the current economic situation will act as a factor in changing the future of BRI.

III. BRI and CJK cooperation

1) Prospect of BRI in the post-COVID-19 era

How will BRI evolve in the post-COVID-19 era? How will BRI face the above challenges and take on a new form? In the government work report at the National People's Congress in May 2020, Prime Minister Li Keqiang (李克強) commented on BRI as follows: “We will focus on quality in the joint pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative. Staying committed to achieving shared growth through consultation and collaboration, we will uphold market principles and international rules, give full scope to enterprises as the main actors, and work with our BRI partners for mutually beneficial outcomes. We will guide the healthy development of outbound investment.” The future direction of China through BRI has been clearly defined. In fact, the future direction of BRI was presented in more detail in the BRI2.0 plan proposed by the Chinese government at the BRI International Forum

in April 2019. First, high-quality development should be pursued in actual business promotion. Many plans established in a top-down manner in the BRI1.0 enter the execution stage in individual projects in earnest. Second, the effectiveness of the project should be improved by securing the BRI's investment principles and the financial soundness of the recipient country of BRI investment. China should comply with international norms and laws of each country in the construction, operation, purchase, and bidding of BRI projects. Moreover, more countries should be encouraged to participate in BRI investment financing and joint entry into third-country markets. Third, the content and extension of BRI should be expanded, and a global consensus should be achieved, and a global initiative should uphold inclusivity. Fourth, from one direction for Chinese companies and products to enter BRI countries, we aim to open the Chinese market to foreign countries to facilitate the entry of foreign companies and products. In the end, the 'high-quality' BRI that China will pursue is intended to promote specific businesses centered on companies. In sum, it complies with international norms in business progress, secures business profitability and financial soundness, induces participation from other countries, secures global consensus, and opens the Chinese market, which is summarized as interactive orientation. If implemented well, these efforts could address the criticisms and problems that have emerged in some of the BRI projects mentioned in Chapter 2.

The intensifying dispute between the US and China, the negative impact of COVID-19, the economic downturn, and internal circulation strategy are likely to bring changes to BRI. First, as the US pressure on BRI mounts due to the intensifying conflict between US and China, countries that need to maintain friendly relations with the US may have difficulty in actively participating in BRI. These countries include Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany. These countries have historically deep political, military, and diplomatic relations with the US. For example, in the recent US–China dispute, the US asked its neighboring countries to participate in Huawei sanctions. The US has requested that other countries refrain from purchasing Huawei's 5G communication equipment and refuse to sell materials, parts, equipment, and software to Huawei. If such conflict between the US and China grows, countries such as Korea may have to choose between participating in the US-centered Indo-Pacific Strategy (or EPN) or in China's BRI. China needs to strengthen international cooperation through BRI 2.0, and the intensifying dispute between the US and China is highly likely to hinder the expansion of BRI. In the face of this trend, China could position BRI toward the formation of a Chinese-centered economic community block in the Eurasian region.

In addition, COVID-19 is demanding a qualitative change in existing policies to strengthen "connectivity." Existing methods of promoting spatial and physical connection between countries and regions may not fit into the post-COVID-19 era, which aims for non-face-to-face exchange. The closure of the border, which is the core of the link, proves this assumption. Of course, this possibility does not mean that BRI is giving up its core goal of connectivity. Rather, new forms of

connectivity can be promoted. First is the expansion of health connectivity in the form of combining quarantine restrictions and economic goals. International medical products, biopharmaceutical development, quarantine bases, infectious hospitals, and other medical systems will be linked to existing cooperation areas, such as transboundary economic cooperation zones, overseas industrial complexes, and infrastructure construction sites. Such initiative uses big data (BT) and cloud technology to share infection-related information, medical product production, and inventory status internationally. Second, the use of artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), and robots, will be used to expand automation, unmanned system, and network platforms in trade and logistics systems. For example, by minimizing human intervention in China–Europe freight trains (中欧班列), measures are taken to ensure normal freight transportation in any infectious disease situation. Third, a non-face-to-face online business model will be developed between countries to expand international e-commerce. The share of simple retailers in cross-border trade will be reduced, whereas the share of large wholesale online transactions will be increased. In short, the Health Silk Road or the Digital Silk Road will expand. The Chinese government also maintains the BRI as the most important foreign policy, but it will expand cooperation between the Health Silk Road and the Digital Silk Road. In the high-level videoconference for BRI international cooperation held in June 2020, President Xi declared that countries should expand solidarity through BRI to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic. Investment plans for the construction of new infrastructures, including big data, are also expected to reinforce this orientation of BRI. The US sanctions on Huawei, AI company SenseTime, and WeChat are also amplifying the need for China to build a digital ecosystem centered on China by strengthening the digital silk road for BRI countries. These efforts that define BRI2.0 highlight soft infrastructure connectivity, which is the linkage of policies, legal systems and standards. By contrast, BRI1.0 was focused on hard infrastructure connectivity representing physical assets such as roads, power grids, and airports.

Next, the economic downturn and internal circulation strategy are expected to weaken the driving force of BRI. The dual circulation strategy, which focuses on internal circulation, which will be included in the 14th Five-year Plan, is expected to simultaneously promote domestic demand expansion in the demand side, supply side reform in the supply side, and internalization of the core supply chain in the industry side. Since the reform and opening up in 1978, China has focused on international circulation, and BRI is a key strategy for international circulation toward the Eurasian continent. However, it is difficult for China to expand BRI in a situation where globalization retreats, connectivity is cut off, and the global value chain weakens due to the US–China trade dispute and COVID-19. Most importantly, China seems to lack economic resources to expand its BRI business in the face of an economic downturn. After BRI was promoted, China's total investment in BRI countries until 2019 is estimated at \$729.9 billion (5.2% of the GDP), and related loans by 2018 are estimated at \$500 billion (3.5% of the GDP). The ability of China to maintain BRI investments and

loans despite prolonged recession is questionable.⁴⁾ Thus, Prime Minister Li Keqiang only briefly mentioned the BRI in the government work report in May, and spent most of his time explaining countermeasures for domestic issues such as COVID-19 response, poverty, the environment, and regional development. Eventually, China will focus its limited resources in underdeveloped areas in China. In this context, the State Council announced in May this year that it would pursue a new Western development strategy suitable for a new era, and President Xi visited Jilin Province in July to re-emphasize the Northeast Promotion Strategy.

However, it is almost impossible for China to abandon the BRI, which is President Xi's representative foreign strategy, which was integrated into the Communist Party's constitution.⁵⁾ China will likely reduce the size of the entire BRI project, but select and proceed with projects that are more helpful to China. Thus, which BRI projects will China continue to promote in the post-COVID-19 era? The post-COVID-19 era is a time when China needs to do its best to revitalize its internal economy due to the lack of resources it can mobilize. In addition, to reduce the number of failure cases that have contributed to criticism such as debt trap diplomacy, the approach should be focused on profitability. To invest using limited budget, you have to be careful. Moreover, all-round pressure from the US made it difficult to implement strategic projects without commercial use. Therefore, in the post-COVID-19 era, as mentioned in BRI2.0, businesses with high profitability and companies are more likely to be preferred.

Overall, the size of the BRI business is expected to be reduced, the transition to health, digital and platform-oriented, commercial performance will be emphasized, business risk management will be strengthened, and international cooperation and compliance with international norms will be expected. The economic downturn, COVID-19, the US-China dispute, and rising debt in recipient countries are the most difficult problems faced after the start of BRI. Furthermore, China is expected to try to break through the crisis by qualitatively transforming its existing business model. The success or failure of this initiative will be a touchstone to gauge the formation of a China-centered Eurasian economic community that BRI aims for.

2) Korea-Japan BRI Cooperation Status and Strategy

Since the announcement of BRI, Korea has expressed its intention to cooperate on BRI several times through summit meetings. Korea is also implementing its own New Northern Policy and

4) The Boston University Global Development Policy Center, which compiled the data on Chinese overseas lending, found that lending by the China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China collapsed from a peak of \$75bn in 2016 to just \$4bn in 2019. (<https://www.ft.com/content/d9bd8059-d05c-4e6f-968b-1672241ec1f6>).

5) In fact, "BRI" means China's foreign economic cooperation activities itself in Eurasia. Therefore, there may be a change in direction or a change in scale, but complete suspension and abandonment are "by definition" impossible.

New Southern Policy for the Eurasian region. The policy aims to expand and deepen the scope of economic cooperation to ASEAN to the south, Northeast China, Mongolia, Russia, and Central Asia to the north. It overlaps significantly with China's BRI regionally. In particular, the cooperation that the two governments have discussed is a way to jointly advance into BRI countries. In October 2015, Prime Minister Li Keqiang's visit to Korea resulted in a memorandum of understanding regarding the joint advancement of Korea and China into third countries. It formed a consensus to jointly develop markets in third countries by combining comparative advantages in the fields of infrastructure construction, ICT, and environment.

