SOUTH KOREA AS A MIDDLE POWER:
A SYSTEMIC IMPACT APPROACH

TAN YI-ZHONG

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

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TAN YI-ZHONG

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SOUTH KOREA AS A 'MIDDLE POWER':
A 'SYSTEMIC IMPACT' APPROACH

ABSTRACT

This research evaluated whether South Korea is a 'middle power' by using the 'systemic impact' approach. The term 'middle power' has a long history, going back all the way to 15th century in Italy, Europe (Yama, 2009). However, it was only in the 20th century when the term 'middle power' rose to prominence in the study of international relations. It was during this time that different scholars put forth different approaches as to how a country can be evaluated as to determine whether it is a 'middle power' or not. Although South Korea has been classified as a 'middle power' by scholars and South Korean politicians alike in the last two decades, this study has discovered that South Korea's position as a 'middle power' is rather vague. This is because there is still no universally accepted approach/method on how to evaluate whether a country is a 'middle power' by scholars, despite efforts made by scholars over the years. Therefore, there is a level of uncertainty on the status of countries categorised as a 'middle power', as a country can be considered a 'middle power' using one approach but not another. In response to the problem, the Australian scholar Andrew Carr (2014) presented the 'systemic impact' approach, a comprehensive approach to evaluating 'middle power'. Carr originally utilised the 'systemic impact' approach to prove that Australia, which was categorised as a 'middle power' for decades, was indeed a 'middle power. In the same vein, this study will utilise Carr's 'systemic impact' approach to determine whether South Korea, who has been classified as a 'middle power' for close to two decades, is indeed a 'middle power' or not.

Keywords: middle power, South Korea, systemic impact approach, positional approach, behavioural approach, identity approach, Republic of Korea

SOUTH KOREA SEBAGAI 'KUASA TENGAH':
KAEDAH 'SYSTEMIC IMPACT'

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menilai sama ada Korea Selatan adalah 'kuasa tengah' dengan menggunakan pendekatan 'systemic impact'. Istilah 'kuasa tengah' mempunyai sejarah yang panjang, kembali ke abad ke-15 di Itali, Eropah (Yama, 2009). Walau bagaimanapun, ia hanya pada abad ke-20 apabila istilah 'kuasa tengah' meningkat menjadi terkenal dalam kajian hubungan antarabangsa. Ia adalah pada masa ini bahawa para ulama yang berbeza mengemukakan pendekatan yang berbeza tentang bagaimana sebuah negara boleh dinilai untuk menentukan sama ada ia adalah 'kuasa tengah' atau tidak. Walaupun Korea Selatan telah diklasifikasikan sebagai 'kuasa tengah' oleh sarjana dan ahli politik Korea Selatan dalam dua dekad yang lalu, kajian ini mendapati bahawa kedudukan Korea Selatan sebagai 'kuasa tengah' agak samar-samar. Ini kerana masih tiada pendekatan /kaedah yang diterima secara universal tentang bagaimana untuk menilai sama ada sesebuah negara adalah 'kuasa tengah' oleh para sarjana, walaupun usaha yang dibuat oleh sarjana selama ini. Oleh itu, terdapat tahap ketidakpastian mengenai status Negara yang dikategorikan sebagai 'kuasa tengah', kerana negara boleh dianggap 'kuasa tengah' menggunakan satu pendekatan tetapi bukan dengan pendekatan lain. Sebagai tindak balas kepada masalah itu, sarjana Australia Andrew Carr menyampaikan pendekatan 'systemic impact', pendekatan komprehensif untuk menilai 'kuasa tengah'. Carr pada asalnya menggunakan pendekatan 'systemic impact' untuk membuktikan bahawa Australia, yang dikategorikan sebagai 'kuasa tengah' selama beberapa dekad, memang merupakan 'kuasa tengah' (Carr, 2014). Dalam vena yang sama, kajian ini akan menggunakan pendekatan 'systemic impact' Carr untuk menentukan sama ada Korea Selatan, yang telah diklasifikasikan sebagai 'kuasa tengah' selama hampir dua dekad, memang merupakan 'kuasa tengah' atau tidak.

Kata Kunci: Korea Selatan, kuasa tengah, kaedah 'systemic approach'

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INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

The term 'middle power' can trace its roots back to the 16th century. Despite the term's long history, there is still no agreement between scholars on how to evaluate whether a country is a 'middle power'. This is despite many scholars, since the mid-20th century, attempting to create different approaches when it comes to evaluating 'middle power'. This lack of agreement between scholars has made classification of countries as a 'middle power' difficult as well as highly debatable and contentious (Yama 2009).

For more than a decade, scholars and the international community have deemed it fit to bestow upon South Korea the title of 'middle power'. South Korea's classification as a 'middle power', however, can be considered ambiguous. This is because there is a lack of a proper and in-depth evaluation of South Korea's 'middle power' status. The lack of an agreed-upon approach when it comes to evaluating 'middle power' by scholars has also made it more difficult to properly evaluate South Korea and whether it deserves the title of 'middle power'. The lack of proper in-depth analysis coupled with the contentious nature of the various approaches to evaluating 'middle power' has put to question the legitimacy of South Korea's status as a 'middle power' country.

Considering the lack of agreement between scholars on how 'middle power' should be evaluated, a new approach to evaluating 'middle power' therefore must be brought to the forefront of the discussion. This new approach to evaluating 'middle power' should be then utilised to evaluate South Korea to determine whether it is indeed a 'middle power' country.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Despite the term and concept of 'middle power' existing for decades in the arena of international politics, scholars are no closer to accepting one general or singular method when it comes to evaluating whether a country can be considered a 'middle power'. This

has led many scholars to develop their own methods when it comes to evaluating 'middle power' over the years. The lack of a universally accepted method when it comes to evaluating 'middle power' by scholars has led to ambiguity on the status of certain countries on whether they are in fact 'middle powers' or not. One such country is South Korea.

Although South Korea has been widely recognised as a 'middle power' and subsequent South Korean presidents have used the term 'middle power' during their presidency, there is still uncertainty as to whether it should be considered an actual 'middle power'. As stated above, this uncertainty stems primarily from the fact that despite the significant amount of discourse and study done on 'middle power' over the years, scholars have yet to agree on a singular and universal approach on how 'middle power' status should be evaluated. This is stems from the fact that whenever a scholar or group of scholars presents an approach to evaluating 'middle power', another scholar or group of scholars would inevitably come out to levy some form of criticism against that presented approach. To address this issue and shortcoming, this study will, therefore, utilise a fairly new approach on how 'middle power' status should be evaluated. This approach was first presented by the Australian scholar Andrew Carr when he used this approach to evaluate Australia's status as a 'middle power'. The systemic approach was presented as an alternative to the three traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power'. In this new approach, Carr addressed the criticism levied against the other approaches to evaluating 'middle power' by creating new parameters in which 'middle power' status is evaluated. With this approach, this paper hopes to not only present a more holistic manner in which 'middle power' status should be evaluated, but also to determine whether or not South Korea is indeed a 'middle power'.

1.3 Research Questions

In light of the above-mentioned statement of the problem, this study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1) How has the term 'middle power' been used by the South Korean government?

2) Is South Korea a 'middle power' based on the 'systemic impact' approach?

- Does South Korea have the capabilities to protect its core national interests?

- Has South Korea impacted the international system in the areas of the global economy and finance, global development, global green growth, and global security?

1.4 Research Objectives

Based on the research question presented above in 1.3, there are three main objectives of this study:

- To determine how the term 'middle power' has been used by subsequent South Korean governments.

- To determine whether South Korea has the capabilities to protect its core national interest from external threats.

- To determine whether South Korea has impacted the international system in the areas of the global economy and finance, global development, global green growth, and global security.

1.5 Significance of Study

The significance of this dissertation can be divided into two separate parts. The first part of this study will seek to address the shortcomings of the current approaches in evaluating 'middle power' status by presenting Andrew Carr's new approach to evaluating 'middle power', the 'systemic impact' approach (Carr, 2014). The details of the 'systemic impact' approach and how it differs from the traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power' will be discussed in the theoretical framework section.

Secondly, although many studies and scholarly papers have been written on South Korea as a 'middle power'. Some of the studies and papers have been done on South Korea's future prospects and role as a 'middle power', while others have been written on the future challenges South Korea might be facing as a 'middle power' in the future. There has been also studies and scholarly papers written on how the term 'middle power' is used and viewed by different South Korean presidencies. However, there has been a lack of study analysing whether South Korea is indeed a 'middle power'. Therefore, this study aims to determine whether South Korea is in actual fact a 'middle power', and it is not just posturing itself as one in order to increase its clout in the international community. This study will, therefore, use Andrew Carr's approach to evaluating 'middle power', looking primarily at the presidency of President Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013), who had articulated that South Korea was a 'middle power' based on his 'Global Korea' initiative, which will be explained further in a later chapter.

This study will be able to serve as a source of future reference to not only 'middle power' scholars and researchers, but also scholars, researchers and students of South Korean history and policymaking.

1.6   Literature Review

When undertaking the study of 'middle power' for this paper, the three traditional approaches used by scholars in evaluating 'middle power' status were studied. The three approaches are: the positional/hierarchical approach, the behavioural approach, and the identity approach. These three approaches were looked at by this study as they are the most popular as well as the most written-on approaches when it comes to evaluating 'middle power' status.

1.6.1   The Positional Approach to Evaluating 'Middle Power'

The positional approach, also referred to as the hierarchical approach, defines whether a country is a 'middle power' by focussing on a country's quantifiable factors. These

quantifiable factors measured are gross domestic product (GDP), population size, military size, and defence spending. The positional approach sought to develop an 'objective' ranking of the state's size (Carr, 2014). Based on this, the positional approach to defining 'middle power' is a realist-based approach and was one of the first approaches put forth by scholars when it comes to determining whether a country should be given 'middle power' status.

One of the earliest modern scholars to articulate the positional approach to evaluating 'middle power' was former Canadian senior diplomat R.G. Riddell. In 1947, Riddell made note that if a country has considerable size, material resources, as well as having the willingness and the ability to accept responsibility, that country should be given more consideration in the international system (Chapnick, 1999).

Another prominent modern scholar of the positional approach is Carsten Holbraad. In his authoritative works on the subject matter, which was published in the 1970s and the 1980s, Holbraad positioned middle powers at the intermediate level of the international hierarchy based on a state's material capabilities. Holbraad also articulated that a middle power was a country or state that was much stronger than the small nations of the international system, though considerably weaker than the great powers in the international system (Holbraad, 1971). The hierarchy which Holbraad brought forth was akin to a social one, albeit in an international setting. In Holbraad's international hierarchy, countries like Britain and Japan were classified as 'upper-middle-class powers' while countries like Canada and Australia were classified as 'lower-middle-class'. In 1984, Holbraad ranked middle powers by region according to a states' population as well as its Gross National Product (GNP). He also at the same time reaffirmed the structuralist approach to defining middle powers. He maintained that the concept applied to 'states that were weaker than the great powers in the international system but significantly stronger than the minor powers and small states' (Holbraad, 1984). The vagueness of

Holbraad's definition, however, is considered to be the paramount shortcoming of the positional approach. That being said, Holbraad did make a valuable contribution to the study of middle power and its literature. Through his studies, Holbraad witnessed that a middle power's propensity to act as a conflict mediator hinges on upon the current structure of the international system. According to Holbraad, a competitive balance of power situation or situations would allow a middle power to have a larger scope of action as opposed to a unipolar order which would constrict and stifle a middle power's foreign policy freedom. Holbraad also made the argument that the likelihood of middle powers to balance or bandwagon depended on a number of different factors, factors such like: their geographical position, their political tradition, the nature of the issue, and the norms of the state system (Holbraad, 1971).

John W. Holmes (1984), a contemporary of Holbraad, was another proponent of the positional approach to defining 'middle power'. He, Holmes, studied 'middle powers' from a purely Canadian perspective. He argued in his 1984 work, 'Most Safely in the Middle', that the motivation for middle power policies are rooted in a 'very hard-headed calculation of the national interest'. According to Holmes, Canada's positional ranking in the international hierarchy, its status as a middle power, and its influence in the international system are all issue-specific in nature (Holmes, 1984).

Other scholars who subscribe to the positional approach are scholars like Bernard Wood, G.P. Glazebrook, Laura Neack, and Jonathan H.Ping. Bernard Wood in trying to 'objectively' determine whether a country can be considered a 'middle power' suggested the use of 'scientific' or empirical means like a country's Gross National Product (GNP) as a tool for analysis. Glazebrook differentiated small states from larger states by categorising a small state as a state with 'limited amount of resources or a small population' as compared to larger states which have a 'larger amount of resources or a larger population'. Laura Neack used a combination of five national indicators within a

cluster analysis to facilitate an investigation on middle state behaviour (Chapnick, 1999). Jonathan H. Ping, on the other hand, evaluated 'middle powers' as well as 'great powers' and 'small powers' based on nine indicators based on material wealth. The nine indicators are: population, geographic area, military expenditure, gross domestic product (GDP), GDP real growth, the value of its exports, gross national income per capita, trade as a percentage of GDP, and life expectancy at birth (Ping, 2005).

In the modern international system, where there are a total of a 195 sovereign states recognised by the United Nations, 'middle power' are expected to be found within the first 20 states when ranked on significant quantitative measures like a state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), its military spending or total population, with no significance accorded to the states ranked between 80 to 90, the median point of the list of total sovereign states (Carr, 2014). Despite the relative ease in developing a positional/hierarchical approach to state power, this approach is intellectually unsatisfying due to several inherent flaws. Even Ping's expanded model for evaluation is still intellectually unsatisfying despite including many more indicators. This is because the 'positional approach' disregards 'soft power' capabilities and active foreign policy behaviours of a state, choosing instead to focus on and depend on quantifiable measures (Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal; 1993). The scholar John Ravenhill (1998) also points out that the positional approach has proven to be of almost no value when it comes to predicting or explaining the behaviour of states which has been classified to be a 'middle power'. In addition to Ravenhill, the scholar Denis Stair also notes that although countries are compared, what similarities or differences between the countries are left untouched. Stair states that this therefore effectively leaves the term useless, given that the inference that power is the fundamental determinant of a state's behaviour is central to the concept of 'middle powers' (Stair, 1998). The scholar Stephan Fruehling also adds that the positional approach to evaluating 'middle power' can also make scholars think more in

terms of averages, rather than the country's strategic situation, as a country can have more than one strategic personality that shapes its defence and foreign policy needs (Fruehling, 2007). Take South Korea as an example, South Korea's military expenditure accounts for 2.9 per cent of its annual GDP, much more when compared to countries like Canada (0.98 per cent) and Australia (1.79 per cent) (Tian, Fleurant, Wezeman, Wezeman). A positional approach to defining 'middle power' cannot tell us what these figures mean or why is it at those levels, as it swaps out what we want to know with what we can count. It does inform us that South Korea is a 'middle power' in terms of its military expenditure, surpassing traditional 'middle powers' like Australia and Canada. This, however, does not tell us why South Korea has spent so much on its military. As Fey pointed out in David Baldwin's 2002 work, *'Power and International Relations'*, redefining power by using property although seductive, warps the very essence of what we are interested in knowing by using such a definition. Though the positional approach is useful in trying to determine and indicate and where the 'middle' is in 'middle power', the positional approach, however, is still not comprehensive enough to evaluate whether a country is a 'middle powers' (Carr, 2014). To add to that, countries that have been deemed a 'middle power' based on the positional approach might not be interested or want to function as a 'middle power'. For example, the Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia, both ranked within the first 20 states when it comes to GDP ranking, might not want to be deemed as a 'middle power', nor function as one (World Bank, 2018). As a result of the flaws and shortcomings of the positional approach, another approach to evaluating 'middle power' was presented by another group of scholars in the hopes of rectifying and addressing the flaws and shortcomings of the positional approach.