It also agreed to seek funding measures using multilateral development banks (MDBs) such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and strengthen joint research, cooperation experiences and information sharing. In November 2017, after President Moon Jae-in emphasized cooperation between the New Northern/New Southern Policy and China's BRI, the Korea–China Economic Ministers' Meeting in February 2018 signed an MOU for joint advancement to third countries and agreed on support for making a list of major projects and discovering success cases. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea and the Ministry of Commerce of China have also been holding 1.5-track seminars for joint entry into third countries since 2018. In the November 2019 seminar, ① jointly held the Korea–China Third Market Infrastructure Development Forum, ② established a public–private consultative body for Korea–China overseas projects, ③ expanded joint survey on demand for cooperation in industrial complexes in third countries to promote overseas industrial complex pilot projects, and ④ agreed to establish a step-by-step Korea–China financial cooperation system to establish a Korea–China joint investment fund.

As such, Korea has discussed ways to cooperate with China while supporting the common prosperity and development of BRI. However, there has been little opportunity for Korea to participate due to the nature of BRI's business led by China. Also, after the THAAD conflict, cooperation between Korea and China has been strained. Now that China is advocating BRI 2.0 and is expressing its willingness to cooperate with other countries, Korea's BRI cooperation strategy cannot be the same as before. As we saw in Chapter 2, the BRI will change in the face of various challenges; hence, Korea should closely analyze the future developments of BRI and find answers to how to respond accordingly. As a party that cannot escape the influence of the US–China dispute, Korea needs to establish the basic principles of the exact implications of the BRI cooperation for Korea and how to respond to it.

Japan is pursuing a strategy for economic cooperation with China while holding back China through strong alliances with the US through the Indo-Pacific strategy. Given that Japan's foreign strategy is based on the US–Japan alliance, cooperation with the US is the core of its foreign policy. On the other hand, Japan's Indo-Pacific strategy is taking a pragmatic strategy to avoid

excessive hostile responses to China and attempt conditional economic cooperation. This policy is evident in the announcement of a list of 52 cooperation projects for joint advancement in third countries in response to BRI at the 2018 Sino–Japanese Summit. The 52 collaborative projects are characterized by the following conditions. First, most agreements entail low-level cooperation, which is the required level of the cooperation protocol. The low-level cooperation was a prerequisite to the discussions on specific projects. Second, mostly state-owned Chinese companies and private Japanese companies participated in the cooperation projects. Third, Japanese financial institutions, trading companies, and electric power companies have signed two or three agreements. Among the 52 projects, more Japanese companies participated than Chinese companies. Fourth, in many cases, projects that have already agreed on cooperation between China and Japan were listed up and re-announced.

Prime Minister Abe said he had accepted the joint venture model to help Japanese companies competing with Chinese companies, adding that Japan selectively participates in more profitable (or profitable) businesses. Subsequently, Prime Minister Abe presented the principles of clearer cooperation for BRI. In March 2019, Abe declared the four conditions to maintain financial soundness through appropriate financing to target countries, and to secure openness, transparency, and economic feasibility in the joint advancement of third countries. This means that Japan’s cooperation with BRI is conditional.

In summary, the Japanese government’s Indo-Pacific strategy is in line with the US. Further, Japan is separately pursuing joint cooperation with third countries that suit its own practical interests while taking conditional cooperation with BRI. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the intensifying dispute between the US and China are expected to have a major impact on Japan’s BRI policy. Therefore, whether cooperation between China and Japan over BRI can produce substantial results remains unknown.

Analysis of cases of joint entry between Korea, China, and Japan

In the case of joint advancement in third countries, the three countries have already experienced joint infrastructure projects overseas. The two recent projects— the Coral South floating liquefied natural gas (FLNG) project located offshore Mozambique, and the Malaysia Marigold petrochemical facility construction project —are interesting cooperation models. These projects were joint efforts by Korean, Chinese, and Japanese financial institutions and companies. In the Mozambique project, Samsung Heavy Industries is in charge of construction in cooperation with French and Japanese companies, whereas Korea’s Export–Import Bank and Trade Insurance Corporation have formed major PF (Project Financing) groups with China’s Export–Import Bank, China Bank, and China Industrial Bank. Samsung Engineering and Samsung C&T are in charge of the construction of the Malaysian business, whereas Korea, China, and Japan export–import banks have organized a PF group.⁶⁾ The two projects is a success model that can be used for future joint ventures in third countries.

IV. Conclusion: Suggestions for CJK's BRI cooperation


Amid the changes in the environment surrounding BRI, BRI in China is expected to evolve. Korea and Japan need to cooperate appropriately with the changing BRI through their respective regional cooperation strategies and to lead the joint development of the Eurasian region. However, belonging to the same region does not necessitate unconditional cooperation. To achieve sustainable cooperation among the three countries in a changing environment, the following cooperation principles must be observed.

First, compliance with international norms in BRI business cooperation is necessary. BRI2.0 will be increasingly developed toward emphasizing compliance with international norms. The cooperation principle and project implementation method proposed by Japan to promote BRI cooperation were also related to this direction. The three countries' BRI cooperation must comply with the four conditions proposed by Prime Minister Abe during his visit to China in 2018: fiscal soundness of the recipient country, openness of the project, transparency, and strong economic foundation. Naturally, to achieve sustainable cooperation, participation in high-profit projects must be a prerequisite. This condition is where China's future goals through BRI2.0 and the international community's demands for international infrastructure projects coincide.

Second, cooperation should be focused on projects that can be neutral to US–China disputes. When planning a BRI cooperation, Korea and Japan should carefully consider changes in global order and external conditions. In the midst of intensifying strategic competition between the US and China, the US is proclaiming that the Indo-Pacific strategy will further strengthen pressure on China. If Korea and Japan wish to participate in BRI cooperation, stipulations should highlight that they are participating in a limited amount as long as international principles are observed. If a BRI project has a “strategic” character, then participation in such projects must be reconsidered. Thus, participation in non-strategic projects must be considered as another principle that Korea and Japan should maintain in relation to BRI cooperation.

Third, the unconventional security cooperation after COVID-19 will be strengthened. In particular, the three countries need to actively cooperate to promote health care in Eurasia. In the short term, Japan, China, and Korea should cooperate in providing medical supplies and services, such as

6) To implement the follow-up measures of the 2018 trilateral summit, the Korea, China, and Japan export–import banks agreed to form a consultative body for Korea, China, and Japan at the 24th Annual Meeting of the Asian Export–Import Bank Forum on November 15, 2018, and actively share information to third countries. There has been an agreement to actively seek joint advancement in the market. Therefore, the project in Malaysia can be said to be the concrete first fruit of this council.



masks, diagnostic kits, and healthcare staff. In the long term, the three countries must focus on leading joint research on infectious diseases, preparing an infectious disease control exhibition program, and establishing a border joint quarantine system. After initiating health and medical cooperation, cooperation in non-traditional security and soft infrastructure such as environmental, academic, and cultural exchange should be expanded. Currently, cooperation in this area is best for the three countries' cooperation on BRI. Although avoiding issues on the US–China dispute, it directly helps developing countries in Eurasia, and is also useful in alleviating negative sentiments among the people of Korea, China and Japan.

Finally, for practical cooperation, the three countries first need to organize discussion platforms for Eurasian economic cooperation. Through such platforms, they can help Eurasian recipient countries and promote joint advancement into third countries to prevent excessive trilateral competition or non-conventional security cooperation. In the early stages, research centers can be assigned under the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) body first. Research centers can serve to investigate the needs of third countries for cooperation and to discover projects that are of mutual economic benefit.

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Trilateral Cooperation

: Young Professionals Research Project



Rethinking People-to-People Exchanges for Promoting China, Japan, and ROK Cooperation

Choi Eunmi

(Research Fellow, The Asan Institute for Policy Studies)

Rethinking People-to-People Exchanges for Promoting China, Japan, and ROK Cooperation

Choi Eunmi

I. Introduction

The history of cooperation between China, Japan and Republic of Korea (ROK) (hereafter, CJK) can be said to have existed for 10 years if we measure from 2011 when the three countries officially established the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (hereafter, TCS), and over 20 years if we start in 1999 when the leaders of the three countries met for the first time. Considering the normalization of diplomatic relations between ROK and Japan in 1965, between China and Japan in 1972, and between ROK and China in 1992, it has been less than 30 years since the initial steps that laid the foundation for trilateral relations between CJK was established. Then, how much has the relationship between CJK developed over a 10 year and 30 year time frame?