1.6.2   The Behavioural Approach to Evaluating 'Middle Power'

The second traditional approach to evaluating 'middle power' is the behavioural approach. The behavioural approach was mainly created by Canadian and Australian

scholars as a response to the many criticisms levied against the positional approach. The behavioural approach was created to serve as an alternative to the positional approach when evaluating 'middle power', focusing on how a 'middle power' acts rather than the material capabilities or resources it has. The behavioural approach to evaluating 'middle power' soon became popular among scholars for not only identifying 'middle power' states but understanding them as well (Flemes, 2007).

The main proponents of the behavioural approach are the scholars Andrew Cooper, Richard Higgott and Kim Richard Nossal. In their landmark study, *Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order*, the three scholars rejected the positional approach to evaluating 'middle power'. Instead, they presented the idea that 'middle powers' should be identified by their tendency to pursue multilateral solution to global problems, their tendency to welcome compromise on global disputes and their tendency to adopt notions of "good global citizenship" to guide their diplomacy (Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal; 1993). According to Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal, 'middle powers' undertake distinctive behavioural characteristics that turn them into catalysts, who trigger and promote special global issues; facilitators, who builds coalitions grounded on collaboration; and managers, who builds up and promotes international institutions and norms. Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal links these three 'middle power' behavioural patterns to niche diplomacy which concentrates resource(s) to specific areas which can generate the most returns for the country (Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal; 1993). The idea presented by Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal shifts the focus away from quantifiable measures of power and to the manner in which states behave. According to Evans and Grant (1998), who are also proponents of the 'behavioural' approach, 'middle power' behaviour can be classified using the five C's: capacity, cooperation, creativity, coalition building, and credibility. The scholar Ravenhill (1998) introduced three more C's: context, content, and choice to understand when a 'middle power' will use its capacity for activist diplomacy.

The scholar John Gerard Ruggie (1994) pointed out that the emergence of the behavioural approach was timely, as it demonstrated the growing engagement of small to mid-sized states in multilateral organisations during the optimistic post-cold war years. The behavioural approach provided useful insight into determining how certain states maximised and wielded its power in multilateral forums, in particular, building coalitions in support of trade liberalisation, niche diplomacy for human rights, and environmental goals, and leadership on non-proliferation (Carr, 2014).

Despite trying to offer a more intellectually satisfying approach to evaluating 'middle power', the behavioural approach still faced criticism from some scholars. One of the major criticism scholars have levied against the behavioural approach is the fact that this approach is tautological in nature. As Carl Ungerer (2008) stated, the behavioural approach identifies 'middle powers' as states who acts like a 'middle power'. Critics of the behavioural approach also point out that Australia and Canada, the two states who were the test and benchmark for the behavioural approach, were not tested against a distinct standard of 'middle powers', but seemingly established the standard of what constitutes a 'middle power', which they then, unsurprisingly, fulfilled (Carr, 2014). It can be seen, therefore, as to why some scholars levy criticisms against the behavioural approach, as the benchmark for determining what is considered to be 'middle power' behaviour was taken from countries who already practised such behaviours and already considered themselves to be a 'middle power'. If an independent variable is defined according to the dependent variable, all end results will be dependent therefore on the dependent variable. In simple terms, 'middle powers' are 'middle powers' because 'middle powers' are 'middle powers'. For example, will a powerful state in the international community be classified as a 'middle power' because it engages in niche diplomacy? Or will a weak state in the international community be classified as a 'middle power' because it engages in niche diplomacy? Certainly not, as such an evaluation

discount the material capabilities of the state(s) (Yama, 2009). The tautological nature of the behavioural approach, therefore, makes this approach to define 'middle power' unpopular to some scholars, making it one of the main criticisms levied against this approach to before 'middle power'. Another criticism levied against the 'behavioural' approach is that issues like survival, security, and conflict, which are considered 'realist', are not factors when it comes to evaluating 'middle power' (Shin, 2015).

Despite the criticism levied against the behavioural approach, Cooper, Higgott and Nossal, should be still be credited for trying to produce a Weberian ideal type of 'middle power'. That being said, the 'middle power' model presented by Cooper, Higgott and Nossal has struck some scholars as exclusionary and tied to a liberal, internationalist ideology (Carr, 2014). The scholar Eduard Jordaan has argued that in the current international system, there are two types of 'middle powers': 'traditional' and 'emerging' (Jordaan, 2003). This group of 'emerging middle powers' which consists of states like India, Brazil, Malaysia and South Africa was seen to have different attitudes towards democracy, different roles in the international economy and a preferred focus on regionalism as opposed to the more multilateral focus of Western and 'traditional middle powers' (Carr, 2014). With the introduction of the term 'emerging' to the study of 'middle power', scholars have been able to use the term to write on non-Western 'middle power' states, stating that these 'emerging middle powers' are a 'neglected component of the changing economic balance of power' (Scott, von Hau, Hulme; 2010). There is, however, a fundamental problem by adding the 'emerging' qualifier to the study of 'middle power'. This is because an adding of a qualifier to a key term, in this case 'middle power', weakens the meaning and importance of the original term. The term 'middle power' would be of little merit and importance if 'middle power' status meant different things for countries of different cultural or economic perspective. While there is no denying that there is a need to give a greater scope to non-Western 'middle power' states which are

'emerging' in the international community, the move to include additional qualifiers to sustain the behavioural definition of 'middle power' can be taken as clear evidence of the limitations of the behavioural approach (Carr, 2014).

Another criticism scholars have levied against the behavioural approach is the fact that it succumbs to a strand of normative idealism which plagued the 'middle power' literature. Scholars, especially policymakers from 'middle power' states that these states have 'constructive attributes… [and] sometimes even a measure of moral superiority', ever since the term 'middle power' first emerged (Wood, 1988). While Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal do attack the normative claims, that 'middle powers' 'possess a certain smugness…[and] are often difficult to substantiate', they do also argue that: 'middle power behaviour…is defined as an approach to diplomacy that has been geared to mitigating conflict and building cooperation and consensus…this kind of activity can be an important antidote to the rigidity of the international system in the face of middle power inertia' (Cooper, Higott, Nossal; 1993).

Although great effort and care were taken by scholars who support the behavioural approach, the behavioural approach is still tautological and leads back to normative endorsements. Due to these tendencies, the behavioural approach is either verging into normative idealism or be used by others as the basis for a normative assessment of 'middle powers', and some scholars have rejected the argument that there is a meaningful difference between the normative and behavioural approaches, and thus label both as part of a 'revisionist' approach (Cooper, 2011). Although the scholarly work of Cooper, Higgott and Nossal had made significant advances in the study of 'middle power', offering an insightful understanding to the term 'middle power', the behavioural approach, like the positional approach it was criticizing and trying to address, did not provide a sufficient enough understanding of the term 'middle power'. Therefore, another

approach should be utilised in an effort to try and address the insufficient understanding of the term 'middle power'.

1.6.3 The Identity Approach

Though far less popular when compared to the positional approach or the behavioural approach discussed earlier, some scholars suggest that 'middle power' status is best understood as a deliberately constructed 'political category', in which policymakers developed and is 'rich by design' with 'positive associations' (Carr, 2014). As Mark Beeson (2011) stated, the identity approach takes seriously the claims of policymakers when they assert 'middle power' status for their country. The identity approach has been long associated with constructivism, but an early version of the approach can be found in the work of the scholar Robert W. Keohane. In his work titled 'Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics, Keohane argued that 'instead of focusing on perceptions of whether security can be maintained primarily with one's resources we should focus on the systemic role that states' leaders see their countries playing'(Keohane, 1969). The identity approach therefore not only offers an easy way of identification, but it also informs us about the foreign policy approach that a state is most likely to be pursue, given the predictive power to this particular approach (Carr, 2014). As noted by the scholars Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'knowing about a state's perception of its identity (both type and role) should help us to understand how the state will act' (Finnermore and Sikkink, 2001). By utilising the identity approach, scholars have been able to reliably track which countries are 'middle powers'.

Like the positional approach and the behavioural approach before it, criticism has also been levied against the identity approach. Critics against the identity approach present several questions that call into question the effectiveness of identity approach. These questions include: what does it mean if a country stops using the label 'middle power' to identify itself? Does it mean that it stops being a 'middle power'? To put it in other words,

does a shift in a country's language result in any meaningful shift in their power? Criticism of the identity approach stems from the fact that with the usage of this term, scholars would have their work cut out for them, as they could quite possibly have to revise the list of countries considered to be 'middle powers' with every general election held and subsequent change in government. Another criticism of the identity approach is that it also risks falling into the same normative trap of the behavioural approach, with the 'middle power' status being awarded to typically left or liberal governments and denied to more right or conservative governments, which have tended to be less taken by the term. Finally, the identity approach is also criticised because it does not have a good way of guarding the boundaries of the term. This stems from the fact that the claims of policymakers are the basis for identifying whether a state is a 'middle power' or not. What this means is that minor states in the international arena (such as the micro-states of the South Pacific) could very much claim themselves to have 'middle power' status, putting themselves on par with states like Canada and Australia. At the same time, there are cases in which large countries like Japan and India, who sometimes use the term 'middle power', finding refuge in it (Carr, 2014). When it comes to determining how certain states behave, identity is important. A sustainable definition of 'middle power' therefore requires a more stable ground than self-identification by policymakers (Carr, 2014).

As seen above, there is widespread disagreement among scholars over how 'middle power' should be measured or defined. Some scholars criticise the positional approach as it struggles with averages and does not consider a country's strategic position(s) and how it affects its foreign policy behaviour. Some scholars, on the other hand, criticise the behavioural approach as this approach seems less to be a definition, but more of a model that was built around countries that are/were considered to be 'middle powers' in the first place, for example, countries like Canada and Australia. Finally, the identity approach seems to suggest that a country's 'middle power' status will change depending on the

government in power. Therefore, it is clear that a new approach to evaluating 'middle power' is needed. As the scholar Andrew Carr (2014) has pointed out in his study of Australia as a 'middle power', a good place to start is by revisiting our fundamental understanding of the term 'power'. Both the behavioural and identity approach largely avoid or sidestep the question of power in their respective approach, the positional approach, however, was founded on an understanding of power as a resource or property. This, however, according to Carr, is not the only way to think about 'power'. Carr, therefore, proposes an alternative to defining what a 'middle power' is (Carr, 2014).

1.7   Theoretical Framework

With all the debate, contention and criticism levied against each one of the three most popular approaches or benchmarks to determining 'middle power', this paper contends that a new approach or benchmark to determine 'middle power' is needed as the three most popular approaches to evaluating what is a 'middle power' is currently insufficient. To accomplish this, the term 'power' first needs to be understood in a different light, to be redefined as a whole. Instead of using indicators like property to identify 'power', 'power' should instead be understood as a relationship 'where the behaviour of one actor at least partially causes a change in the behaviour of another actor'. As the scholar David Baldwin points out, 'power, therefore, should be viewed as an 'actual or potential relationship between two or more actors (persons, states, groups etc.) rather than a property of any one of them' (Baldwin, 2002). When it comes to undertaking a relational power analysis, power within a given relationship of actors is therefore examined, using references such as scope (the objectives of an attempt to gain influence; influence over which issue), domain (the target of the influence attempt), weight (the quantity of resources), and cost (opportunity cost of forgoing a particular relation) (Guzzini, 1993). Using a relational approach to defining power is especially suited to analysing the distribution of power, such as concepts like 'middle power' due to its focus on power

'within specified issue-area and…specified regions' (Baldwin, 2002). As the scholar Stephan Fruehling points out, the relational approach to power better recognises the difficulty a state faces when it comes to transferring their power from one issue-area to another, or from one resource base to another, in order for it to sustain its different 'strategic personalities' (Fruehling, 2007). The scholar Andrew Carr also points out that a relational approach to defining power can also help explain why great power states might not always emerge victorious over their much weaker military opponents (such as the United States in Vietnam or Afghanistan), and why smaller powers, in certain circumstances, are able to have a substantive impact (Carr, 2014). Furthermore, when it comes to understanding 'middle powers', a contextual driven understanding of the term 'power' is much more suitable, given that a 'middle power's' role is not static and changes depending on how the international system is organised. As Robert Cox has argued: 'the middle-power role is not a fixed universal, but something that has to be rethought continually in the context of the changing state of the international system' (Cox, 1989). Cox' assertion reminds us that any analysis on the term 'middle power' must be heavily influenced by context, as encouraged by the relational understanding of power. Therefore, by comprehending power differently, moving away from the more traditional understanding of power, an alternative approach to defining what a 'middle power' is becomes viable. As noted by Carr, this 'new' definition fits with some of the earliest research on the concept, however, it is more often found in the works of scholars who were not explicitly focused on the study of 'middle powers', but instead sought a hierarchy and an understanding of a state's power in the international system. This approach as Carr points out is best understood as a 'systemic impact approach' (Carr, 2014).

The 'systemic impact' approach can trace its origins back to the 16th century, to the work of the scholar Giovanni Botero. Botero argued that rather than simply examining

and counting the capacity that small, middle or large powers possessed, these powers should instead be examined by what they could achieve with it while defending itself and at the same time affecting the wider political order (Holbraad, 1984). Botero's argument would be echoed centuries later by the scholar Robert Keohane who sought to focus on the impact of states on the international system. A four-level hierarchy was proposed by Keohane in which he defined a 'middle power' as 'a state whose leaders consider that it cannot act alone effectively but may be able to have a systemic impact in a small group or through an international institution' (Keohane, 1969). Although the systemic impact approach sounds somewhat familiar to the behavioural approach, it is in fact not, as it focuses on the effect of these states' cooperative behaviour, rather than their likelihood to engage in cooperative behaviour. Keohane (1969) also included a state's identity in his assessment of 'power', but instead of focussing on labels, he focused once again on a state's capacity and the outcomes achieved by the usage of a state's capacity. Keohane also included 'the caveats that in all cases statesmen's attitudes must have considerable basis in reality'.

The scholar Andrew Carr notes that Keohane's approach shifts the emphasis from understanding 'middle powers' through the possession, tendency or claims to power, and instead defines 'middle powers' by the effects of their power, measured through their 'systemic impact'. A 'systemic impact approach' is useful to scholars' consideration of the term 'middle powers', as it directly captures the significance of a state's 'power' and develops this understanding via comparison with other states, providing a clearer sense of what a 'middle power' state does or might seek to do in the international system. However, it should be also noted that not all state power is evidenced through discernible actions. In fact, the lack of action is also the evidence of capability or effect of a state's power on other states' behaviour. Carr notes that while Keohane's approach focuses more on the common example of power through action, but many strategic scholars have also

highlighted that 'middle powers' can also demonstrate its power by avoiding action (Carr, 2014). The most fundamental means by which 'middle powers' can impact the international system which they are currently embedded in is to preserve their role within the system and to decrease the likelihood of conflict in their immediate area. Therefore, the capacity for self-defence or at least the ability to significantly increase the costs for any great power aggressor is a common theme in scholarly work about 'middle powers'. As the scholar Paul Dibbs (1995) points out, 'one of the defining characteristics of a middle (or medium) power…is that it will seek to have a credible minimum of defence autonomy or self-reliance'. The scholar Hugh White, having similar thoughts with Dibb, claims that a 'middle power' is 'a state that can shape how the international system works to protect its interests, even in the face of competing interests of major powers' (Carr, 2014). Compared to Dibb's claim, White's claim is far more expansive as it includes a 'middle power's' core interests and not just its self-defence. To add to that, White's claim is far more useful when it comes to thinking about the modern uses of military power. In short, 'middle powers' tend to be states with the capacity to evade suffering at the hands of stronger states, though without necessarily being capable of coercing others (Carr, 2014).

By taking into consideration all the points presented above and combining it, a new way to determine what is a 'middle power' is created: a systemic impact approach. This new approach, the systemic impact approach, will seek to determine whether a state is a 'middle power' by examining their ability to alter or affect specific elements of the international system in which they are currently embedded in, and not their average position on a list or their multilateral behaviour or rhetoric. Instead of focusing on a state's intentions when it comes to defining 'middle powers', the systemic impact approach will instead define 'middle powers' through the outcome of their respective actions. As John Ravenhill pointed out, the systemic impact approach, as a definition, provides a predictive

power which the positional approach is unable to provide (Ravenhill, 1998). The scholar Carl Ungerer (2007) also points out that the systemic impact approach to evaluating 'middle power' also avoids falling into the trap of tautology as well as normative idealism, something that is common in the behavioural approach to defining 'middle power'. Carr also notes that the systemic impact approach gives a much more solid ground for judgement, rather than simply accepting the words of governments and policymakers who profess their state is a 'middle power', as the identity approach so often struggles with. Carr notes that by building on Keohane's work, an updated the systemic impact approach could define 'middle powers' as 'states that can protect their core interest and initiate or lead a change in specific aspects of the existing international order' (Carr, 2014).

This new approach to determining 'middle power' in which Carr proposes is comprised of two main elements. The first element of this new approach is that a state must have some reasonable capability to protect its core interests, including through military conflict, though not necessarily defeating a great power, but rather to raise the costs of conflict to the point where the great power would be discouraged to launch an attack on said 'middle power'. The second element of this new approach is that a state should be identified by their capacity to change a specific element of the current international order through formalised structures, such as international treaties and institutions as well as through informal means such as norms or balances of power (Carr, 2014). As we can see, the Carr's systemic impact approach to evaluating 'middle power' is more comprehensive and holistic in nature than the traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power' as it not only looks at its material capabilities (reasonable capability to protect their core interests), but it also looks at a state's ability to change a specific element or elements in the international system with the use of diplomacy. As such, Carr's systemic impact approach to evaluating 'middle power' will therefore be utilised in determining whether South Korea can be considered to be a 'middle power' like the likes

of Australia and Canada, as this approach avoids the pitfalls faced by both the positional and behavioural approach to evaluating 'middle power'. Firstly, South Korea will be evaluated on whether it has sufficient capabilities to protect its core national interest(s) from external threats. Secondly, South Korea will be evaluated on whether it has made an impact on the international system.

1.8   Research Methodology

This research's methodology would use a qualitative case study approach to determine South Korea's 'middle power' status. The qualitative case study approach was chosen as it offers a common-sense boundary (South Korea), as well as offering an in-depth description and analysis of the bounded system (South Korea). The specific type of qualitative case study approach that was used for this study was the historical type case study. This type of case study was selected as it focusses on investigating the development of South Korea and its 'middle power' identity based on historical pieces of evidence (Merriam, 2009).

This research also carried out interviews with several different scholars who are experts in the field of South Korea. Among the scholars interviewed for this study was Sarah Teo from the National University of Singapore, Dr Jae Jeok Park from Hangkuk University and Dr Geetha Govindasamy from University Malaya.

1.9   Scope of Study

The scope of this study discusses the term 'middle power' and its history as well as the approaches scholars have presented over the years to attempt to evaluate 'middle power'. As stated earlier on, despite many different scholars presenting different methods to evaluate 'middle power' over the years, there is still yet to be a universally accepted method to evaluate 'middle power'. To understand why scholars have not accepted any of the traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power', this study will look at the criticisms levied against each of the three traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle

power'. After taking a look at the history of the term 'middle power' and the criticisms levied against the three traditional approaches of evaluating 'middle power', the researcher will take a look at a more comprehensive approach to evaluating 'middle power' before finally utilising this new comprehensive approach to evaluate South Korea's status as a 'middle power'.

1.10   Limitations of Study

In carrying out this research, the researcher attempted to interview several South Korean professors or professors who are experts on South Korea to get their thoughts on whether or not South Korea can be considered a 'middle power'. Unfortunately, the researcher what was not able to elicit a reply from some of the professors who he wished to interview. Additional attempts were made, but the researcher was still unable to get a reply. In addition to that, certain information that was needed for this dissertation could not be obtained due to the sensitive nature of the data as well as the lack of access to it. For example, current data and information on South Korea's military capabilities could not be studied or analysed due to the sensitive nature of the data at the moment. In addition to that, the researcher had some problems with acquiring some sources of information as they were written in the Korean language which the researcher does not speak or read. Attempts were made to acquire translated copies of these sources of information in the researcher's native English. The researcher was able to acquire translated press statements or reports published on official South Korean government ministry websites. However, the researcher was not able to acquire translated copies of academic works published in the Korean language.

In order to ensure the validity of the data and information acquired for the purpose of this research, different sources were referred to, such as journal articles, books, newspaper articles, speeches as well as governmental and international organisation reports.

1.11   Dissertation Outline

The first chapter of this paper will serve as the introduction to the study. There will be eleven sections in the first chapter. The first section of chapter one will be covering the background of this study. Section two, three, four, and five will look at the statement of the problem, the research questions posed, the research objectives of this study, and the significance of the study. The literature review for this study and the study's theoretical framework will be covered in section six and seven respectively. Section eight will cover the methodology used for this research. Section nine, ten, and eleven will cover the scope of the study, the limitations of the study, and the outline for the dissertation.

The second chapter of this paper, which will look at the history of the term 'middle power', is divided into three sections. The first section of chapter two will serve as the introduction of the chapter. The second section covers the history of the term 'middle power' from its origin in the 15th century, to the mid-20th century, and finally to the late 20th century/early 21st century. The third section of part of chapter two will cover the history of the term 'middle power' and its use by subsequent South Korean government and officials. Section three of chapter two will be broken into three sub-sections. Sub-section one will cover the usage of the term 'middle power' during the presidency of President Roo Moo-hyun. Sub-section two will look at the usage of the term 'middle power' during the presidency of President Lee Myung-bak. The third and final sub-section will look at the term 'middle power' during the presidential term of President Park Guen-hye.

Chapter three will evaluate whether South Korea has sufficient capabilities to defend its core national interest. Chapter three is divided into four main sections. The first section will serve as the introduction to chapter three. Section two of the chapter will cover what are South Korea's current core national interest and its defence policies. Section three of the chapter will look at South Korea's defence posture and the efforts to enforce it. The

fourth section of chapter four will look at the modernisation efforts of the South Korean armed forces. Section four is divided into four main sub-sections, covering modernisation in the army, the navy, the air force, and the development of a missile shield system.

The fourth chapter of this paper will be focused on examining whether South Korea has made an impact on the global community/international. Chapter four is divided into five sections. The first section will cover South Korea's impact on the global economy and financial system. The second and third section of the chapter will cover South Korea's impact on global development and global green growth respectively. The last section of chapter four will look at South Korea's contribution to global security.

The fifth and final chapter will be the conclusion for the study. This chapter will review the three traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power', the criticisms levied against the three traditional approaches, and why the 'systemic impact' approach is a more comprehensive approach to evaluating 'middle power'. The final chapter will also contain a summary on whether South Korea can be considered a 'middle power' using the 'systemic impact' approach.

CHAPTER 1: HISTORY OF THE TERM 'MIDDLE POWER' IN WORLD POLITICS AND IN SOUTH KOREA

2.1   Introduction

Although the study of the term 'middle power' gained prominence in the immediate years following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the term 'middle power' can trace its origins back to the 15th century to the European state system. The first use of the term 'middle power' was by the Mayor of Milan. The Mayor of Milan divided the world into three types of states. The first type of state is called the grandissime (empires), which can be equated to be the great powers and superpowers of the current modern international system. The second type of state is called the mezzano (middle powers). The third and last state is called the piccioli (small powers). In defining 'middle power' the Mayor of Milan defined 'middle power' as states that have sufficient strength as well as the authority to stand on their own without the need of help from others (Yalcin, 2012).

2.2   History of the term 'middle power'

The first real political usage of the term came in the early 20th century during the formation of the League of Nations in 1919. At the time, the term 'middle power' was used to differentiate the intermediate powers against the five great powers and that of minor states or secondary powers. Later on, the term was used to try and determine which countries would be able to occupy the four non-permanent seats of the Council of the League of Nations. Among the countries that professed themselves to be middle powers at the time were countries like China, Brazil, Spain and Persia. Each of these self-professed middle powers had a different criterion when it came to justify themselves as a middle power. For example, China and Brazil believed themselves to be middle powers due to their country's size and the population that inhabit it. On the other hand, Spain believes itself to be a middle power due to its leadership role in Latin America. Persia, on

the other hand, believed itself to be a middle power due to its leadership in Islamic countries (Yamasaki, 2009).

With the use of the term 'middle power' and the recognition of the existence of such countries within the framework of the League of Nations, many scholars began to undertake research on the term 'middle power' Among the early scholars to examine and research the terms were scholars like C-Howard-Ellis, C.K. Webster, S. Herbert, and Waldo E. Stephens. According to Holbraad, however, these scholars from the 1920s and 1930s were more interested in 'middle powers' within the framework of the League of Nations, and rarely did these scholars venture into generalising or speculating about the typical behaviour as well as the function of 'middle powers' in the larger international system (Holbraad, 1984).

The term 'middle power' emerged again in the mid-20th century, receiving attention during the negotiations and preparation for the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 in the aftermath of the Second World War. During the negotiation process, countries like Australia, Canada and New Zealand professed themselves to be middle power, just like China, Brazil, Spain and Persia did during the establishment of the League of Nations. Australia, Canada and New Zealand tried to make a distinction between themselves and other smaller or minor states in the hopes of acquiring more power and influence in the United Nations, as they considered themselves to be more powerful and influential in the realm of world politics (Glazebrook, 1947). Australia, Canada, and New Zealand professed that even though 'middle powers' could not compare with the larger countries in total national power, they still had the capability and the will to play as significant a role as the larger countries in different areas and on particular issues (Yamasaki, 2009).

Both Australia and Canada exhibited a remarkable urge to occupy positions next to the great powers of the United Nations at the time (the United States, China, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and France). Australia, setting itself up as a middle power

by being the representative and regional leader of the Pacific region suggested the adoption of a regional principle of representation. To add to that, Australia at the same time also attempted to reduce the veto rights held by the great powers and to enlarge the roles and rights of the lesser powers within the framework of the United Nations (Holbraad, 1984). At the same time, the Canadian government also attempted to push through for representation based on functional principles. Canada stated that representation within the United Nations' Security Council, as well as other Councils, should be based on functional bases, admitting members based on their ability to make the greatest contribution to a particular area or subject regardless of its size.

Despite their robust campaign for official recognition as 'middle powers', both Australia and Canada failed to be officially recognised as 'middle power' within the framework of the United Nations, as the great powers refused to create official positions in the United Nations' structure for the middle powers (Yamasaki, 2009). Although not officially recognised by the United Nations or given any special positions within the framework of the United Nations, these self-professed 'middle powers' played active roles in various committees and Councils when the body was first established. For example, the members of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) were countries like Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and Poland (Glazebrook, 1947).

Australia and Canada failed to be officially recognised as a middle power for three reasons. The first reason was that the great powers refused to create official positions in the United Nations' structure for the 'middle powers'. Even though France had occasionally supported Australia in its quest to be officially recognised as a 'middle power' within the framework of the United Nations, the great powers were nonetheless consistently against creating a special position within the United Nations. According to Holbraad, the reason as to why the great powers refused to officially recognise countries like Australia and Canada was due to the fear that if 'middle powers' were officially given

recognition and special positions, their rights and dominance within the group will be weakened (Holbraad,1984). The second reason as to why the middle powers were not officially recognised in the United Nation's structure was because the self-professed 'middle powers' themselves did not form a coalition or united front to press their claims (Glazebrook, 1947). Despite Australia and Canada both seeking official recognition as a 'middle power' by the United Nations, both countries did not suggest a similar principle when classifying themselves as a 'middle power'. Instead, both suggested different principles when classifying themselves as a 'middle power' (Glazebrook, 1947). And the third and final reason as to why self-professed 'middle powers' were not officially recognised in the United Nation's framework was due to the lack of a shared definition to what a 'middle power' actually is. The lack of a shared definition for the term 'middle power' made it difficult to acknowledge the existence of the group of countries that professed themselves to be middle powers (Yamasaki, 2009). The third and last point would continue to be a thorn to scholars who are attempting to define what a 'middle power' is, as currently there is still no clear definition to the term or method to evaluate it.

With the start of the Cold War, the term 'middle power' rose to prominence again. It was during the Cold War where the term 'middle power' became more fluid and flexible, due in part to the United Nations not officially recognising any 'middle power' country. The advent of the Cold War, bloc politics as well as a stagnating United Nations made the influence of the 'middle powers within the framework of the United Nations less important. It was also during the time of the Cold War where self-professed 'middle powers' began to not only show their presence in the United Nations but in other international activities as well (Yamasaki, 2009).

The start of the Cold War also saw the usage of the term 'middle power' by politicians becoming varied. Before the Cold War, politicians who sought 'middle power' status for

their countries focussed on defining what a 'middle power' was by basing it off their country's population, economic resilience, military strength, and geographical size in addition to the efforts that their respective countries made in the war effort. During the Cold War, however, the definition of what constituted a 'middle power' slowly shifted away from the above-mentioned parameters. Among the new parameters used in this new definition was whether a country had the ability as well as the willingness to mediate in conflicts, a country's military capabilities, the size of its territory and finally, the size of its population (Yamasaki, 2009).

It was during the time of the Cold War, where Canada became more prominent in the international community, taking up roles which would later on become synonymous with 'middle power' behaviour. Among the roles, Canada took during this time was that of a mediator and peacekeeper. Canada's role as a mediator was crucial in preventing a war between the United Kingdom, France, Egypt, and Israel over the Suez Canal in 1956. In addition to that, Canada also established the basis for the Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) during the Suez Canal Crisis. Utilising Canada's diplomatic successes, Canadian politicians and scholars soon classified and defined Canada as a 'middle power' due to its international mediation efforts. Soon, politicians from other countries began to use the term 'middle power' when classifying their own country in various contexts as well as those referring to international mediational activities or contributions to PKO. It was also during the time of the Cold War where new 'middle power' countries began to emerge. Countries like India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sweden, and Yugoslavia are some examples of new 'middle powers' emerging as a result of it becoming independent, developing economically, or undertaking a shift in its policy direction (Yamasaki, 2009).

Finally, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, which brought an end to the Cold War, the term 'middle power' changed yet again. The collapse of Western and Soviet bloc politics and the bipolar international political system made many policymakers and

scholars think that the arena of international politics would change drastically. Policymakers and scholars opined that with the collapse of the international bipolar system and the cooling of tensions between superpowers, there would be more room for multi-lateral cooperation and mediation- in which the great powers would welcome the assistance of middle powers in international mediation. In addition to that, these scholars and policymakers also believed that there would be more opportunities for 'middle powers' to engage in wider policy areas with great powers. An example of this optimistic outlook can be seen in a statement made by a Canadian diplomat who stated that superpowers are more likely to welcome middle power mediation in a world where conditions have changed drastically over a short time (Yamsaki, 2009). Although many countries began to seek new roles in the new post-Cold War world, Canada and Australia, long-time self-professed 'middle powers' continued applying the term 'middle power' to describe their role in the immediate post-Cold War world. Canada's Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, at the end of the First Gulf War, stated that Canada had the will as well as the capability to protect the international legal system, revitalise the United Nations, as well as to improve the position of countries who were less-equipped or capable of helping themselves (Cooper, 1997). It was also during this post-Cold War era where new 'middle powers' emerged. One such country that emerged as a 'middle power' during this time was South Africa. It is said that South Africa emerged as a 'middle power' due in part to its mediating and bridging roles in international society (Yamasaki, 2009).