Although it is difficult to say that the three countries have formed one cooperative community, CJK have made institutional progress. CJK formed a number of cooperative mechanisms from working level to summit level, and established a secretariat to provide practical support for trilateral cooperation. In addition, the official secretariat, TCS, which is based on equal budget and participation of the three countries, has been established. It means that the institutionalization of cooperation has been realized. Also, cooperative mechanisms between CJK are being prepared and operated in more than 20 different fields, including economy, diplomacy, culture, science and technology.¹⁾

In that sense, the trilateral cooperation between CJK has made institutional progress during the short history. However, can we affirm that the three countries trust and rely on each other as cooperative partners? Also, can we evaluate that the three countries have a solid cooperative system in spite of any threatening external factors?

Unfortunately, even though the three countries have developed cooperation at a variety of levels

1) According to the data of the TCS, there are currently numerous cooperative mechanisms in operation, including 2 Summit, 21 Ministerial-level Meeting, 13 Senior Officials' Meeting, 19 Director-Generals' Level, and 44 Working-level Meeting. <https://tcs-asia.org/ko/cooperation/dashboard.php> (accessed 27 August, 2020).

over their short history and achieved institutional progress, the relations between CJK are still unstable. The U.S.-China confrontation in Northeast Asia, the North Korea nuclear issue, and the historical and territorial issues between the three countries pose obstacles to promoting trilateral cooperation (Lee 2015; Cha 2018).²⁾ In the U.S.-China power transition, ROK and Japan who are forced to take a position whether they want to or not amid the recent conflict between the U.S. and China, are in a difficult situation. As for the two countries which are heavily dependent on China for their economies, it is difficult to keep their distance from China because that would result in them sacrificing their prosperity. Also, for the two countries with military alliances, it is not easy to risk their peaceful relations by belittling the United States. Of the two countries, ROK is in a particularly difficult situation because it is not an easy task for the divided nation to keep a balance between the United States and China to resolve the North Korea issue.³⁾ It means it is necessary for ROK to increase deterrence against North Korea by strengthening cooperation with the United States, while preventing accidental or offensive provocation from North Korea through maintaining friendly relations with China (Park 2015). These international environmental factors and changes in the power structure also make it difficult for CJK to make progress in trilateral cooperation.

Furthermore, political and diplomatic conflicts and mutual distrust serve as factors that hinder CJK trilateral cooperation and the formation of positive relations. In addition, unhealed historical memories and national wounds serve as obstacles to cooperation. As a result, non-political cooperation or exchanges are influenced or subordinated by political conflicts. Sometimes it makes existing practices and efforts of cooperation meaningless in times of crisis. Therefore, CJK have to establish a new cooperation system while firmly continuing its existing cooperation system by dealing with these difficulties.

Based on this research background, I would like to emphasize the importance of People-to-People (hereafter, P2P) exchanges which enhance mutual understanding and trust between the three countries, and then find ways for elevating CJK cooperation to a higher level.

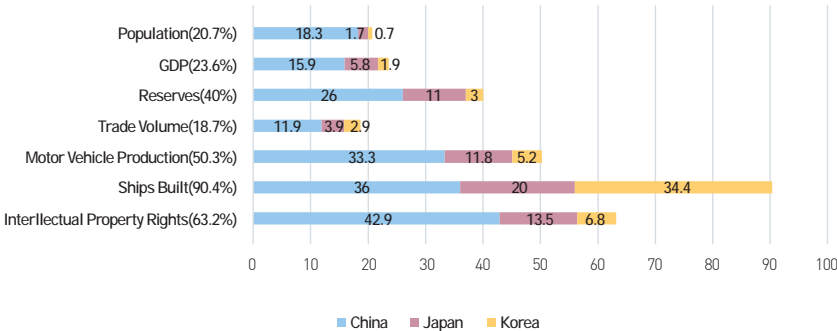
2) Yeo (2017) argues that the institutionalized cooperation, such as Trilateral Summit and TCS, by China, Japan, and ROK has some positive effect in addressing non-controversial issues and building low levels of trust. However, the overriding weight of bilateral tensions has significantly limited the impact of trilateral cooperation in promoting peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

3) ROK relies on its military alliance with the United States to counter the existential threat from North Korea, but does more trade with China than it does with the U.S. and Japan combined. - *The Atlantic* (2019/7/26) <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/07/south-korea-china-united-states-dilemma/594850/> (accessed 27 August, 2020).

II. The Current Status and Tasks of China, Japan, and ROK Cooperation

As it is well-known, the practical vision of trilateral cooperation among CJK can be found in the economic sector. That is the three countries have an enormous amount of development capabilities and capacity for cooperation. According to statistics published by the TCS in 2020,⁴⁾ the combined population of CJK is 20.7% (1,571 Million) of the worldwide population and their combined GDP is 23.6% (20,198 Billion USD) of the global GDP. Additionally (currency) reserves stand at 40% (4,730 Billion USD) and they account for 18.7% (7,290 Billion USD) of the global trade volume. Furthermore, the three countries are responsible for 50.3% (36 million units) of global motor vehicle production, 90.4% (59.4 million GT) of global ship construction and 63.2% (2 Million) of intellectual property patent applications (see Figure 1). Lastly, China and Japan are the top and third largest trading partners of ROK, respectively. China and ROK are the top and third largest of Japan, and Japan and ROK are the second and third largest trading partners of China (see Figure 2). As such, the three countries not only have the ability to increase the need for cooperation globally, but also have an important economic weight among each other.⁵⁾

(Figure 1) Development capabilities and capacity for cooperation of CJK

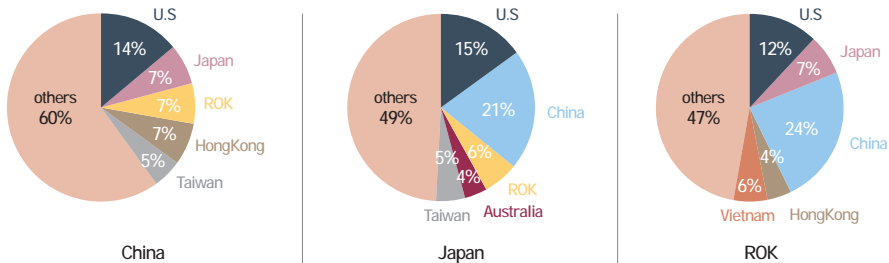


Note. Created by the author based on data from 2019 Trilateral Statistics, by TCS, 2020

4) TCS. 2020. 2019 Trilateral Statistics. <https://tcs-asia.org/en/data/statistics.php> (accessed 27 August, 2020).

5) Many scholars analyze the effect of CJK economic cooperation and argue the importance of it. For more information, see Obashi and Lim (2004), Kwag(2016), Obashi and Kimura (2016), Lee (2017), etc.

(Figure 2) Top Trading Partners of China, Japan and ROK in 2018



Note. Created by the author based on data from 2019 *Trilateral Statistics*, by TCS, 2020.

But a more fundamental reason for paying attention to trilateral cooperation among CJK is that economic and social interdependencies or interconnections are not linked to politics and security, despite the economic benefits and visions. In other words, conflicts among the three countries or between the two countries can be obstacles to CJK cooperation, and that cooperation is not apparent in the common crisis facing the three countries. For example, during the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, it has been hard to find any common solutions to overcome the crisis through close cooperation among the three geographically adjoining countries. The '*CJK Infectious Disease Hotline*', which was created just a month or two before the spread of COVID-19, did not work,⁶⁾ as well as information, medical supplies and masks were not shared in the initial stage.⁷⁾ In the face of a transnational crisis, we witnessed antagonism, mistrust, and exclusion rather than trust and cooperation. This phenomenon of 'ethnocentrism' or 'exclusive nationalism' was not just a problem of CJK. However, this mutual distrust and exclusion among three countries overshadowed the development and actual progress achieved towards trilateral cooperation. It means that negative perceptions of each other and collective memories resulting from unfortunate histories, impede cooperation. This occurs despite the recognition of the importance of economic cooperation and

6) On December 15, 2019, the health ministers of China, Japan and ROK agreed to establish a direct communication system to enable immediate communication in the event of a health crisis through the establishment of a "China-Japan-ROK infectious disease Hotline," but information sharing was not enough about the outbreak of the COVID-19 just one or two months later. – Asia Economy (2020/1/21) <https://view.asiae.co.kr/article/2020012110245359024> (accessed 20 September 2020); Money Today (2020/1/30) <https://news.mt.co.kr/mtview.php?no=2020012917345917741> (accessed 20 September 2020)