It was during this post-Cold War era where the term 'middle power' obtained other political meanings. During this time, the term 'middle power' appeared in the contexts of 'soft' security issues. Examples of 'soft' security issues include human rights, protection of the environment, prevention of conflict and human security. These 'soft' security issues began to receive more international attention in addition to 'hard' security in the post-Cold War World. As many self-professed 'middle power' had already been

advocating 'soft' security issues even during the height of the Cold War, addressing these new issues became one of the methods in which 'middle powers' from countries with a 'moral' foreign policy (Kitchen, 2002).

2.3   History of the term 'middle power' in South Korea

South Korea is one of two countries located on the Korean Peninsula. Historically, the Korean Peninsula has been wedged between Imperial China and Imperial Japan, with both powers trying to exercise its influence on the Peninsula and its people. In the early 20th century, the Korean Peninsula which was under the rule of the Choson Dynasty was annexed by Japan, making it a colony. With the surrender of Imperial Japan to Allied Forces in 1945, Japanese annexation of the Korean Peninsula came to an end. With the end of the Japanese annexation of the Korean Peninsula, Korea regained its independence. However, unified Korean independence was not to last, as the United States State Department divided the Korean Peninsula along the 38th Parallel Line into North and South Korea. In the south, the Republic of Korea, a democratic-style government was set up under the leadership of President Syngman Rhee. In the North, the Democratic People's Republic Korea, a communist-style government was set up by Kim Il-Sung. Tensions between the two countries would eventually lead to the Korean War which lasted between 1950 and 1953. During the Korean War, UN troops fought alongside South Korean troops to defend and repel North Korean and later Chinese troops from South Korea. The Korean War ended in 1953 after an armistice was signed between South Korea and North Korea, permanently separating the two countries along the 38th parallel (Robinson, 2007).

The political landscape in South Korea fluctuated in the years following the Korean War. In 1961, General Park Chung-hee took over leadership of the country after a bloodless coup. During his reign, President Park expanded South Korea's economy, achieving rapid economic growth and restoring South Korea's economy which was

destroyed by the Korean War. After the assassination of President Park by the head of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) in 1979, South Korea entered a time of political uncertainty. In 1980, just a year after Park's assassination, General Chun Doo Hwan along with generals Roh Tae Woo and Chong Hoyong carried out a bloody internal coup that placed the entire South Korean military under their command. General Chun Doo Hwan soon became the President of South Korea despite mass protest and demonstrations. President Chun's rule over South Korea would ultimately be tainted by the Kwangju massacre which took place on May 1980. The Kwangju Massacre saw to the death of 200 South Korean civilians. Despite efforts to quell the ever-increasing opposition and vocal street demonstrations, Chun was not successful, and the voices of the opposition swelled even more. The Summer Olympics in Seoul in 1988 played a vital role in bringing together the various opposition forces against Chun's rule. In the summer of 1987, fighting in the streets was the worst since the assassination of President Park. Although students were at the forefront of the demonstrations, it was clear that more ordinary citizens were joining the demonstrations. To add to that, demonstrations had spread to every city in South Korea. Demonstrations were also drawing large numbers of people. The United States seeing the scope of the demonstrations, sent Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs Gaston Seigur to warn President Chun and his government that if they were to use military force against the demonstrators, there would be dire consequences in South Korea-United States relations. On the 29th of June 1987, as a result of citizen participation, the lack of US support, and the sheer size of demonstrations, President Chun's handpicked successor, Roh Tae Woo promised a new election law, press freedoms, local elections of mayors and governors, restoration of civil rights, and the introduction of bold new 'social reforms'. Two days after Roh Tae Woo's announcement, President Chun accepted the proposal and the demonstrations ended. With President Chun

accepting Roh Tae Woo's proposal, South Korea's government transitioned from an authoritarian regime to a more open pluralist democracy (Robinson, 2007).

With the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy, South Korea's policy shifted drastically. It was during this drastic shift where the term 'middle power' became more prominent in the minds of South Korean policy and decision-makers, thereby becoming ever more present in the South Korean diplomatic narrative. As such, the term 'middle power' has been used by successive South Korean governments as the basis for their foreign policy vision and endeavours, using it as it sought to present itself as a newly advanced Asian country.

2.3.1   The term 'middle power' during the presidency of Roh Moo-hyun

The first time South Korea ever expressed its 'middle power' aspirations occurred during the presidency of President Roh Moo-hyun (2003-2008). Although the term 'middle power' was not used explicitly during the Roh administration, the initiatives and policies that were undertaken by the Roh administration at the time displayed 'middle power' characteristics. During the Roh administration, the Northeast Asian Initiative was started with the goal to project South Korea's pivotal role as a 'balancer' or 'hub' in the Northeast Asian region. The Roh administration hoped that the Northeast Asian Initiative would facilitate not only regional cooperation in the realm of economics in the Northeast Asian region but security as well. To add to that, President Roh also envisioned South Korea to be a country which would serve not only a financial hub for the region but a transportation hub as well, capitalising on South Korea's key and strategic geographical location in the Northeast Asian region. President Roh's economic vision for South Korea was closely linked to a political desire to transform South Korea to be an influential actor at the centre of northeast Asian affairs and no longer a minor player on the periphery of Northeast Asian politics (Kim, 2016). The expression of South Korea's 'middle power' aspirations during President Roh's time, especially its role as a 'balancer', however, had

serious political repercussions and implications for South Korea, both domestically and internationally. Many in the *Dongmaenpa*, the alliance faction, was concerned that with South Korea taking this new position as a 'balancer' in the Northeast Asian region, the longstanding traditional alliance that South Korea has with the United States will be hollowed out, negatively affecting South Korea's national interest. The concern of the alliance faction was indeed warranted, as diplomatic relations between South Korea and the United States were highly strained during Roh's presidency. The straining of relations between the United States and South Korea was due in part to President George W. Bush being suspicious and sceptical of South Korea's intention to play a leading role in establishing a Northeast Asian economic and security community. This is despite South Korea's attempt to frame its role as a balancer in relation to that of the Sino-Japanese rivalry and not Sino-American rivalry, which was what America feared would happen. Despite South Korea's efforts to assuage the United States' fear and suspicion, American policy and decision-makers at the time nevertheless interpreted South Korea's desire to be a 'balancer' in the Northeast Asian region as a move to distance itself from the United States (Kim, 2016). In addition to that, relations between South Korea and the United States were further strained due to the differing approaches both countries had taken to try and resolve the North Korean issue. President Roh believed that South Korea played a key and vital role in resolving the crisis with North Korea. As such, President Roh emphasised the need for South Korea to constantly engage with North Korea through the use of economic cooperation and the dispensing of humanitarian aid that is much needed by North Korea. On the other hand, the United States believed that a hard-line approach to North Korea was the only method to resolve the North Korean crisis (Kim, 2016). In fact, President George W. Bush labelled North Korea to be part of the Axis of Evil in his 2002 State of the Union address, placing North Korea in the same league as countries like Iran and Iraq (Washington Post, 2002). The differences in approach on how to resolve the

North Korean crisis remains a considerable cause of tension between Seoul and Washington (Kim, 2016).

The Roh administration's 'middle power' aspiration also sharply divided conservatives and progressives in the country. While the progressives in the country lauded Roh's effort to seek out a more independent foreign policy that would lessen South Korea's dependence on the United States. Conservatives on the other hand highly criticised Roh and his administration for being 'naïve' and 'anti-American'', creating unnecessary friction in the relationship that South Korea shares with the United States. Domestic tensions were also further aggravated during Roh's presidency when Roh proposed the transfer of wartime operational control (OPCON) of the South Korean armed forces from the United States back to South Korea (Kim, 2016). President Roh's 'middle power' aspirations clearly showed the limitations as well as challenges present when it comes to flexing South Korea's 'middle power' in the Northeast Asian region, especially if it involves seeking an independent foreign policy stance or direction from the United States.

2.3.2 The term 'middle power' during the presidency of Lee Myung-bak

The term 'middle power' took a more explicit form during the presidency of President Lee Myung-bak, President Roh Moo-hyun's successor. It was here where South Korea first expressed itself to be a 'middle power'. The term 'middle power' was used openly by President Lee to promote his administration's overarching slogan of 'Global Korea', a concept of 'middle power' which was used to support South Korea's aspiration to increase its international clout by improving its networking capacity as well as convening powers (Watson, 2011). As such, under the umbrella of 'Global Korea', the Lee administration stressed the functional aspects of 'middle power' diplomacy to legitimise South Korea's claim to the usage of the term 'middle power'. In line with President Lee's Global Korea policy, a set of 'niche diplomacy' endeavours were focused on by South

Korea at the time. These 'niche diplomacy' endeavours included issues relating to global development, global green growth, and global security. South Korea managed to pursue these 'niche diplomacy' endeavours by effectively leveraging on its own developmental experiences, technological advancement, and growing economic influence undertook that particular form of 'niche diplomacy' (Kim, 2016). President Lee during this time also presented the narrative that South Korea, as a 'middle power' was able to function as a diplomatic bridge or link between the developed countries and the developing countries (Kim, 2016).

Although the Lee administration was more explicit in the use of the term 'middle power', when compared to the previous Roh administration, the Lee administration made few attempts to apply a 'middle power' vision in regional security issues. Unlike the Roh administration, the Lee administration took a largely conformist attitude towards the United States-led global and regional order (Snyder, 2015). At the same time, the Lee administration also sought to repair the strained relations South Korea had with the United States due to the Roh administration by strengthening South Korea's strategic ties with the United States as a means of countering the increasing military tensions with North Korea. Learning from the mistakes of his predecessor, the Lee administration, unlike the Roh administration, focused more on global, non-security issues when it comes to 'middle powers', enabling its 'middle power' diplomacy to avoid any significant distancing of South Korea from the United States (Kim, 2016). As such, South Korea's 'middle power' initiatives took a global outlook, looking out and away from the Northeast Asian region to flex its 'middle power' muscles.

2.3.3   The term 'middle power' during the presidency of Park Guen-hye

When President Park Guen-hye came into power, she was reluctant to label South Korea as a 'middle power' unlike her predecessor, President Lee Myung-bak who used the term explicitly to label South Korea's diplomatic posture and identity. During her

presidency, President Park based her administration's foreign policy on three pillars within an overarching philosophy of 'Trustpolitik'. These pillars consist of the Trust-building Process on the Korean Peninsula, the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative, and middle-power diplomacy. The use of the term 'middle power' during the Park administration has also been confined to only Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia (MIKTA)-related activities as well as international development programs, areas that are outside of South Korea's security roles in the Northeast Asian region (Kim, 2016). There are several reasons as to why the 'middle power' narrative under President Park has declined. Firstly, President Park and her administration did not want to 'recycle' the term, as the term 'middle power' was intricately connected to the previous Lee administration. Another reason as to why the usage of the term 'middle power' declined during the Park presidency was due to more fundamental and politically sensitive concerns, associated with the necessity to restore as well as enhance South Korea's relationship with China. This is because the previous Lee administration had not pursued a closer relationship with China, letting relations cool even though bilateral trade relations between South Korea and China increased not only in volume but in-depth as well. The reason as to why the Park administration would want a warmer and closer relationship with China is due to China's inherent strategic value in pressuring North Korea to denuclearise and reach a détente (Kim, 2016).

The Park administration's caution over the usage of the term 'middle power' is a reflection of the fear it has of provoking apprehension and/or misunderstanding in the United States and China. President Park was careful to not let South Korea's warming relations with China to be interpreted as a distancing of South Korea from its longstanding alliance with the United States, as policymakers have become acutely aware of the risks in doing so as exemplified by the straining of relations caused as a result of the Roh administration's 'northeast Asian balances agenda'. Concurrently, South Korea was wary

of using terms such as 'tilt' towards China or 'balancing' diplomacy, as it did not want to create an unrealistic expectation in China that South Korea will review its security alignment with the United States (Kim, 2016).

Despite the Park administration's reluctance to explicitly employ the term 'middle power', especially when it comes to regional engagements, public debates within South Korea and abroad have used terminology to situate South Korea in the 'middle' position between China and the United States. In fact, South Korea has increasingly become situated in the 'middle' of the escalating rivalry between China and the United States, forcing the South Korean government to make a series of difficult decisions which involve the two rival superpowers. For example, during the South Korea-US Summit in 2015, both sides had to work hard to assuage each other of the strength of their alliance in light of South Korea ascending to the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the attendance of President Park to China's World War Two Victory Day ceremony. While the explicit and official use of the term 'middle power' to label South Korea has been significantly downplayed in the Park administration in relations to the Lee administration, 'middle power' concepts such as 'balancing' and 'equidistance' has continued to be featured in media discussions as well as scholarly analysis, especially in regards to China and the United States (Kim, 2016).

From the examples above, we can see that the term 'middle power' has different connotations for different administrations. For the Roh administration, the term 'middle power' was used to try and seek out an independent foreign policy for South Korea in the Northeast Asian region. In the Lee administration, the term 'middle power' was used to increase South Korea's clout in the international community, focussing on global issues rather than regional ones. Finally, in the Park administration, the term 'middle power' was downplayed significantly with the exception of MIKTA related activities and international development programs. This was done to risk provoking apprehension or

misunderstanding between the United States and China. With the recent election of President Moon Jae-in into office, replacing President Park Guen-hye, only time will tell whether or not he will follow the footsteps of the Roh administration, the Lee administration or the Park administration. Or perhaps, President Moon might blaze his own path when it comes to the usage of the term 'middle power' in the context of South Korea.

CHAPTER 2: EVALUATING SOUTH KOREA'S ABILITY TO DEFEND ITS CORE NATIONAL INTEREST

3.1 Introduction

Evaluating South Korea's status as a 'middle power' using the three most popular and traditional methods of evaluating 'middle power' proves that South Korea is, in fact, a 'middle power'. Firstly, by using the positional approach for evaluating 'middle power', South Korea can be considered a 'middle power'. According to the World Bank in 2017, South Korea's GDP amounted to 1,411,246 million US dollars. Based on its 2017 GDP, South Korea's economy is ranked 11th in the world, ahead of traditional middle powers like Australia and the Scandinavian countries, but behind other traditional middle powers like Canada and Japan in addition to the great powers like China and the United States (World Bank, 2017). As stated in chapter one, countries that are found within the first 20 countries in the international system, with the exception of the first two countries, can be considered to be 'middle powers' if the positional approach to evaluating 'middle power' is utilised. South Korea's GDP ranking of 11th in the world therefore based on the positional approach can be making South Korea a 'middle power'. In terms of military expenditure, South Korea has spent a total of 36.8 billion dollars in the year 2016 alone, ranking South Korea the 10th out of the top 15th countries in the world in terms of military expenditure (Tian, Fleurant, Wezeman, Wezeman; 2017). In the Asian region itself, South Korea's military expenditure is ranked the 4th largest, coming behind countries like The People's Republic of China, India and Japan (Beraud-Sudreau, 2017). Based on the figures presented above, South Korea, in terms of its material capabilities (the economy, and military resources) has managed to fulfil the criteria needed to be considered a middle power using the positional/hierarchical approach. However, having sufficient material capabilities to be categorised as a 'middle power' does not equate to a country actually a 'middle power'.