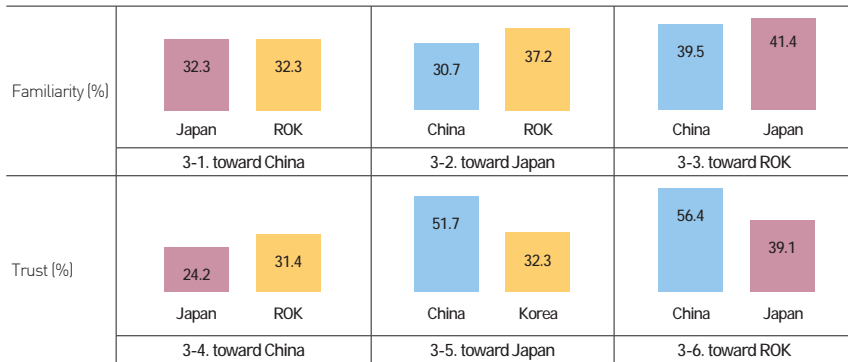
7) Gyeongju City, North Gyeongsang Province, provided health protection items such as protective clothing and protective glasses to Nara City and Kyoto City of Japan, which are sister cities of Gyeongju in the early stage of COVID-19 Pandemic. However, public opinion was negative and there was a national petition for the dismissal of the mayor of Gyeongju on the Cheong Wa Dae website. *Seoul Economy* (2020/5/22) <https://www.sedaily.com/NewsView/1Z2UM1H9QN> (accessed 20 September 2020); *Yonhap News* (2020/5/25) <https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20200525073800053?input=1195m> (accessed 20 September 2020).

vision among the three countries. Therefore, efforts must be accompanied by mutual understanding and consideration in order to take the path of coexistence and prosperity through sincere cooperation and exchanges between CJK. Because we know that trilateral cooperation for regional security, peace and prosperity are indispensable, while the seeds of distrust and conflict remain in politics, diplomacy and history. Moreover, as shown during the COVID-19 crisis, the need for joint response to transnational threats in areas such as environment, health and disaster is also increasing.

In sum, CJK have the potential to create synergy through cooperation in the economic and industrial area based on geographical proximity and geopolitical ties. Also, they have reasons to cooperate in the field of foreign affairs and national security for maintaining peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia. These are the reasons why the trilateral cooperation between the three countries is important and necessary. Therefore, we need to make efforts to establish a trilateral cooperative system between three countries and improve it.

However, the familiarity and trust toward each other between the three countries are not high compared to their vision of cooperation, also there was some imbalance in the levels of trust. The following Figure 3 is the degree of familiarity and trust among the people of CJK in 2018. Specifically, it shows Japan and ROK's familiarity toward China was 32.3% and 32.3% respectively (see Figure 3-1), China and ROK's familiarity toward Japan was 30.7%, 37.2% (see Figure 3-2), and China and Japan's familiarity toward ROK was 39.5% and 41.4% (see Figure 3-3). In addition, Japan and ROK's trust toward China was 24.2% and 31.4% (see Figure 3-4), while China and ROK's trust toward Japan was 51.7% and 32.3% (see Figure 3-5), and China and Japan's trust toward ROK was 56.4% and 39.1% (see Figure 3-6). Especially, while China's trust toward Japan and ROK stood at 51.7% and 56.4%, respectively, Japan's and ROK's trust toward China was 24.2% and 31.4% each. This gap in mutual awareness and confidence could serve as another psychological factor hindering the promotion of cooperation.

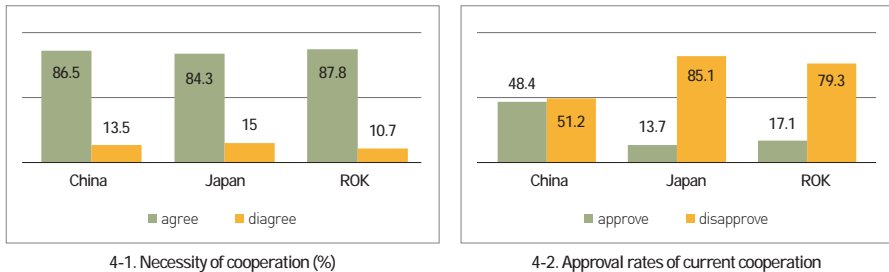
(Figure 3) Familiarity and Trust toward neighbors



Source: TCS. https://tcs-asia.org/ko/board/news_view.php?idx=668

However, promoting trilateral relations and cooperation among three countries for peace and prosperity in the region is inevitable. In the same poll above, 86.5% of Chinese, 84.3% of Japanese and 87.8% of Korean felt high on the need for trilateral cooperation (see Figure 4-1). On the other hand, public opinion positively assessing the current trilateral relationship was relatively low compared to the number of those who believed in the necessity of cooperation, with 48.8% of Chinese, 13.7% of Japanese and 17.1% of Korean (see Figure 4-2). It indicates further efforts should be made to narrow the gap between reality and vision for the development of trilateral cooperation.

(Figure 4) Evaluation about CJK Cooperation



Source: TCS. https://tcs-asia.org/ko/board/news_view.php?idx=668

In this aspect, I would like to reflect on the meaning of P2P exchanges which can be an efficient way to lead positive changes to the way people perceive cooperation. Of course, P2P exchanges do not always lead positive perceptions, also they can lead to negative perceptions. Nevertheless,

direct contact and experience between people leads to changes in thinking and contributes to a better understanding of their counterparts whether it be individuals, governments or entire cultures. In that sense, we can expect that P2P exchanges enhance people's understanding of each other which promotes relations, and then it helps to establish cooperative mechanisms through shared meaning and interest. Ultimately, in order to achieve sincere cooperation, it is necessary to solve the perception gap and distrust problems that block the cooperation between the three countries.

III. Theoretical Approach

1) Diplomacy in the Hybrid⁸⁾-Network Era and P2P Exchanges

The reason for paying attention to 'P2P exchanges' as a way to promote cooperation between countries lies in the changes in the international political environment and paradigm. With the end of the Cold War, the international world entered the Globalization and Information Age. It has changed from a world characterized by the 'logic of power' and 'ideological confrontation' to a world characterized by technology, information, knowledge, communication, and culture. Also, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of "communicating and empathizing with each other" (Kim 2013). This means that the concept of a nation-state as a physical distinction and exclusive boundary of territory, sovereignty and people, which is how it has traditionally been defined, has faded, and the world has entered the new era of being globally connected as one. Indeed, currently we are experiencing the collapse of the national boundary, checking various issues occurring in various parts of the world in real time in the progress of the information technology revolution and globalization, and freely sharing opinions on the constant changes in the state of international affairs. Moreover, during the COVID-19 crisis, the boundaries between online and offline have broken down, and now we face strengthened hybrid links. With the activation of online seminars, we can meet world-class scholars anytime and anywhere easily. Also, citizens have become main actors expressing their opinions on content-sharing platforms such as YouTube, Twitter and Facebook, etc. In other words, facing a new crisis that restricts people's face to face contact with each other, has resulted in the introduction of the era of hybrid networks in which existing offline and new forms of online exchanges are combined. It made it easier to share and access information than in the past, allowing more diverse actors to participate in building relationships. In this connection between

8) 'Hybrid' means a thing made by combining of two or more different elements to achieve a particular goal. It is a similar concept to mixture, combination, and compound, etc. in a broad meaning. In this study, I would like to use the term 'hybrid-network era' by utilizing the word 'hybrid'. 'hybrid-network era' means a convergence with other areas in terms of content, including online and offline forms, in an era where existing physical boundaries are broken down and different areas overlap.

time and space, the relations between countries have been influenced by a wider range of actors. The question lies in whether existing mechanisms can achieve innovation and change, in line with the pace of these changes. Here, we need to focus on the role of actors. That's because the role of actors is more important than ever in a situation where the transition of ideas and subsequent administrative reforms must occur concurrently. Also, it is important to consider the accuracy and reliability of the information being shared. Therefore, accurate understanding and judgment of the counterparts as a result of P2P networking and a more critical evaluation of the issues are more important than ever in this situation.