Secondly, by utilising the behavioural approach to determining 'middle power', South Korea can also be considered to be a 'middle power'. South Korea undertakes policies that some scholars state is synonymous with 'middle power' behaviour. For example, South Korea carries out conflict mediation and bridge building, peacekeeping and donating to international development aid.

Third and lastly, by using the identity approach for evaluating 'middle power', South Korea can be considered to be a 'middle power'. Successive South Korean presidents and policymakers have called South Korea a 'middle power'. Professor Jae Jeok Park from Hankuk University points out in an interview carried out with him that the South Korea people themselves also consider South Korea to be a 'middle power' (Jae Jeok Park, E-mail interview, February 2018). Statistics taken in 2010 by the East Asian Institute (EAI) indicate that 76.8 per cent of South Koreans perceives South Korea as a 'middle power' as opposed to 19.9 per cent of respondents who perceives South Korea to be a 'weak power' (Lee, 2012). South Korea's self-identification as a 'middle power' is further cemented by outside parties both implicitly and explicitly. South Korea is explicitly recognised by other 'middle powers' like Mexico, Indonesia, Turkey, and Australia by being a part of MIKTA, a collection of 'middle powers' (Patrick and Feng, 2018). Countries like Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam have also recognised that South Korea is a 'middle power' (Teo, Singh, and Tan; 2013).

By applying the three traditional approaches individually to evaluating 'middle power', South Korea can be clearly considered to be a 'middle power'. However, as stated earlier, due to the limitations of the three traditional approaches of evaluating 'middle power' and the criticisms levied against them by scholars, a more holistic approach is needed in evaluating South Korea's 'middle power' status is needed in order to cement its status as an actual 'middle power'. The aim of this chapter is to evaluate South Korea's 'middle power' status using the first criteria of the systemic impact approach to evaluating

'middle powers', which evaluates whether a country has reasonable capabilities to protect its core national interest(s). This chapter, therefore, will evaluate South Korea's current military capabilities and whether it is sufficient or reasonable enough to protect its core national interest from any external threat or threats, and the efforts taken by the South Korean government to modernise its armed forces.

3.2 South Korea's Core National Interest and Defence Policy

In a 2016 Defence White Paper released by the Ministry of National Defence of South Korea, the South Korean government highlighted three national security objectives or core interests. The first national security objective highlighted by the South Korean government is the protection of the nation and its people as well as the people's property from external military threats or attacks. The first national security objective of South Korea stems primarily from the constant military threats and provocations made by its estranged neighbour, North Korea, to the people of South Korea. The second national security objective highlighted by the South Korean government has to do with normalising South Korea's relationship with North Korea in order to pave the way for potential reunification in the future. To accomplish the goal of normalisation of relationship with North Korea, which could potentially lead to reunification in the future, the South Korean government will endeavour to foster cooperation with neighbouring countries in the region and the global community to lay the foundation to North Korea eventually abandoning its nuclear and ballistic missile program. The third and last national security objective highlighted by South Korean government has to do with the South Korea's promotion of cooperation within the Northeast Asian region and South Korea's contribution to world peace and prosperity (Ministry of National Defence, 2016).

For this paper, only the first security objective of South Korean government will be examined as it has to do with the very survival of the state itself, and looks purely at South

Korea's military capabilities and whether it has the ability to defend the country from external threats.

3.3   South Korea's Defence Posture

South Korea is located in one of the most volatile regions in the world, as such, it has one of the highest defence spendings in the region. As stated earlier in this chapter, South Korea has spent a total of 36.8 billion dollars in the year 2016, ranking them 10th out of the top 15th countries in the world in terms of total military expenditure (Tian, Fleurant, Wezeman, Wezeman; 2017). Within the Asian region itself, South Korea's military expenditure ranks the 4th largest, coming behind countries like The People's Republic of China, India and Japan (Beraud-Sudreau, 2017). The armed forces of South Korea are divided into three branches: the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. The South Korean Army currently consists of approximately 490,000 troops, 2400 main battle tanks (MBTs), 2700 armoured fighting vehicles, 5900 field artillery pieces/ MLRS, 60 guided weapon batteries and 600 assault helicopters. The Navy, on the other hand, consists of approximately 70,000 troops, 10 surface combatants, 10 amphibious ships, 10 mine warfare ships, 10 submarines and 70 aircraft capable of naval operations. Finally, the Air Force consists of approximately 65,000 troops, 410 aircraft capable of combat operations, 30 surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, 50 transport aircraft, 180 training aircraft and 30 helicopters (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). In addition to South Korea's own armed forces, South Korea also has a longstanding defence alliance with the United States. The United States Force Korea (USFK) has been an integral part of South Korea's defence for decades, serving as a deterrence to its belligerent neighbour, North Korea. Currently, the USFK has approximately 28,500 troops, 90 fighter aircraft, 20 assault helicopters, 50 tanks, 130 armoured vehicles, 10 field artillery pieces, 40 Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), and 60 Patriot Missile Batteries. In addition to the USFK, the United States will also deploy an augmentation force of 690,000 ground, naval and air

force troops, 160 vessels and 2000 aircraft to the Korean peninsula in the event of a full-scale war to support the South Korean military as per the Mutual Defence Treaty signed between the two countries (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). But what if South Korea were to act alone, without its long-standing military alliance with the United States? What if South Korea did not have access to the hardware and assets provided by the United States military through its military alliance? Does South Korea have sufficient capacity to challenge or raise the costs if North Korea challenged its core interest?

As stated earlier on, the first tenet of South Korea's National Defence Policy is the establishment of a robust national defence posture. In light of the increasing threat posed by North Korea, the South Korean military has taken steps to enhance its command and unit structure to maximise its capacity for joint and combined operations in order to create a more robust national defence posture. The South Korean Joint Chief of Staff (JCS) has begun to develop a task performance system which focuses on close mutual support and integration among the three branches of the South Korean armed forces: the army, the navy and the air force. The enhancing of the organisational structure and functions of the South Korean military and its capabilities were done in the hopes that the warfighting capabilities of the South Korean military will be enhanced by strengthening the jointness between the three separate branches of the military. In addition to that, the enhancing of the South Korean military organisational structure and its functions are also in line with its in preparation for the eventual transfer of wartime operational control (OPCON) from the United States to South Korea (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2017). With the increased jointness and integration among the three branches of the armed forces, there is a high chance that any threat to South Korea's security would be dealt with quickly and efficiently. It is also clear from this that South Korea recognizes the

importance of having a sold and well-organised organisational structure in the event that the United States transfer wartime operational control (OPCON) back to South Korea.

In addition to enhancing its command and unit structure to maximise its capacity for joint and combined operations, the South Korean military has also begun expanding the strength and efficiency of its current capabilities to counter the growing North Korean threat. Firstly, the South Korean army has begun to maximise its current capabilities through the effective deployment of its assets. The South Korean army has also begun to continuously reinforce its intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, which includes the usage of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that are capable of carrying out integrated offensive, full-battlefield operations, as well as manoeuvre and strike forces such as K-2 battle tanks, K-21 infantry fighting vehicles and attack helicopters as well as counter-fire operations capabilities including the multiple rocket launch system. In addition to that, the South Korean army will also be reinforced by the introduction of the 230-mm Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), mid-size tactical vehicles, Korea Utility Helicopters (KUH), K2 tanks as well as K-9 self-propelled guns and light-armed helicopters, strengthening the army's manoeuvre and strike capabilities (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). Secondly, the South Korean Navy has begun to make plans to increase its ability to effectively respond to various types of surface, underwater and airborne threats posed by its enemy, North Korea. And to do this, the South Korean Navy has made plans to acquire next-generation submarines (KS-III), Aegis-class destroyers, KDXX destroyers, FFX frigates, patrol killer mediums, surface patrol aircraft and maritime operations helicopters for integrated deployment. In addition to acquiring new military assets, the South Korean Navy will also develop the Marine Corps to be a force that is capable of carrying out a diverse range of missions, which includes multi-dimensional high-speed amphibious operations and the defence of strategic islands (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016).

Third and lastly, the South Korean Air Force has recently re-organised its Southern and Northern Commands into the Air Combat Command and the Air Mobility and Reconnaissance Command respectively, creating a more centralised control of air operations. In addition to that, the South Korean Air Force will also begin to integrate next-generation F-X fighters and Korean indigenous fighters (KF-X) into force structures to achieve decisive air superiority in the event of hostilities. At the same time, large-size transport and aerial refuelling tankers will be introduced to strengthen the South Korean's Air Force's long-range operational capabilities (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). The acquisition of these advanced military assets by the South Korean military will no doubt increase South Korea's ability to respond to any hostile threat posed to it, thereby protecting its core national interests.

Maintaining a readiness posture against any potential provocation is another step the South Korean military has taken to protect its core national interest. South Korea is currently establishing a surveillance and early warning system to detect signs of military provocations. Although this early warning system is aimed primarily at North Korea, it can be argued that the very same system can be used to detect for signs of military provocation from South Korea's other neighbours, allowing South Korea to prepare, respond and counter a specific threat. To detect for early signs of provocation by North Korea and to ensure the speedy transmission of any detected data, the South Korean military operates the South Korean-United States combined information assets which include signal and imagery assets and satellites. Any signs of provocations, which includes the launching of long-range ballistic missiles and nuclear tests are then jointly evaluated and analysed by South Korea and the United States before being shared with the appropriate operational units. To further enhance its ability to detect for the earliest signs of North Korean provocations, the South Korean military also plans to continuously expand its independent surveillance capabilities by acquiring mid-to high-level altitude

reconnaissance UAVs, multi-purpose satellites and military reconnaissance satellites (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). The acquisition of these surveillance assets would not only allow South Korea to detect early signs of provocation from North Korea, but it also can be reasoned that the very same system can be used to detect threats from other powers which surrounds it, allowing South Korea to better prepare and respond to a threat to its core national interest.

In addition to establishing surveillance and early warning systems to detect signs of possible military provocations, the South Korean government has also taken other steps to bolster its readiness posture against land, sea and airspace infiltration to protect its core national interest. Despite agreeing to the Northern Limit Line (NLL), a maritime borderline which clearly demarcated South Korean waters and North Korean waters, through the signing of the Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression and Exchanges and Cooperation in 1991 and the Protocol on the Implementation and Observance of Chapter 2, Nonaggression in 1992, North Korea continues to provoke South Korea in the northern waters of the West Sea and in waters surrounding the north-western islands. To adequately prepare for potential artillery bombardments or raids by North Korean forces towards the five north-western islands, the South Korean military has enhanced its strike capabilities by deploying additional missile batteries, helicopters capable of naval operations, and long-range-air-to-surface missiles. To add to that, the South Korean military has also fortified the five north-western islands by building additional fortifications in order to prepare for a potential North Korean invasion.

Implementing realistic as well as scientific training for the armed forces is another strategy the South Korean Ministry of National Defence is utilising in order to further enhance the country's defence posture. It is estimated that the North Korean armed forces have more than 1.1 million active serving personnel (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018) and approximately 7.62 million personnel in reserve which can be mobilised during times

of war (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). This is in stark contrast with the South Korean armed forces which only has a total of 625,000 active personnel and 2,750,000 reserve personnel (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). With the South Korean armed forces outnumbered at a ratio of almost 2:1 in terms of active personnel and 3:1 in reserve personnel by their North Korean counterparts, the South Korean government, therefore, needs to ensure that their personnel have a qualitative advantage over the North who has a quantitative advantage. To ensure that the South Korean armed forces have a qualitative advantage over the North, the Ministry of National Defence of South Korea carries out realistic combat training, focussing on areas like mental training, firing, physical training and combat abilities in order to enhance the armed forces combat operation abilities. In addition to realistic combat training, scientific training is also carried out concurrently by the armed forces. Personnel undergoing scientific training are trained to use advanced technologies like the multiple integrated laser engagement system (MILES), data communications and satellites during combat situations (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). All branches of the South Korean military undergo realistic and scientific training in order to enhance their combat effectiveness and abilities if a full-scale war were to break-out between South Korea and North Korea.

The Army of South Korea carries out realistic training to prepare their soldiers to be able to respond to any type of attack. To accomplish this objective, the Army is focussing on realistic training that reflects the actual conditions on the battlefield. Currently, the Army is intensifying the training of its soldiers in night-time firing and long-range firing of mortars and artillery to increase their effectiveness and efficiency in real combat situations. To improve the command abilities of Army command officers, the South Korean Army has initiated the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) which utilises computer simulation techniques to generate an environment similar to that of an actual battlefield, allowing command officers to further develop their command abilities and

increase their efficiency in commanding and directing troops in the event of a full-scale war. Newly-enlisted soldiers, as well as reservist, also undergo simulator-based training in order to increase their effectiveness in combat. Simulator training for newly-enlisted soldiers and reservists consists of two components: firing and control training and tactical training. By utilising simulation technology, newly-enlisted soldiers and reservists can familiarise themselves in the use of unfamiliar combat equipment and learn about operating and targeting procedures. Training using simulator technology has enabled newly-enlisted soldiers and reservists to experience the endless possible situations that they may experience in actual combat, enhancing their abilities to efficiently respond to any possible combat scenario encountered (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). Intensive realistic training, as well as scientific training during peacetime, will undoubtedly produce highly effective and efficient South Korean soldiers and command officers who will be able to defend South Korea from any external threat.

In the South Korean Navy, realistic training is conducted to familiarise its personnel with the East, West, and South Seas, which could be potential battlefields in the event of a full-scale war with North Korea. A well trained South Korean Navy that is combat effective and is capable of responding to any threat efficiently and decisively is of great importance to South Korea. This is because it is estimated that the North Korean Navy has approximately 430 surface combatants, 240 amphibious vessels, 20 minesweepers, 40 auxiliary vessels and 70 submarines. This is in contrast with the smaller South Korean Navy which only has approximately 110 surface combatants, 10 amphibious vessels, 10 mine warfare vessels, 20 auxiliary vessels and 10 submarines. With the North Korean Navy having such a large quantitative advantage over the South Korean Navy, the Ministry of National Defence of South Korea has to ensure that South Korean Navy personnel are highly trained in order to make up for the quantitative disadvantage. Realistic training carried out by the Navy consists of component training and mission-

based training. Component training is carried out by the Navy in accordance to the features of a specific combat environment. Component training includes anti-surface warfare training, anti-submarine warfare training, anti-air training, anti-amphibious training and anti-ballistic training. Mission-based training is specialised training which covers manoeuvre training, northwestern island defence training, joint response training to counter local provocations in waters surrounding the NLL, and naval interdiction training. Navy assets involved in mission-based training include advanced surface combatants, submarines, amphibious vessels, naval patrol aircraft, naval operations and utility helicopters (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). The South Korean Navy also carries out cruise training for 90-120 days for senior students of its Navy Academy in order to provide them with a realistic experience at sea. To enhance the Navy's ability to carry out realistic training, the Navy is constructing the Integrated Maritime Tactical Training Ground and the Guided-Weapon Tactical Simulation Centre. The Integrated Maritime Tactical Training Ground and the Guided-Weapon Tactical Simulation Centre will both utilise state-of-the-art simulation technology to reflect the changes in naval weapon systems. In addition to the construction of the Integrated Maritime Tactical Training Ground and the Guided-Weapon Tactical Simulation Centre, the Navy has also planned to build a modern standard training centre which can produce an environment similar to an actual vessel, allowing the Navy to carry out realistic naval ship damage control training. The construction of this modern standard training centre by the Navy will enhance the ability of ship personnel to manage all types of damage to a vessel, enabling a ship to remain combat effective during combat operations even if damaged by an enemy attack (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). Realistic training carried out by the Navy is important as it provides the Navy's personnel with the training needed to effectively and efficiently defend South Korean waters from any hostile intrusions or attacks.