In the changing society, we need to consider the role and form of diplomacy which is necessary to build and maintain international relations. In the past, diplomacy has been understood as an act of negotiating war and keeping peace between nations. However, it has gradually developed that low politics such as economy, culture, environment, and human rights parallels the status of high politics such as military, security and political issues (Lee 2014). In other words, in the past, if politics and diplomacy were centered on 'hard power' such as military and economic power, the importance of "politics and diplomacy to get the people's heart" has increased these days based on soft power resources such as technology, information, knowledge and culture. That is, the process of persuading the other party, drawing consent and cooperation through attraction, without compulsion, coercion, or compensation, has become important in order to achieve the desired outcome (Nye 2005).⁹⁾

Moreover, unlike in the past, the role and influence of various non-governmental actors as well as governmental actors are important for building friendly and cooperative relations between countries, especially in this hyper-connected society where humans and humans, humans and objects, and objects and objects are connected. While diplomacy has been conducted in the form of "Government to Government" in the traditional meaning, now it has broadened its scope to "Government to Private", "Private to Government" and "Private to Private". These various categories are subgroupings of "People to People (P2P)" networks. This reflects the chronological change, which are changing the international environment, the complex linkage of respective issues, and the emergence of various actors, that is the characteristics of hybrid-network era. Thus, diplomacy using cultural, human, and knowledge resources and networks of each country has become very important compared to the past (Lee 2014). In particular, P2P exchanges provide opportunities to inform my opinions and positions in a closer relationship in a frank, responsible manner, and to promote interest and understanding from others. In addition, it helps to exercise direct and indirect influence to others for providing a more accurate view of the issue amid the flood of information. In this process, we can expect to narrow the differences in mutual thoughts and

9) Nye (2005) defines 'soft power' as a way of achieving a desirable result by getting others to want the outcomes you want, in contrast, 'hard power' as use of military force or economic resources to obtain desired outcomes. However, Nye's theory and concept of Soft Power has been criticized by many scholars, because of its unclear and ideological position. For more debates, see Li(2008), Hall(2010), etc.

perceptions of conflict issues, and change perception in a positive way. Then, what is the current state of P2P exchanges? How is it formed and what are the main characteristics?

2) Types and Characteristics of P2P exchanges as diplomacy

In diplomatic area, P2P exchanges are regarded as one of the important diplomatic means. Amid of the absence of formalized theoretical discussions on P2P exchanges (Fukahori and Oh 2018), Ayhan(2020) defines P2P diplomacy as intentional, political, and transboundary communication-based interactions between groups of people for public, rather than private interests that have or aim to have foreign policy implications, excluding pure international exchanges which do not have political objectives or relevance to foreign policies, or anti-diplomatic, e.g. warfare activities. Then, he tried to introduce a typology of P2P diplomacy based on 2 dimensions; ‘approach’ and ‘relations with existing public diplomacy’. Specifically, it is categorized by the top-down or bottom-up approach and the relations with government's existing public diplomacy, which is complementary or supplementary.¹⁰⁾

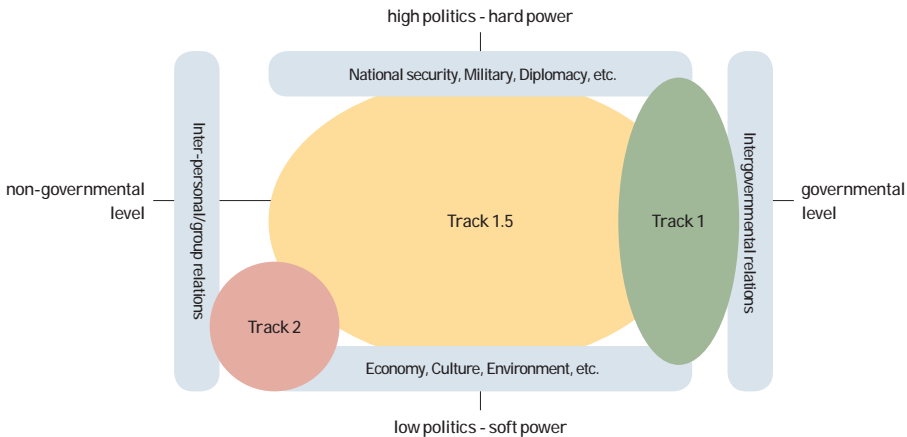
Since there are very few classification and theoretical approaches about P2P exchanges in international politics, Ayhan’s typology can be regarded as a meaningful attempt. However, it excludes the importance of international exchanges between individuals and groups without political intentions, overlooks interactive communication and interconnection processes by bifurcating the approach in a top-down or bottom-up process, and has limitations that it is difficult to apply them in current situations due to ambiguous criteria for determining their characteristics based on the linkage with existing policies. Taking this into consideration, in this study, I try to develop a new theorization by redefining and reclassifying P2P exchanges. This will require a reexamination and supplementation of Ayhan’s definition and typification.

10) As for the first dimension, ‘*approach*’, it means P2P diplomacy aims to have political influence via bottom-up or top-down processes. Top-down refers to political initiatives that began from leadership level to public level, whereas bottom-up refers to the initiatives that began at grassroots level aiming to bring about political change at the leadership level. In these dimensions, governments’ roles are limited to designers, initiators, facilitators and catalyzers, whereas interpersonal communication, relationship building, socialization and co-constitution of identity formation are carried out on the grassroots level. In addition, as for the second dimension, ‘*relations with the existing public diplomacy*’, it indicates the nature if it is complementary or supplementary to its government’s existing public diplomacy. With these dimensions, if the activities are “*top-down & complementary*”, these are government-initiated and/or sponsored programs that involve domestic citizenry to pursue foreign policy objectives, i.e., government-initiated exchange programs. If the activities are “*bottom-up & complementary*”, these are programs initiated by non-state actors with political goals in line with but independent of foreign policy objectives of home country, i.e., Track 2 diplomacy, etc. On the other hand, if the activities are “*top-down & supplementary*”, these are government-initiated and/or sponsored programs that involve domestic citizenry to pursue foreign policy objectives in places where official public diplomacy channels do not exist, i.e., government-initiated Track 2 diplomacy. Lastly, if the activities are “*bottom-up & supplementary*”, these are programs initiated by non-state actors with political goals in line with but independent of foreign policy objectives of home country in places where official public diplomacy channels do not exist (Ayhan 2020).

In spite of Ayhan's meaningful definition, there is a limitation that is difficult to clearly distinguish the boundaries between intentional and unintentional international exchanges. For example, when promoting inter-college exchange projects as part of a government-initiated program, even though the real actors of P2P exchanges participated without any political intention or purpose, the planner ('governmental side') has specific goals, such as enhancing bilateral relations, expanding understanding between the countries and increasing awareness of one's country. On the other hand, even if international exchanges between individuals, such as travel, tourism, and social gatherings, are regarded as unintentional international exchanges, the potential influence of these exchanges and the effect of changing perceptions of the other countries cannot be underestimated. In the end, the accumulation of these kinds of exchanges has a possibility to open the way to mutual understanding and trust. As shown in the study of Rüland(2016), P2P exchanges can improve public knowledge and awareness of other regions, enhance mutual understanding and tolerance of different histories and cultures, and overcome apathy, prejudice and stereotypes. Furthermore, P2P exchanges can broaden awareness of inter-state problems, urge them to solve problems, and promote dialogue of inter-regional cooperation, thereby ultimately deepening inter-state interactions and boosting cooperation based on mutual interests. As such, P2P exchanges provide a "foundation or groundwork" for enhancing relations between countries as well as serving as a "catalyst" for improving relations. In addition, when relations between countries are tense, they can act as a "substitute or instrument" to alleviate them and as a "buffer" to relieve tension.

In that sense, I would like to define 'P2P exchanges' as "a linkage and process between actors that directly and indirectly affect national relations". This includes various forms of exchanges, ranging from individual level tourism, travel and cultural experiences to strategic exchange programs among policymakers at the national level. Also, as the level of awareness and understanding of individuals and the public affects international exchanges and relations, we cannot help but pay attention to the actors who plan and carry out and the contents of the P2P exchanges. From this point of view, in this study, I classify the types of P2P exchanges with the dimensions of the 'content (theme)' and 'subject (actors)' of exchange activities as shown below Figure 5.

(Figure 5) A Typology of People to People (P2P) exchanges



Note. Created by the author

One dimension is the ‘actor’ of exchange. ‘Actor’ can be regarded as an initiator to plan and support P2P exchanges, or as a person who is directly involved in the exchanges. These roles can be matched or separated. For example, government officials may become parties to exchanges at the government level, or they may plan and support at the government level, but the practical exchanges may be conducted by non-governmental actors. We can take examples of “intergovernmental meeting” for the former case, and “exchanges and events conducted under the government’s planning and support” for the latter case. Therefore, the type of P2P exchanges can be divided according to the ‘initiative of exchange’, such as planning, support, and budget, which can be divided into governmental actors and non-governmental actors.

The other dimension is the ‘content’ of exchanges. This relates to the ‘high politics’ and ‘low politics’ which I mentioned above. Amid the change of international environment and the stream of times, the area of international exchange has expanded from security, military, politics to economy, society, culture, environment, health and so on. So, actors such as government, research institutions, civil society and individuals are engaged in various forms of exchanges, such as intellectual exchange meetings, joint events which directly or indirectly affect international relations these days. Thus, the exchanges between individuals are also important in that they ultimately play a buffer role in promoting friendly relations between countries in terms of forming intimacy and understanding each other.

In this perspective, the types of P2P exchanges can be divided into ‘Track 1 exchanges’ which is conducted at the government level, ‘Track 1.5 exchanges’ conducted by governmental and non-

governmental actors, and ‘Track 2 exchanges’ conducted at the individual level. More specifically, ‘Track 1 exchanges’ can be identified through the number of ‘inter-governmental meetings’ established at the institutional level. As for ‘Track 1.5 exchanges’, the trend will be identified through the government-initiated exchange programs which are institutionalized, even though it is difficult to identify the whole cases. In addition, ‘Track 2 exchanges’ can be identified through the number of visitors to each other. Then, how are the exchanges taking place between China, Japan, and ROK?

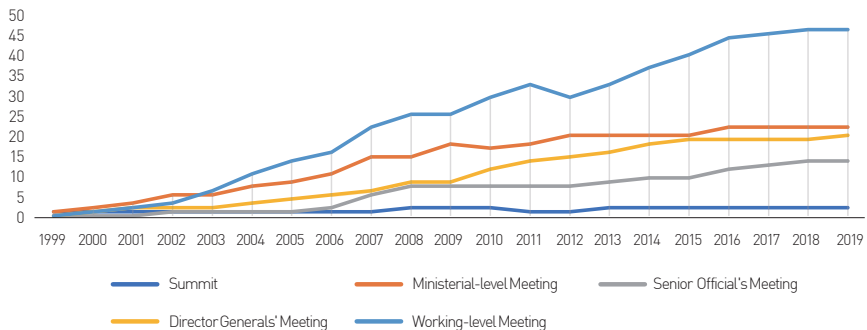
IV. The Current Status and Tasks of P2P Exchanges between China, Japan, and ROK

1) The Current Status

a) Track 1: Government to Government Exchanges

Track 1 exchanges can be identified through the inter-governmental meetings. According to the 2019 TCS research data,¹¹⁾ there are 2 summit meetings, 21 ministerial level, 13 senior official’s level, 19 director-general level and 44 working-level meetings between CJK (see Figure 6).

(Figure 6) Progress of Track 1 Trilateral Mechanisms (1999-2019)



Source. TCS. 2019 CJK Statistics

In addition, these inter-governmental meetings are widely conducted and established in various fields, including tourism, environment, health, education, science and technology, sports, as well as in the fields of diplomacy, security and economy and trade. This is a significant quantitative growth over the past two decades or so, compared to 1999, when the three countries had no other

11) TCS. “Progress of Trilateral Cooperation” <https://tcs-asia.org/ko/cooperation/dashboard.php>

one summit meeting and one minister level meeting. In other words, CJK's inter-governmental cooperation has achieved institutionalization from the working level to high-level officials and has dealt with various topics at various levels.

According to MOFA(2018), "*Trilateral Partnership Program for Government Officials of CJK (2011-present)*", "*CJK Trilateral Cooperation Workshop for Public Officials (2012- present)*" and the "*Trilateral Local Governments' Cooperation Meeting among CJK (1999- present)*" are being promoted among governmental officials, policy makers, and related institutes officials from the three countries as the main cooperation governmental programs.

b) Track 1.5: Government to Private and Privat to Government Exchanges

In the case of Track 1.5 exchanges, it does not seem possible to identify all relevant cases because they are conducted in various forms in various fields. However, it can be possible to know the trends and characteristics by researching some cases which are institutionalized and conducted persistently, especially initiated by governmental level except for one-time event.

According to data from the TCS, the CJK cooperation programs are being carried out in areas such as youth exchange, media, environment, culture, economy and smart cities. For examples, "*Trilateral Journalist Exchange Program (2014-present)*", "*CJK TV Producers Forum*", "*GREENA Program*", "*Asia International Youth Film Festival (2006- present)*", "*Young Ambassador Program (2013-present)*", "*Trilateral Youth Summit*", "*CJK FTA Seminar (2012-present)*", "*Trilateral Entrepreneurs Forum*", "*CJK Business Exchange (2013-present)*" and "*International Forum for Trilateral Cooperation (2011-present)*". Also, according to the 2018 CJK Cooperation Progress published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of ROK, CJK have been cooperating in various area, such as regional and international affairs, trade, industry, finance, economy, agriculture, fishing, energy, environment, culture, tourism, sports, youth education and exchange, science technology, information and communication technology, transportation, disaster management, personnel, health, and academic and P2P exchanges. Among these areas, 'youth education and exchanges' and 'academic exchanges' are specific areas which are aiming on P2P exchanges. The following are specific examples. In the field of 'Youth Education and Exchange', there are "*CAMPUS Asia Program (2016-present)*", "*CJK Children's Story Exchange Program (2002-present)*", "*Trilateral Youth Diplomacy Camp (2012-present)*", "*Trilateral Youth Summit (2014-present)*", "*CJK Youth Friendship Meeting (2007-present)*", and "*CJK Youth Forum (2012-present)*". As for the field of 'Academic Exchanges', we can find the examples of "*Trilateral Dialogue among CJK(2008-*

present)”, which constitutes of the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security of Korea National Diplomatic Academy (IFANS/KNDA), the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), and the China Institute of International Affairs (CIIS), “*Network of Trilateral Cooperation Think-Tanks (NTCT) Conference(2016-present)*”, which constitutes of IFANS, The Japan Forum on International Relations (JFIR), and China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU), and “*Future Leaders Forum (2002-present)*” which is organized by Korea Foundation (KF), Japan Foundation (JF), and All-China Youth Federation.

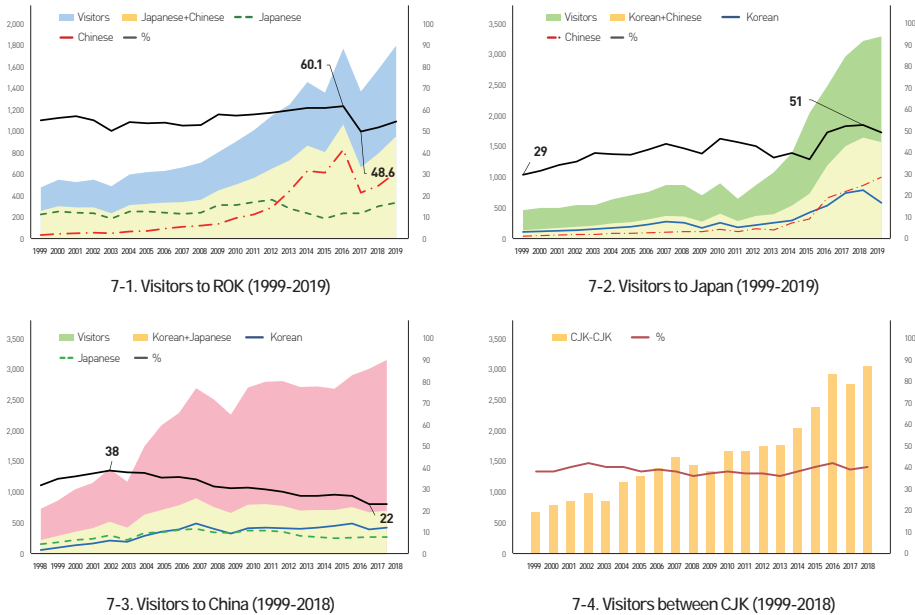
c) Track 2: Private to Private Exchanges

In the case of Track 2 exchanges, it can be identified through the number of visitors between the three countries. Figure 7 shows the changes of the number and the percentage of visitors between the three countries over the last 20 years from 1999 to 2018/2019.

With these Figures, we can discover that Chinese and Japanese visitors to ROK for 21 years from 1999 to 2019 was, on average 54.3% of all foreigners visiting ROK, the highest was 60.1% in 2016 and the lowest was 48.6% in 2017 (see Figure 7-1). In addition, the average number of Koreans and Chinese visiting Japan during the same period was 39.9%, the highest was 51% in 2017 and 2018, and the lowest was 29% in 1999 (see Figure 7-2). Meanwhile, we can discover that the average number of Koreans and Japanese visiting China for 20 years from 1999 to 2018¹²⁾ was 31%, the highest was 38% in 2002 and the lowest was 22% in 2017 (see Figure 7-3). Based on these figures, it can be known that the ratio of visits between CJK to each other for 20 years from 1999 to 2018 averaged 38.7% over the entire period (see Figure 7-4).