The South Korean Air Force is undertaking realistic training of its personnel in order to create elite warriors who are able to swiftly respond to any type of threat posed to South Korea. According to the Ministry of National Defence of South Korea, the North Korean Air Force has approximately 810 combat aircraft, in contrast, the South Korean Air Force only has approximately 410 combat aircraft. In light of this 2:1 advantage the North Korean Air Force has over its own Air Force, the South Korean Air Force, therefore, needs to ensure that its pilots are able to outperform their North Korean counterparts. Realistic training in the South Korean Air Force includes combat training, local provocation readiness training, wartime operations readiness training, and specialised mission-based training. In order to enhance the readiness of the Air Force to respond to local provocations, specifically from North Korea, the Air Force conducts Northwestern Islands (NWI) provocation readiness training, combined coastal infiltration training, naval infiltration interdiction training, nighttime infiltration and attack training, training to respond to potential aircraft hijacking and other air terrorism-related incidences, and guidance training for aircraft transporting North Korean defectors and refugees. Wartime operations readiness training conducted solely by the South Korean Air Force consists of four components: 1) combat preparedness training, 2) wartime combat space management training, 3) wing/combat command air strike package training and 4) grand-scale campaign-level training (Ministry of National Defence, 2016). Regarding specialised mission-based training, the South Korean Air Force undertakes five different types of realistic training to fully prepare its pilots for specialised missions. The first, defensive counter-air training, attempts to train pilots on how to counter enemy intrusion into South Korean air space. The second, air interdiction training, is carried out in order to train pilots on how to disrupt, delay, and destroy hostile support units that have been deployed to the front lines before they can pose a threat to the South Korean armed forces. The South Korean Air Force is consistently conducting joint training with the Army, the Joint

Surveillance and Target Attack System (JSTARS), and Special Warfare Command aircraft strike controllers in order to improve the capabilities to detect and assault mobile targets. The third, close air support training, is carried out during the day and night to train pilots on how to support operations by ground and naval forces. The fourth, airborne/special operations training, is conducted in order to augment the operational capabilities of the Air Force to perform low-altitude infiltration and airborne missions. The fifth and last type of realistic specialised mission-based training conducted by the Air Force is wartime combat search and rescue training, which is aimed to improve the Air Force's capability to carry out joint search and rescue training with the other branches of the military. In addition to realistic training, the South Korean Air Force also conducts scientific training to further enhance the operational abilities of its pilots. Scientific training conducted by the Air Force is aided by the use of state-of-the-art ground simulation training equipment, combat manoeuvring instrumentation (GPASACMI), and electronic warfare training system (EWTS) (Ministry of National Defence, 2016).

In addition to each branch of the South Korean Armed forces carrying out their own form of realistic training in order to enhance the capabilities of their respective personnel, the South Korean military as a whole also conducts joint exercise and training in order to strengthen the joint and combined operational capabilities of the armed forces. One such training exercise carried out by the military is the Taegeuk Exercise, which is a yearly exercise led by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in order to improve wartime and peacetime operational capabilities and command capabilities. Another joint exercise and training carried out by the South Korean military is the Hoguk Training. The Hoguk Training is a military-wide field training exercise carried out every year under the leadership of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The purpose of the Hoguk Training is to enhance the operational execution capabilities of large-sized units. Starting in 2015, in an effort to further increase efficiency and enhance jointness, the Hoguk Training was linked with the Hwarang and

other similar training programs, with training exercises conducted in the East and West Sea becoming integrated. The Hwarang Training is yet another joint exercise and training initiative carried out by the South Korean military. The Hwarang Training is a rear-area training exercise whose participants consists of all national defence elements which include civilians, the government, the military and the police force. The objective of the Hwarang Training is to enhance proficiency when implementing procedures for wartime and peacetime operational plans as well as to create an integrated civilian-government-military-police defence posture.

It is evident from this section that the South Korean military has significantly enhanced its defence posture in response to the growing threat posed by North Korea. It has installed additional state-of-the-art surveillance systems at all major contact areas to continuously monitor for any signs of North Korean aggression, constructed additional defensive fortifications in high-risk contact zones and expanded the strength and efficiency of its current military assets. In addition to the measures taken above, the military is also conducting extensive realistic as well as scientific training to better prepare its armed personnel for a potential full-scale war with North Korea. That being said, there is a need for the South Korean military to further modernise its assets and capabilities. This is because not only does North Korea have a quantitative advantage over the South in terms of personnel and assets, but it is also because the North is aggressively pursuing the use of unconventional warfare like nuclear weapons and the use of cyberwarfare.

If the strategies used against North Korea can be implemented in other parts of the country and not just the South Korea-North Korea border, the likelihood of a successful great power attack on South Korea would be considerably lowered, as the South Korean military would be able to detect any hostile intentions and prepare themselves to counter it sufficiently, raising the costs of an invader who would threaten South Korea's core interest.

3.4   Modernising the South Korean Military

As stated earlier on in this chapter, the North Korean armed forces outnumber the South Korean armed forces in terms of personnel and equipment by slightly more than half. Because of this, the South Korean military needs to ensure that its military assets are more technologically advanced or superior in order to cover the quantitative gap. The South Korean Ministry of National Defence, therefore, has undertaken several procurements efforts over the years in an attempt to modernise all branches of its armed forces to meet future challenges and to ensure that its armed forces remain qualitatively superior to that of North Korea.

3.4.1   Modernisation of the South Korean Army

In 2014, the first batch of the next-generation K2- Main Battle Tank (MBT), codenamed Black Panther, was delivered and subsequently deployed by the South Korean Army to the frontlines to replace or augment the ageing K1 and K1A1 MBTs (Korea Times, 2016). The K2-MBT is significantly more advanced when compared with the older K1 and K1A1 MBTs. The K-2 MBT is equipped with an auto-loaded 120mm smoothbore main gun which can load projectiles automatically even on uneven terrain. The 120mmm main gun is also capable of firing up to 10 rounds a minute. Secondary armaments of the K2-MBT includes a 7.62 mm and 12.7 mm machine guns (Army Technology, 2019). The K-2 MBT is fitted with an auto-target detection and tracking system and a hunter-killer function. For its protection, the K-2 MBT has a composite armour and explosive reactive armour (ERA). The K-2 MBT also has a protection system against nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) threats and an active protection system which is capable of neutralizing incoming anti-tank rockets and missiles aimed at the tank. Commanders of K2-MBTs also have better battlefield awareness and management compared to commanders of older generation South Korean MBTs as the K2-MBT is equipped with a battlefield management system that is connected to the command,

control, communication, computers and intelligence (C4I) system (Army Technology, 2019).

In April 2011, the South Korean Army received the first batch of the K21 Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV), a next-generation IFV which was developed replace the ageing K200 series IFVs that were in service to the Army. The K21 IFV, being a next-generation IFV, was equipped with many state-of-the-art technologies. The K21 IFV is equipped with a 40mm cannon, two anti-tank guided missile launchers as part of its main armaments. The 40mm cannon of the K21 is capable of firing armour-piercing fin-stabilised discarding sabot (APFSDS) rounds that can penetrate up to 220mm of armour due to its ability to sharpen itself. The anti-tank guided missiles carried by the K21 is able to penetrate armour up to 1000mm. The K21 IFV's secondary armament is a 7.62 mm coaxial machine gun. For defence, the K21 IFV is equipped with a highly durable composite armour which is made out of various layers of ceramic, glass fibre and lightweight allows. The armour of the K21 IGV is capable of protecting the vehicle and its inhabitants from large-calibre cannon fire, armour-piercing rounds and 152 mm artillery shells exploding 10 metres away. In addition to the composite armour, the K21 IFV is fitted with an active protection suite and hard-kill anti-missile system which enhances the vehicle's ability protecting itself and its occupants from anti-tank missile attacks. The K21 IFV is also equipped with an advanced fire-control system which can detect targets over 6 kilometres and identify them at a range of over 3 kilometres. In regard to mobility, the K21 IFV is a highly mobile vehicle, able to undertake amphibious operations in addition to land operations due to its unique amphibious mode (Army Technology).

In addition to modernising its MBTs and IFVs, the South Korean army has also taken steps to modernise its artillery systems. In 2015, the South Korean Army began deploying the domestically developed 'Chunmoo' multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) to replace

the ageing 'Goryung' rocket system which has been in service since the 1980s. The 'Chunmoo' MLRS is equipped with a state-of-the-art firing control system which enables its operators to carry out real-time precision strikes using multiple-calibre rockets. In addition to that, the 'Chunmoo' MLRS is also a vast improvement over the older 'Goryung' in terms of effective range, having an effective range of up to 80 kilometres compared to the older rocket system which only had an effective range of 40 kilometres (Korea Herald, 2015). The deployment of the 'Chunmoo' MLRS by the Army to the frontlines will definitely improve the capability of South Korea to strike back at the North if hostilities were to break out due to its improved range, allowing it to strike at North Korean military assets and facilities that are deployed and located deeper within North Korean territory. The South Korean Army has also taken steps to modernise its anti-tank warfare capabilities to counter North Korea's superior tank numbers. In 2016, the South Korean military developed the 'Hyungung', an advanced Fire & Forget anti-tank type weapon to replace the ageing 90mm/106mm recoilless rifles and TOW missiles utilised by the Army. According to the South Korean Defence Agency for Technology and Quality, the 'Hyungung' is far superior and effective compared when compared to the Israeli Spike-MR and the American Javelin (The Korea Herald, 2017).

The South Korean Army has also taken steps to modernise the air-wing of the army. In 2013, the South Korean Army procured a total of 36 Boeing AH-64E Apache attack helicopters at an estimated cost of 1.6 billion USD to replace the Army's ageing fleet of Bell AH-1S Cobra helicopters (Army Technology, 2019). The AH-64E Apache attack helicopter is highly advanced. It is fitted with an advanced laser, infrared and target designation system as well as other sensor systems which allows it to locate, track and attack targets. In terms of armaments, the AH-64E Apache attack helicopter is heavily armed. It carries laser-guided precision Hellfire missiles, 70mm rockets and a 30mm automatic cannon (Boeing, 2019). In 2016, the South Korean Army began deploying the

AH-64E Apache attack helicopter (Yo, 2016). In 2017, the South Korean Army fully deployed all 36 AH-64E Apache attack helicopters (Son, 2017).

In July 2014, South Korea's DAPA and the Korea Evaluation Institute of Industrial Technology (KEIT) signed a contract with KAI to develop a light-armed helicopter (LAH). The LAH programme was launched to find a replacement for the ageing MD500 and AH-1S attack helicopter fleet of the Army. Design-wise, the design of the LAH will be based on Airbus Helicopters' H155 multi-purpose helicopter. It will be fitted with air-to-surface missiles, rockets, gun turrets, and a defence system that will protect it against diverse threats (Army-Technology). In 2018, KAI unveiled the first LAH it had produced. The LAH is slated to enter service sometime in 2023 and will operate alongside the 36 Boeing Ah-64E Apache Guardian Helicopter that is currently in service (Aviation International News, 2018).

3.4.2.1 Modernisation of the South Korean Navy

In addition to the modernisation of the Army, the South Korean military has also taken steps to modernise its Navy. Towards the end of the 20th-century, it was evident that the South Korean surface fleet was in dire need of modernisation. To modernise its ageing fleet to meet 21st-century threats on the horizon, the South Korean military and government initiated several fleet and asset modernisation programs. These programs include the Korean Destroyer Experimental (KDX) program, the Future Frigate Experimental (FFX) program, Patrol Killer Experimental (PKX) program, the amphibious program, the mine warfare modernisation program, the auxiliary modernisation program, the submarine modernisation program, and finally the naval aviation modernisation program.

3.4.2.2 The Korean Destroyer Experimental (KDX) Program

The Korean Destroyer Experimental (KDX) program was initially launched by the South Korean Navy in the early 1980s to find a replacement for the ageing Gearing-class

destroyer. The first class of ship conceived by the KDX program was the KDX-1, also called the Gwanggaeto Daewang-class destroyer. Although initially slated for construction in 1990, construction of the KDX-1 only began in 1995 due to the introduction of additional operational requirements midway through the design phase. The first KDX-1 ship was launched by the South Korean Navy in 1996 (Bowers, 2019). The introduction of the KDX-1 vastly improved the operational capabilities of the South Korean Navy. The KDX-1 comes equipped with the British built SSCS mark-7 combat management system (CMS) which links together all of the ship's weapons and sensor system. The installation of the SSCS mark-7 CMS on board KDX-1 class ships marked the first time in which a modern CMS was installed on a South Korean Navy vessel, allowing KDX-1 ships to operate in an environment where multiple threats are present. The KDX-1 is also equipped with the Korean Naval Tactical Data System (KNTDS), allowing KDX-1 ships to serve as a command and control ship (Bowers, 2019). In terms of armaments, the KDX-1 is fitted with the RIM 7 M Sea Sparrow Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) system and two Signaal Goalkeeper Close-in-Weapons System (CIWS), giving the KDX-1 a point defence system that is far superior to any South Korean Navy vessel in service at the time. In addition to the RIM 7 M Sea Sparrow SAM system and the Signaal Goalkeeper CIWS, the KDX-1 is also equipped with two quad launchers for Harpoon missiles and six 324 mm torpedo tubes capable of firing the Mark 46 Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) torpedo. The KDX-1 is also fitted with a hull-mounted active sonar and a passive towed sonar, further enhancing the class' ASW capabilities. To further augment the KDX-1's surface and subsurface combat capabilities, KDX-1 ships can carry with it one Super Lynx helicopter (Bowers, 2019).

In 1996, the KDX-II, also called the Chungmugong Yi Sunshin-class destroyer, was given the approval to be constructed. Boasting more advance and state-of-the-art systems, the larger KDX-II is an upgrade to the KDX-1. One of the main improvements that the

KDX-II has over the KDX-1 is in regard to its armaments. The KDX-II comes fitted with the SM-2 (Block IIIA) surface-to-air missile which has an effective range of up to 90 nautical miles (nm). In addition to that, the KDX-II is also fitted with a 24-cell Korean Vertical Launch System (KVLS). The KVLS onboard KDX-II ships enable them to carry the Hong Sang Eo anti-submarine missile, a South Korean-designed missile. All Hong Sang Eo missiles carries with it a K745 Chung Sang Eo (Blue Shark) torpedo which is capable of striking a submerged target up to a range of 19km. The KVLS is also capable of firing the Hyunmoo-3C, a land-attack cruise missile which can strike land-based targets located up to 1500 km away. The KDX-II also carries with it the SSM-700K Haesong anti-ship missile, replacing the Harpoon missiles carried by the KDX-1. With an effective range of approximately 180km and carrying a single warhead weighing 220 kg, the SSM-700K Haesong anti-ship missile is a subsonic missile that was designed by South Korea (Bowers, 2019). The Haeseong anti-ship missile has an advanced targeting system. For mid-course guidance, it utilises a GPS-assisted inertial navigation system, active radar for terminal homing, and a phased array active radar seeker. The Haeseong anti-ship missile also has the capability of taking evasive manoeuvres and carry out an inclined attack to counter enemy defences. In addition to that, the SSM-700K was introduced in order to improve South Korea's Navy's capability to repel North Korea's small-to-medium-sized naval vessels without spending a considerable amount of money on anti-ship cruise missile (ASCM) systems developed by foreign defence companies (Missile Threat, 2018). Regarding its combat management system, the KDX-II is fitted with the KDCOM system, an improved version of the KDX-I's SSCS mark-7 combat management system. The introduction of the KDCOM expanded the number of multifunctional combat consoles on the KDX-II up to ten. In order to increase the operational lifespan of the KDX-II, the KDX-II's radar, C4I and weapons systems are slated for an upgrade at the beginning of 2020 (Bowers, 2019).

The introduction of the KDX-III Aegis destroyer, also called the Sejong Daewang-class destroyer, represents the pinnacle of the KDX program to date. First commissioned back in 2008, the KDX-III is based on the Aegis combat system and the AN/SPY-1 multifunction radar (Bowers, 2019). The AN/SPY-1 radar system enables ships of the KDX-III class to track targets throughout a 100+ nautical mile arc (Madden, 2018). The KDX-III is also equipped with a formidable array of state-of-the-art weaponry. KDX-III ships are fitted with two Mark 41 VLS, one 48-cell launcher located at the front of the ship and one 32-cell launcher located at the aft of the ship. In addition to that, KDX-III ships are also equipped with a 42-cell KLVS. The two Mark 41 VLS and the single 42-cell KLVS enables the KDX-III to carry up to 80 SM-2 (Block IIIA/B) missiles as well as a combination of Hyunmoo-3C and Red Shark anti-submarine rockets (ASROC). The KDX-III is also capable of carrying up to 16 Haesong anti-ship missiles for ship-to-ship combat. To protect itself from enemy missile fire, the KDX-III is fitted with the RAM Block I missile system and the Goalkeeper CIWS for point defence (Bowers, 2019). An announcement made by the Defense Acquisition Program in 2016 stated that the KDX-III will be upgraded with a new VLS which will allow KDX-III ships to launch the longer-ranged SM-3 and SM-6 ship-to-air-missiles. This will allow KDX-III ships the ability to intercept North Korean ballistic missiles, boosting the Navy's ballistic missile defence capabilities (Yonhap News Agency, 2016). The KDX-III also possesses advanced C4I capabilities with the Aegis system operating side by side with the Global Command and Control System- Maritime (GCCS-M) and Satellite Communications (SATCOM). Due to the KDX-III's state-of-the-art systems, it is tasked with the important mission of monitoring and detecting ballistic missile launchers from North Korea. As such, KDX-III ships are deployed in areas close to North Korean territorial waters. In the event of a war breaking out between South Korea and North Korea, KDX-III ships are charged with providing area air defence, executing strategic and tactical strike missions and to function

as a Maritime Air Support Operations Centre (MASOC) (Bower, 2019). It was announced in 2013 that the South Korean Navy has received permission to begin construction of three brand new KDX-III Batch-II destroyers to meet the increased demand for ships that are capable of countering North Korean and regional threats (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013). The KDX program has led to the creation of three powerful next-generation multifunctional ship classes that have the capabilities to respond to the numerous maritime threats South Korea faces in the region and beyond.

3.4.2.3 Future Frigate Experimental (FFX) Program

Another program introduced by the South Korean Navy to modernise its surface fleet is the Future Frigate Experimental (FFX) program. The FFX program was introduced in order to design next-generation ships that can replace the ageing Ulsan-class frigates and the Pohang-class corvettes. The South Korean Navy planned for three batches of FFX frigates, with each batch allowing for the introduction of upgrades and design adjustment. The first batch was named the Incheon-class frigate. In 2011, the first Incheon-class frigate was launched by the South Korean Navy. Although lacking a VLS, the Incheon-class frigate is still a heavily armed warship. It carries six K745 Chung Sang Eo torpedoes, eight Haesong anti-ship missiles and eight Haesong-II land attack missiles. For its defensive systems, the Incheon class is fitted with a RAM Block 1-point defence system and a Phalanx CIWS (Bower, 2019). The Incheon-class is also fitted with the Hanwha Naval Shield Combat Management System and the LIG Next1 3D surveillance radar with a maximum range of 250km. Ships of the Incheon-class also have Link-11 and Link-K and are integrated into the Korean Naval Command and Control System (KNCCS) (Bowers, 2019).

In March 2018, the second batch of FFX ships, the Daegu-class, was commissioned by the South Korean Navy. The Daegu-class is fitted with a 16-cell KVLS and carries the K-SAAM, a medium-range air defence missile designed by South Korea. The Daegu-

class also carries Haesong anti-ship missiles, land-attack missiles, and the Red Shark ASROC. Ships of the Daegu-class can also carry onboard either one Super Lynx or AW159 Wildcat helicopter, augmenting the class' surface and subsurface combat capabilities (Bowers, 2019).

The third batch of FFX ships is slated to begin construction in 2021. At the time of this writing, the weapon complements for the third batch of FFX ships has not been released. However, the South Korean government has indicated that ships of the third batch of FFX ships will be fitted with a phased-array radar, a 360-degree infrared search and track system in addition to an upgrade to the class' sonar capabilities (Bowers, 2019).

Like the KDX program, the FFX program has significantly improved the capabilities of the South Korean Navy, replacing the ageing Ulsan-class and Pohang-class with the modern and state-of-the-art Incheon-class and Daegu-class. With the third batch of FFX ships slated for construction only in 2021, it can be reasoned that the third batch of FFX ships will be even more advanced and formidable compared to the first and second batch of FFX ships.

3.4.2.4 Patrol Killer Experimental (PKX) Program

In 2003, the South Korean Navy launched the Patrol Killer Experimental (PKX) program after it was discovered that the existing Chamsuri-class had weaknesses after one was sunk during the Second Battle of Yeonpyeong. Two classes emerged from the PKX program, the Patrol Killer Guided-Missile (PKG), also called the Gumdoksuri-class, and the Patrol Killer Medium Rocket (PKMR). As of 2018, 18 PKG vessels have been commissioned by the South Korean Navy (Bowers, 2019). In terms of armaments, the PKG carries four Haeseong anti-ship missiles and is fitted with one 76mm cannon, one 40mm cannon, two 12.7 mm machine guns and the Chiron portable SAM system. To enable all PKG ship to aid in gunfire support and to effectively operate in high-clutter littoral environments, all PKG ships are outfitted with the SPS-100K surface search radar

and SPS-540K 3D air and surface surveillance radar. Installed onboard all PKG vessels is a compressed version of the Naval Shield System that has already been installed on the larger Incheon-class and Daegu-class. The PKG also has Link-K and an Inter-Site Data Link (ISDL) connection with the KNCCS (Bowers, 2019). As for its defensive systems, the PKG is fitted with chaff dispensers and the Korean designed SONATA electronic warfare system which is capable of detecting as well as jamming incoming radar signals. The PKG, however, is not equipped to protect itself from incoming missiles, lacking any hard-kill defensive capabilities. Although much slower when compared to North Korean vessels of the same type, only capable of reaching a top speed of 44kt, the PKG is more heavily armed and boast a more advanced fire-control system compared to its North Korean counterparts, mitigating any speed disadvantage (Bowers, 2019).

First launched in 2017, the PKMR is a smaller vessel when compared to the PKG. Although smaller than the PKG, the PKMR is still outfitted with the same sensor and electronic warfare systems as the PKG. In terms of armaments, however, the PKMR is more lightly armed when compared to the PKR. The PKMR is only equipped with one 76mm cannon, two 12.7 mm machine guns, and a single 12-cell launcher for 130mm guided rockets. Like the PKG, the PKMR was designed with the sole purpose of countering the threat posed by North Korea's high-speed amphibious vessels (Bowers, 2019).

3.4.2.5 Amphibious Warfare Modernisation Program

In 2007, the South Korean Navy commissioned the Dokdo-class Landing Platform Dock (LDP). At the time of its commissioning, the Dokdo-class was one of the largest naval vessels in the Northeast Asian region. With a fully loaded displacement of 18,800 tons, the Dokdo-class is capable of carrying up to 700 troops, 10 MBTs, two air-cushioned landing vehicles (LCAC) and 10 helicopters. The Dokdo-class is equipped with highly advanced and state-of-the-art sensors and communication systems. It is outfitted with the

Thales SMART-L 3D long-range surveillance radar, Link-11, Link-16, Link-7 and SATCOM. Ships of the Dokdo-class are also capable of sharing tactical information directly with the South Korean Army and the South Korean Air Force through the Korean Joint Tactical Data Link System (KJTDLS) it is integrated with. The superior C4I capabilities of the Dokdo-class allows it to function as the flag/command ship to any South Korean Navy integrated fleet or amphibious operation. For self-defence, the Dokdo-class is fitted with two Goalkeeper CIWS and a single RAM 116 missile system. Although sufficient for point air defence, the Dokdo-class requires support from other South Korean Navy vessels in an environment with intense missile fire (Bowers, 2019).

The introduction of the Dokdo-class has given the South Korean Navy a versatile platform for both wartime and peacetime operations. In wartime, the Dokdo-class is tasked with executing wartime amphibious operations, fleet control and ASW operations. During times of peace, the Dokdo-class is given the task of supporting PKO, humanitarian operations, and national prestige enhancement (Bowers, 2019).

Although three Dokdo-class ships were slated for construction, only one is currently in service. In 2014, the construction for a second Dokdo-class vessel was approved by the South Korean government. This second vessel, slated to enter service in 2020, will feature the ability to carry the V-22 Osprey helicopter (Bowers, 2019).

In addition to the Dokdo-class, the South Korean Navy has also introduced the Cheon Wang Bong-class landing ship. The Cheon Wang Bong-class landing ship is a smaller vessel compared to the Dokdo-class, with a full load displacement of 7140 tons. The Cheon Wang Bong-class landing ship can carry up to 300 soldiers, two MBTs, eight Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAV) and three landing craft (LCM). Although lacking any hangar facilities, a total of two helicopters can land on the Cheon Wang Bong-class landing ship if needed. In terms of its armaments, the Cheon Wang Bong-class landing ship is equipped with a Korean-designed 40mm dual cannon, a KVLS capable of carrying

air defence missiles and two Rheinmetall MASS naval countermeasure system. The hull of the Cheon Wang Bong-class landing ship is also specifically designed to protect the ship from ballistic projectiles, granting the ship a higher level of survivability when landing in an extremely hostile environment (Bowers, 2019).

3.4.2.6 Mine Warfare Modernisation Program

Between 1986 and 2005, the South Korean Navy introduced three classes of mine warfare vessels to enhance its mine warfare capabilities. The first class introduced was the plastic-hulled Ganggyeong-class coastal minehunter which carried two mine-disposal vehicles (Bowers, 2019). The plastic hull of the Ganggyeong-class made it suitable for mine warfare operations, as it does not have a strong magnetic signature (Hensel and Gupta, 2018). The second class of mine warfare vessels introduced is the Wonsan-class minelayer which was commissioned in 1997. With a hull design similar to that of the Ulsan-class frigate, the Wonsan-class minelayer is armed with a 76mm cannon, twin 40mm for air defence, and two triple 324 torpedo tubes. It also carries up to 500 mines of different variants for offensive minelaying operations (Bowers, 2019). In 1999, the Yangyang-class, the third class of mine warfare vessel was introduced into service of the South Korean Navy (Bowers, 2019). The Yangyang is equipped with a variable depth sonar and a fully integrated minehunting system. Ships of the Yangyang-class are also anti-shock and anti-magnetic, giving ships of this class a low underwater acoustic and electromagnetic signature. The introduction of the Yangyang-class further enhanced the mine warfare capabilities of the South Korean Navy (Madden, 2018).

In 2017, the Nampo-class, a next-generation class of mine warfare vessel, was commissioned by the South Korean Navy. Design-wise, the Nampo-class is similar to that of the Incheon-class frigate and boast many of the same sensor suite systems found onboard the Incheon-class. In terms of armaments, the Nampo-class is armed with a cannon, torpedo launchers, and a four-cell KVLS which is capable of carrying a total of

16 KSAAM anti-air missiles. As a mine warfare vessel, the Nampo-class also carries with it a total of 500 mines that can be deployed. The Nampo-class also has a hangar facility that can accommodate one medium-sized helicopter, further enhancing the ship's surface and sub-surface combat capabilities (Bowers, 2019). The introduction of the Nampo-class has not only enhanced the South Korean Navy's mine warfare capabilities but the capabilities of the fleet as a whole, as the Nampo-class has a high degree of multi-functionality.

3.4.2.7 Submarine Modernisation Program

Towards the end of the 20th century, the South Korean Navy recognised the need to modernise its submarine fleet. The submarine modernisation program of the South Korean Navy is distinguished by the tiered introduction of more state-of-the-art capabilities and the increasing indigenisation of designs, components and construction. This tiered approach is similar to the KDX program.

The first stage of the submarine modernisation program began in 1987, code-named Korean Submarine System (KSS). The first stage of the program saw the South Korean Navy signing an agreement to procure three Type 209-class submarines from German company Howaldtswerke Deutsche Werft (HDW). The Chan Bogo, the first in the class, was built in Germany with South Korean engineers working with their German counterparts in order to learn submarine construction methods from them. The remaining vessels were constructed in kit form back in South Korea (Bowers, 2019). The combat management system of the Chan Bogo-class is highly advanced. It is equipped with an Atlas Elektronik integrated sensor underwater system (ISUS) capable of gathering data about potential threats, allowing the crew onboard to analyse developing combat scenarios in order to deliver a rapid and decisive response. The Chan Bogo-class submarine is heavily armed. It is fitted with eight 533mm torpedo tubes that can fire the Surface and Underwater Target (SUT) Mod 2 torpedoes which can strike a target up to a

range of 28km. The Chan Bogo-class submarine is equipped with a search and attack hull-mounted sonar that can operate on a medium frequency in either active or passive mode. It is also reported that the Chan Bogo-class is equipped with a passive towed array sonar that can detect submerged submarines (Naval Technology). In 1989, three more submarines were ordered by the South Korean Navy. Another three more submarines were ordered by the South Korean Navy in 1994. According to reports, the last three Chan Bogo submarines were reported to be heavily modified, having a lengthened hull and the capability of launching Harpoon missiles. Sometime after 2011, it was reported that the inertial navigation systems of all Chan Bogo-class submarines were upgraded (Bowers, 2019).

In 2000, the South Korean Navy ordered equipment and parts needed to build three of its next class of submarine, the Type 214 submarine, named the Sohn Won-il-class. Compared to the Chan Bogo-class, the Sohn Won-il-class is more advanced, sporting more advanced and state-of-the-art systems. The Sohn Won-il-class is fitted with the Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system, granting submarines of this class greater endurance when submerged. The Sohn Won-il-class is also heavily armed, carrying a variety of torpedoes, mines and the Haesong-III anti-ship/land-attack missile. In 2008, six more Sohn Won-il class submarines were ordered by the South Korean Navy to bolster its submarine fleet. In September 2017, the South Korean Navy launched the ninth and final Sohn Won-il-class (Bowers, 2019).

In 2020, submarines from the third and final phase of the South Korean Navy's submarine modernisation program, named the Chan Bogo-III, is slated to enter into service. The Chan Bogo-III will be designed by South Korean engineers and will be 40% larger compared to the Sohn Won-il-class (Bowers, 2019). Construction of Chan Bogo-III class submarines is divided into three separate batches. Construction of the first batch of three submarines began in 2016. South Korean engineers plan to equip the Chan Bogo-

III with a six-cell VLS in addition to the standard torpedo tubes in response to North Korea's growing nuclear threat and capabilities (Bowers, 2019). In 2016, assembly for batch-I

The submarine classes mentioned above play an integral part in South Korea's strategy to deter North Korea's asymmetric capabilities and strategies in the Northeast Asian region. The introduction of land-strike capabilities on later classes of South Korean Navy submarines has given these submarines a considerable strategic value, giving South Korea the ability to strike North Korean targets from the relatively safe subsurface environment in the event of war with North Korea (Bowers, 2019).