12) The latest data of China is the year of 2018.

(Figure 7) Inbound Visitors between CJK (1999-2018/2019)



Note. Created by the author based on data from Korea Tourism Organization, Japan National Tourism Organization, and National Bureau of Statistics of China

In addition, there are many Track 2 exchanges for specific purposes. For examples, for business groups, “*CJK Business Summit (2009-present, 2002-2007: CJK Business Forum)*” which has been organized by ‘The Federation of Korean Industries (FKI)’, ‘Japan Business Federation’, and ‘The China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT)’, for a group of senior politicians, businessmen and scholars, cultural workers, and intellectuals, “*Northeast Asia Trilateral Forum (NATF)*” which is co-hosted by ROK’s JoongAng Ilbo, Japan’s Nikkei Shimbun, China’s Xinhua News Agency, and for the people of culture field, “*Trilateral Culture Exchange Forum (2005-present)*”, for juniors, “*CJK Junior Sports Exchange Meet (1993-present)*”, and for fishery operator, “*CJK trilateral consultation for fishery cooperation meeting (2005-present)*”.

2) Analysis and Assessment

In this study, I redefine and reclassify P2P exchanges based on the existing studies. Then I divided P2P exchanges into government-to-government exchanges (Track 1), government-to-private

exchanges (Track 1.5), and private-to-private exchanges (Track 2) to examine the current status of P2P exchanges between CJK. With this typology, now we know various forms of P2P exchanges are being conducted among CJK.

Above all, in the case of ‘Track 1 exchanges’, there are 99 inter-governmental meetings, including summit meeting, ministerial-level, high-level official, director-general level and working-level groups. It can be assessed to have made significant progress over a short period of time, considering that there was only one summit meeting and one ministerial-level meeting in 1999. As we studied above, these developments and institutionalized cooperation have limited impact of trilateral cooperation (Yeo 2017; Cha 2018; Choi 2018). Also, it is difficult to assess the outcome or substantial progress of cooperation because all the details of the meetings are not disclosed. However, it can be assessed positively that various levels, from top to working level, of inter-governmental meetings and exchange programs, from central to local governments, are continuously expanded and operated.

Next, as for ‘Track 1.5 exchanges’, there were some specific areas which are aiming on P2P exchanges. The reason for choosing Track 1.5 exchange programs lies in the ‘promoting background’ and ‘initiated actors’. For example, “*CJK Children’s Story Exchange Program*” started with “*Children’s Dream Fund*,” which consists of members of the Japanese House of Representatives and the upper house of parliament. It means that this program was initiated at the governmental level. Other examples are “*CJK Youth Friendship Meeting*” and “*CAMPUS Asia Program*”¹³⁾. These programs were adopted at the CJK Summit Meetings, which encouraged middle and high school students and college students to participate in CJK cooperation led by the government. Likewise, the “*Trilateral Dialogue among CJK*” and “*Network of Trilateral Cooperation Think-Tanks (NTCT) Conference*” were also proposed and agreed on at high-level meetings and Foreign Ministers’ meetings between CJK. Especially, the participants of these two academic exchange programs consist of representative research institutes from the three countries. It means that, although it was started at the governmental level, it conveys opinion in a manner more aligned with the Private-to-Government exchanges.

13) The CAMPUS Asia (Collective Action for Mobility Program of University Students in Asia) is a cross-border student mobility program among CJK, initiated by the agreement of the Summit Meeting of CJK in 2010. The program aims to strengthen networks among academic institutions of higher education in Asia and promotes student exchanges through joint and double degree programs and exchange programs.
- <http://www.campusasia.kr/com/cmm/EgovContentView.do?menuNo=1110000001> (accessed 20 September 2020).

Table 1. CJK Track 1.5 Exchange & Cooperation Programs

section		Programs
Young Generation Exchanges	Children	China-Japan-ROK Children's Story Exchange Program (2002-present)
	Juniors	Asia International Youth Film Festival (2006-present) CJK Youth Friendship Meeting (2007-present) CJK Youth Forum (2012-present) Young Ambassador Program (2013- present) Trilateral Youth Summit (2014-present)
	(under) Graduate students	Trilateral Youth Diplomacy Camp (2012-present) CAMPUS Asia Program (2016-present)
Academic exchanges	Experts	Future Leaders Forum (2002-present) Trilateral Dialogue among CJK (2008-present) Network of Trilateral Cooperation Think-Tanks (NTCT) Conference (2016-present)

Source. MOFA (2018), TCS website

As can be seen from Table 1, the P2P exchange programs of China, Japan and ROK are target-oriented towards children, teenagers, college students, and experts. Also, it began to open the door for cooperation in the early 2000s and actively developed in the 2010s. This kind of exchanges has great advantages. It is easy to institutionalize and consolidate cooperation as the government has the initiative in the program in the formality aspect, and above all, it can secure sustainability. Also, some programs have been in place for nearly 20 years since they have been in effect, and the latest ones for five years.

However, the problems are government-led programs are likely to fall as a result of a lack of autonomy, a lack of new attempts due to government's structural rigidity, and stagnation caused by following existing methods. Another problem lies on the "contents" of exchange programs. The current programs are aimed at target-oriented exchanges for children, teenagers, college students, and expert groups. However, in some programs, it is difficult to expect a proliferation effect due to its high entry barriers. For example, the "*CAMPUS Asia Program*" contributes to foster talented individuals who can exhibit their ability for co-development in Asia through specialized curricula, while focusing on intensive education for a small number of selected students. However, in this process, there is a tendency to neglect those who do not meet the standards but have capabilities to contribute and are interested in CJK relations. In other words, there is a lack of "Advanced Program" for some students who are selected by high standards and "Basic Program" for increasing familiarity. There needs to be an "Intermediate program" to fill the gap between the other two programs.

Meanwhile, in the case of expert exchange programs, it is also focusing on the specific groups, so that it tends to be closed and exclusive. In other words, even though the representative and official actors for P2P exchanges between research institutes representing each country have been secured, such as KNDA in ROK, JIIA or JFIR in Japan, CFAU or CIIS in China, it is difficult to guarantee

the participation of the other experts who are not affiliated in the designated institutions. Also, it is difficult to expect the proliferation of the discussion due to the limited number of participants in the relevant field within the designated institutions. Even though this kind of exchange format secures representative and official meetings initiated by government, it is required to achieve results with high standards. Unless these exchange programs produce a certain level of results, it will have little more meaning than regularized events in which the same participants attend the same meeting annually to discuss similar topics. Therefore, academic exchanges between research institutes may have more implications not only for policy suggestions to the government, but also for providing information and knowledge to the other experts and public as a public institution and presenting research results as a research institute. It is also a social responsibility as a government-run research institute or a government-designated public research institute.

Lastly, ‘Track 2 exchanges’ are difficult to guarantee sustainability, but can be evaluated positively in that those are voluntarily conducted based on needs and demand. Moreover, the ‘come-and-go’ between CJK has been steady at about 38.7 percent for the last 20 years, as shown in Figure 7-4, despite wide fluctuations in the number and intensity of bilateral exchanges. In other words, when Track 2 exchanges between ROK and China decrease, the other parts such as exchanges between ROK and Japan or China and Japan increase. Also, when Track 2 exchanges between ROK and Japan decrease, exchanges between ROK and China or Japan and China increase. This is because of high geographical proximity and geopolitical connectivity among the three countries.

Nevertheless, it is a significant problem that private sector is influenced by political issues among countries, then it leads to ups and downs of Track 2 exchanges. For example, the falling number of Japanese visitors to ROK when ROK’s President Lee Myung-bak’s visit to Dokdo in 2012, the falling number of Chinese visitors to ROK when Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) issue happened in 2016, and the falling number of ROK visitors to Japan when ROK-Japan relations were deteriorated in 2019 are the cases. It shows that Track 2 exchanges in non-political areas, such as tourism and travel, are affected by conflicts in political areas such as foreign affairs and history issues. Therefore, we should consider how to ensure stable Track 2 exchanges without being affected by intergovernmental political and diplomatic conflict issues.

V. Conclusion: Policy Recommendations

The trilateral cooperation between China, Japan, and ROK has made a lot of progress since 1999 when the leaders of the three countries met for the first time. A secretariat for trilateral cooperation, TCS, was established to lay an institutional foundation, nearly 100 intergovernmental consultative

meetings were created between governments, and non-political Track 2 exchanges accounted for 40 percent of all exchanges. Considering that the three countries have established diplomatic relations and have set the foundation for cooperation in less than 30 years, it can be seen as a remarkable achievement in a short period of time.

Nevertheless, as we can see above, the familiarity and trust toward each other between the three countries are not high compared to their vision of cooperation in various fields, including economy, industry, and diplomacy. This is why we should make an effort to narrow the gap between perception to each other and vision for cooperation. Therefore, I would like to emphasize the importance of P2P exchanges as an efficient way to lead positive changes to the way people perceive cooperation. Even though P2P exchanges do not lead positive changes all the time, they contribute to a better understanding each other and help to promote relations. Therefore, I would like to suggest the following policy recommendations for enhancing P2P exchanges.

First, P2P exchanges between governments require transparency and tangible achievements for its people and policies. Specifically, ‘Track 1 exchanges’ need to be strengthened with an emphasis on policy cooperation. The current “*Trilateral Partnership Program for Government Officials of CJK*”, “*CJK Trilateral Cooperation Workshop for Public Officials*”, and “*Trilateral Local Governments’ Cooperation Meeting among CJK*”, which are mentioned above, are part of these efforts, but it needs to be deepened. In other words, we need to make efforts to produce substantial results in cooperation among the three countries, develop the programs such as workshops and short-term training programs from a mid- to long-term perspective, and train experts in multilateral cooperation in government. To achieve these objectives, we should focus our capabilities on policy-linked cooperation, not just building network between governments. Also, the three countries can cooperate in the matter of trans-border issues, such as environment, health and disaster management as neighboring countries. During the COVID-19 crisis, the three countries have more opportunities and challenges to cooperate in various fields, such as health, IT, e-governments, etc. For examples, the governments of CJK can share the information, skills, and knowhow how to overcome COVID-19. Also, the three governments can reboot the ‘*CJK Infectious Disease Hotline*’ and promote a new type of technology cooperation against COVID-19. Moreover, special visas may be considered to facilitate cross-border exchanges between the three geographically close countries. In addition, the three governments should make an effort to enhance and secure Track 2 exchanges focused on increasing familiarity and interest are not affected by conflict at the national level. The three governments may consider making a gentleman's agreement to prevent political conflicts from affecting P2P exchanges, including travel visa exemptions, the development of visiting programs, etc. These direct and indirect supports should be provided to facilitate Track 2 exchanges between the three countries. And then, the accomplishment should be

open and transparent to the public. Being more open to their constituents about cooperation results and how they overcome difficulties would help drive further cooperation. It is necessary to actively utilize each country's MOFA and TCS websites to disclose and accumulate existing achievements, and to promote and develop them into new forms through policy meetings with media and experts. It can contribute to Track 2 exchanges not only within CJK, but also in Northeast Asia and around the world.

Second, we should consider shifting the paradigm of expert exchanges. In the case of Track 1.5 exchanges which are focusing on experts, it seems that the start was relatively late and attempts were passive, despite it having more potential for development and spread effects compared to Track 1 and Track 2 exchanges. Even the current status of expert exchanges is not enough. I pointed out the problems of expert exchanges that are currently being carried out. The current situation of expert exchanges seems exclusive, closed, and shallow. Many meetings such as academic conferences and policy meetings seem to be lacking in inclusivity and others seem to be little more than one-time events and do not provide a substantive or fertile ground for networking. Therefore, more creative and active attempts are needed. As a way to improve this, it is first necessary to change the direction of the exchange through the segmentation process by generation and job classification by experts. For example, in the case of a scholar and researchers, ① a group of Ph.D candidates (mainly in their late 20s and early 30s) who are highly likely to grow into experts in their field; ② a group of rising researchers who have acquired Ph.D degrees and qualified as a scholar, but still inexperienced (in their early 30s to early 40s); ③ a group of late-40s to 50s who have established and solidified their research field in academia, and exerted influence; and ④ a group of influential senior researchers (in their 60s and beyond).

First of all, for “Group ①”, it is still difficult to be seen as a professional researcher. However, this group has infinite potential, so that the goal should be to create a venue for exchanges that can form a familiarity and network among researchers from CJK. For achieving the objectives, the government should create a venue for exchanges and opportunities through various forms of conferences and forums. It is worth considering creating the “*CJK Researcher Forum (tentative)*” by benchmarking the cases of the “*ROK-Japan Next Generation Forum*” and “*East Asia Consortium of Japanese Studies*,” which are mainly aimed at graduate students. In the case of “Group ②”, it is the group with the highest possibility of developing into a talent for trilateral cooperation in the future. So, exchange strategies are needed to derive results for promoting cooperation and accumulate experience through intensive targets. In other words, the government should devise measures to develop their expertise and foster them as experts in trilateral cooperation by becoming global talents in the future. For example, we can consider having circular visits program to major policy research institutes in various fields such as IFANS/KNDA, JIIA, and CFAU, as well as in-depth

workshops on common topics, by referring to institutional visits to foster local researchers and short-term stay support programs conducted by KF and JF. For “Group ③”, it is a group that can expect substantial performance based on expertise and accumulated experience. In order to encourage cooperation and to derive results, we can consider developing mid- and long-term exchange and cooperation programs using various resources in the universities. Finally, in the case of “Group ④”, based on the achievements and accumulated experience achieved throughout the whole life as an expert, it will be necessary to exchange knowledge and share the know-how and experience with the next generation. It is a social contribution to future generations and research fields as well as his/her duty as an intellectual. In sum, the keywords for exchange purpose of Group ① are ‘opportunity’ and ‘vision’, Group ② are ‘experience’ and ‘achievement’, Group ③ are ‘performance’ and ‘contribution’ and Group ④ are ‘contribution’ and ‘responsibility’.

Third, it is necessary to build a new network-building scheme for online and offline combined platforms in the new hybrid-network era. Now we have faced new forms of dialogue and discussion as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. In the early stage of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the online-based networking seemed too difficult and complex to use. However, people are adapting and adjusting to new challenges and various changes gradually. Now we can predict that this new type or format of networking will not end in the short-term and continue gradually as a supplementary mechanism for networking. However, it can’t substitute the existing offline-based networking, because deep and sincere relationships can be formed by experiencing and feeling in person. This means, face to face contact and relations can’t be replaced by other mechanisms. Therefore, we need to develop online and offline combined platforms to build hybrid-networks.

Furthermore, with this new platform, we need to establish a multi-layered and complex network that can achieve various job groups and inter-generational exchanges. Most of the current P2P exchanges are between same job groups, such as government officials to government officials, scholars to scholars, and journalists and journalists. Also, most exchanges are focused on young people, including teenagers and twenties. This type of exchange is definitely needed and it contributes greatly in terms of education for future generations and enhancement of mutual understanding for the next generation. However, we need to focus less on the time and space of these networks and instead focus on their multi-layered natures, taking inspiration and knowledge from diverse segments of society, resulting in a more holistic approach. Also, the lack of a platform for exchanges between the middle-aged people in their 30s and 40s, who are major economic actors and can be the main players of practical cooperation, and those in their 50s and 60s, which make up a large proportion of the total population, will have to be improved. It means we need to consider building of “whole generation exchange platform”. Therefore, efforts should be made to promote the exchanges of all generations, such as middle-aged, elderly, and female exchanges. The opinions of journalists,

politicians, academics, bureaucrats, academics, students and business people all have a place in our research as well as inter-generational exchanges. It can consider the case of the “*ROK-Japan Forum*”, initiated by both governments, in which politicians, scholars, bureaucrats, entrepreneurs and journalists gathered together to discuss ROK-Japan issues, which has been continued since 1993.

CJK have a complex relationship with many issues due to their geographical proximity and geopolitical connectivity. Also, the three countries should not only prepare joint responses to transnational threats, but they also have the potential to create more opportunities and increase productivity through solidarity and cooperation as major countries in Northeast Asia. Under these circumstances, efforts should be made to further enhance trilateral cooperation by promoting P2P exchanges to which individuals in these exchanges can be the main actor or recipient. This is because the formation and cooperation of friendly relations between CJK is a geopolitical fate and an inevitable task in a changing era. As I argued above, CJK cooperation has developed a lot in a short period of time. But these developments are mostly focused on quantitative growth, so it requires more attempts and efforts for qualitative developments. We should make efforts to cope with the social changes of this new hybrid era and achieve national development through trilateral cooperation with clear goals and visions.

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발 행 처 국립외교원 외교안보연구소

아시아태평양연구부

발 행 인 국립외교원장

주 소 서울특별시 서초구 남부순환로 2572

전 화 02-3497-7600

팩시밀리 02-575-5245

홈페이지 <http://www.knda.go.kr>

<http://www.ifans.go.kr>

인 쇄 처 웃고문화사 Tel.02-2267-3956

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