3.4.2.8 Naval aviation modernisation

Like its surface and subsurface counterparts, the air component of the South Korean Navy has also gone through a modernisation program to meet the 21st-century threats.

Modernisation of the air component of the South Korean Navy began in 2011 after an audit published by the National Assembly indicated that the capabilities of the MK99 sonar and radar were obsolete and inadequate for ASW in coastal waters. This audit was released a year after the fatal sinking of the Cheonan. The audit published by the National Assembly led to the South Korean Navy acquiring the AW159 Wildcat ASW helicopters to enhance the Navy's ASW capabilities in light of the growing threat posed by North Korean submarines in its littoral waters (Bowers, 2019). AW159 helicopters are heavily armed with state-of-the-art weaponry. They are equipped with Spike Non-Line-Of-Sight (NLOS) missiles, K745 Chung Sang Eo (Blue Shark) torpedoes, and depth charges. The sensor systems installed on AW159 helicopters are also highly sophisticated. AW159 helicopters are fitted with the Selax Seaspray 7000E active electronically scanned array radar as well as a Thales Compact FLASH Sonics low-frequency, long-range dipping sonar system to detect submarines. In 2019, the Defense Acquisition Program

Administration (DAPA) of South Korea announced that it has issued a tender for procuring another batch of ASW helicopters for the South Korean Navy

In 2018, the South Korean Navy initiated a competition to search for a modern maritime patrol aircraft to replace the ageing P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft that is currently in service (Bowers, 2019). At the end of the competition, the South Korean Navy selected the Boeing P-8, a multi-functional long-range maritime patrol vessel, to replace the ageing P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft. The P-8 has highly advanced sensor systems and is fitted with equipment that will allow it to execute anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions. The eventual introduction of the P-8 into service will enhance the South Korean Navy's ability to survey the waters in the Northeast Asian region for North Korean submarines (Panda, 2018).

The amphibious lift capacity of the South Korean Navy and South Korean Marine Corps is also insufficient and in need of modernisation. Currently, the South Korean Navy operates 19 UH60P Blackhawk helicopters to serve in a utility and lift role. However, UH60P Blackhawk helicopters are not designed to operate in maritime conditions. The UH60P helicopters are also not designed to take full advantage of the Dokdo-class' capabilities. To fully utilise the Dokdo-class' capabilities, the South Korean Navy procured 30 KUH-1 Surion amphibious helicopters. The KUH-1 Surion amphibious helicopter, which is the maritime version of a South Korean military helicopter which entered service in 2013 is highly advanced (Bowers, 2019). To aid in landing and for en-route navigation, Surion amphibious helicopters are fitted with a tactical air navigation (TACAN) system. Surion amphibious helicopters are also equipped with the Rockwell Collins high-frequency radio for voice communication during amphibious operations. The Rockwell Collins high-frequency radio is capable of functioning in extreme altitudes and temperatures. Countermeasure systems installed onboard Surion amphibious

helicopters include a radar warning receiver (RWR), a missile warning receiver (MWR), a laser warning receiver (LWR), and countermeasures dispenser system (CMDS) (Naval-Technology). In 2018, the South Korean Navy received its first two KUH-1 Surion amphibious helicopters (Khan, 2018). By introducing the Surion amphibious helicopters into the service of the South Korean Navy, the Navy has enhanced the current amphibious lift capabilities of the Navy, allowing it to execute more successful amphibious landing missions.

3.4.2 Modernisation of the South Korean Air Force

Like the army and the navy, the South Korean Air Force also recognised the need to modernise their assets at the end of the 20th century. As stated earlier on in this chapter, the South Korean Air Force is at a major numerical disadvantage when compared to the North Korean Air Force. In order to reduce this numerical disadvantage, the South Korean government recognised that the South Korean Air Force needed to have a qualitative advantage over their northern counterparts' quantitative advantage.

The South Korean Air Force launched the Next Generation Fighter Programme to find a replacement for its ageing fighter aircraft assets. In April 2002, the F-15K Slam Eagle, a multi-function fighter manufactured by Boeing, was selected by the South Korean Air Force to replace its ageing fighter aircraft. A total of forty F-15K Slam Eagle fighter aircraft were procured. In 2008, all orders of the F-15K were delivered to the South Korean Air Force (Airforce-Technology). The F-15K Slam Eagle is a highly advanced fighter aircraft. It is equipped with the AN/APG-63 (V)1 Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar that can track high-flying and low-flying targets, mobile ground targets and sea surface targets. The AESA radar is also able to provide F-15K pilots with high-resolution ground maps that can identify targets at long ranges. The F-15K fighter aircraft also utilises the Link-16 Fighter Data Link to disseminate target information to other fighter aircraft during coordinated air-to-air operations. To protect the F-15K

against anti-aircraft threats, the F-15K is fitted with an integrated Tactical Electronic Warfare Suite (TEWS) which integrates the ALR-56C(V)1 early warning receiver, the ALQ-135M jammer and the ALE-47 Countermeasure Dispenser System (CMDS) (Airforce-Technology). The F-15K is a heavily armed fighter aircraft. For air-to-air combat, the F-15K is fitted with a 20mm cannon, AIM-9 Sidewinder infrared-guided air-to-air missiles, Raytheon AIM-7 Sparrow radar-guided air-to-air missiles, AIM-120 advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles (AMRAAM), and the AGM-130 missile. The F-15K is also equipped with precision-guided munitions such as the AGM-84D Harpoon anti-ship missiles and the AGM-84E SLAM Expanded Response (ER) air-to-ground missiles for ground strike operations (Airforce-Technology).

In April 2008, the South Korean Air Force began the second phase of its Next Generation Fighter Programme. The second phase of the Next Generation Fighter Programme saw the F-15K aircraft being selected once again by the South Korean Air Force (Airforce-Technology). The selection of the F-15K for the second phase of the Next Generation Fighter Programme is a testament to the F-15K's versatility and advanced capabilities.

Not long after the completion of the second phase of the Next Generation Fighter Programme, the South Korean Air Force launched the third phase of the programme. The third phase of the Next Generation Fighter Programme has two main objectives. Firstly, the programme aims to find a replacement for the ageing F-4 and F-5 fighter aircraft. Secondly, the programme aims to procure a fighter aircraft with stealth capabilities that will be able to serve as a deterrent and a counter to potential threats from North Korea (Lee, 2011). Companies like Lockheed Martin, Boeing and the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company (EADS) all participated in the third phase of the programme in the hopes of securing the deal of selling sixty next-generation fighter aircraft to the South Korean Air Force. In 2014, it was announced that Lockheed Martin's F-35

Lightning II fighter aircraft was selected over Boeing's F-15Silent Eagle and the EADS' Eurofighter Typhoon by the South Korean Air Force (Kang, 2014).
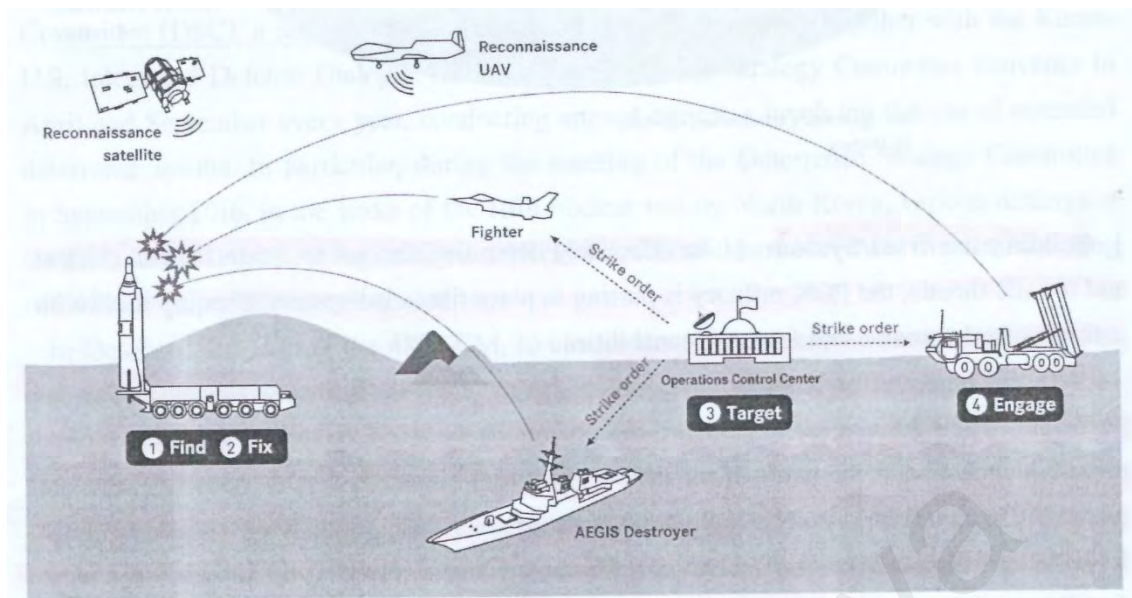
The F-35 Lightning II is a highly advanced 5th generation supersonic multi-role stealth fighter aircraft that is designed for the 21st-century combat. It is fitted with a highly effective state-of-the-art electronic warfare suite that allows its pilot to locate and track hostile targets, jam enemy radar and disrupt attacks. The F-35 Lightning II is also capable of sharing data collected by its sensors with commanders at sea, in the air or on the ground, enhancing coalition operations. Advanced avionics equipped on the F-35 Lightning II allows its pilot to have a 360-degree real-time access to battlespace information, allowing the F-35 Lightning II to dominate the tactical space during combat operations. In addition to its advanced electronic warfare system, the stealth capabilities of the F-35 Lightning II are unparalleled. The use of an integrated airframe design, advanced materials and other feature, has made the F-35 Lightning II virtually untraceable on radar, allowing it to penetrate defended airspace areas to either conduct ISR missions or to strike at ground targets at longer range without being detected or tracked by enemy radar (Lockheed Martin, 2019). In air-to-air combat situations, the F-35 Lightning II has a distinct advantage over enemy fighter aircraft due to the F-35 Lightning II's integrated sensors, information and weapons system. As a result, pilots of the F-35 Lightning II can detect enemy aircraft beforehand and take decisive action from a safe distance before the enemy can detect them (Lockheed Martin, 2019). In March 2019, the first two of the forty F-35 Lightning II fighter aircraft arrived in South Korea. The remaining thirty-eight F-35 Lightning II fighter aircrafts are scheduled to arrive in South Korea by 2021. In a statement issued by South Korea's Defence Acquisition Minister Wang Jung-hong, the F-35 Lightning II will be capable of boosting South Korea's operational capabilities, establishing a stronger defence posture (Jo, 2019).

In addition to the Next Generation Fighter Programme, the South Korean military also began a programme to develop its very own homegrown fighter aircraft as part of its Air Force modernisation programme. The programme, codenamed Korean Fighter Experimental (KFX), is an ambitious project which goal is to produce an indigenous Korean multi-role 5th generation stealth fighter aircraft suited to network-centric warfare to replace ageing F-4 and F-5 fighter aircraft. According to a statement made by an official from South Korea's Agency for Defence Development (ADD) in 2008, the KFX will be stealthier when compared to Dassault's Rafale and EADS' Typhoon fighter aircraft. However, it will not be as stealthy when compared to Lockheed Martin's F-35 Lightning. In terms of armaments, the ADD official has stated that the KFX will be fitted with Korean designed and made high-tech weapons systems like precision-guided bombs, air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles (Jung, 2008). In 2019, the Korean Aerospace Industries (KAI), began construction on the prototype of the KFX after a long delay in the project. A representative from the KAI announced that the prototype for the KFX will be finished by early 2021 (Defence-Blog, 2019).

3.4.3 Invention of an Indigenous Missile-Shield system

The greatest threat to South Korea's core national interest at the current moment is the nuclear weapons that are being held by North Korea. In recent years, the South Korean military and government have undertaken a programme to strengthen its defensive capabilities to deter and to respond to possible North Korea nuclear and missile threats. To accomplish this goal, the South Korean military is developing the 'triad system', an autonomous deterrence and response system which is aimed at effectively deterring and responding to the North Korean nuclear and missile threats. The 'Kill Chain', which is currently being developed by the South Korean military, is one of the three axes of the 'triad system'. The 'Kill Chain' is an attack system aimed at striking North Korean nuclear and missile operations systems, which includes missiles, mobile missile

launchers, the command and control system and relevant fixed installations. To ensure that the 'Kill Chain' is effective, the South Korean military is taking steps to expand their missile capabilities, particularly ground, surface and sub-surface launched ballistic and cruise missiles, and air-launched guided bombs and missiles. To effectively detect for signs of a possible North Korean nuclear missile attack, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities would have to be strengthened through the integration of high-altitude reconnaissance UAVs (HUAVs) and military reconnaissance satellites into forces structure. In addition to that, the acquisition of additional surface-to-surface missiles, long-range air-to-surface missiles, intermediate-range air-to-air missiles and joint direct attack munitions (JDAM) and laser-guided missiles into the force structures by the South Korean military would also be needed to build up the strike capacity needed to strike against signs of attack throughout North Korea. To add to that, strike capabilities of maritime units will also be enhanced by improving the performance of submarine-to-surface and ship-to-surface missiles in addition to developing a strategic ship to surface missiles (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). Although the 'Kill Chain' system is currently geared to and focused on North Korea, it can be reasoned that the system can be reconfigured and be used instead to deter other hostile or aggressively postured powers which neighbour South Korea, thereby protecting South Korea from an attack by raising the cost of an attack significantly.

Reconnaissance UAV

Reconnaissance satellite

Fighter

Strike order

Operations Control Center

Strike order

Strike order

3 Target

4 Engage

1 Find **2 Fix**

AEGIS Destroyer

Diagram 2.1: South Korea's Kill-Chain-System. Diagram from Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea White Paper (2016).

The second axis in South Korea's 'triad system' in an effort to independently protect itself from North Korean strikes is the Korea Air and Missile Defence (KAMD) system. The KAMD is a multi-tier missile defence system that enables for the interception of missiles launched by North Korea before they hit their targets on the ground. Three components make up the KAMD system. The first component is the early warning system which is used to detect an enemy missile using either an early warning radar system or the radar system of an Aegis warship. The second component of the system is the command and control system which analyses the detection data of the early warning system and transmits the data to the appropriate missile-interceptor battery. The third and final component of the system is the interception system which after receiving the interception order will track the missile using its own radar system before the appropriate battery launches its own missile to intercept and destroy the hostile missile. With the integration of the ballistic early warning system, Aegis ship, and Patriot missile batteries, the South Korean military now has the capabilities to not only detect hostile ballistic missiles targeting key civilian and military areas and facilities but also defend them. In order to further enhance the capabilities of the KAMD in the future, the South Korean

military has begun to upgrade its current Patriot missiles, medium-range surface-to-air missiles (M-SAM) and long-range surface-to-air missiles (L-SAM) using home-grown technology. South Korean military officials believe that the upgrades to the system will expand the geographic coverage of the KAMD and improve its interception capabilities (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). In a report revealed on October 2018, the South Korean military has decided to procure SM-3 class ship-based anti-ballistic missile to further enhance the KAMD system, specifically its ability to intercept hostile missiles at the upper tier of the system (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). The recent procurement of the SM-3 class ship-based anti-ballistic missile is proof that South Korea seeks to further develop and enhance the KAMD system to be a more reliable system in an effort to strengthen its anti-ballistic missile capabilities. The KAMD, like the 'Kill Chain', has the ability to significantly increase the cost of an attack for an attacker who would attack South Korea. This is because the attacking force would have to expend more resources to penetrate South Korea's defences, which could lead to greater loss of life or resources for the attacking power.
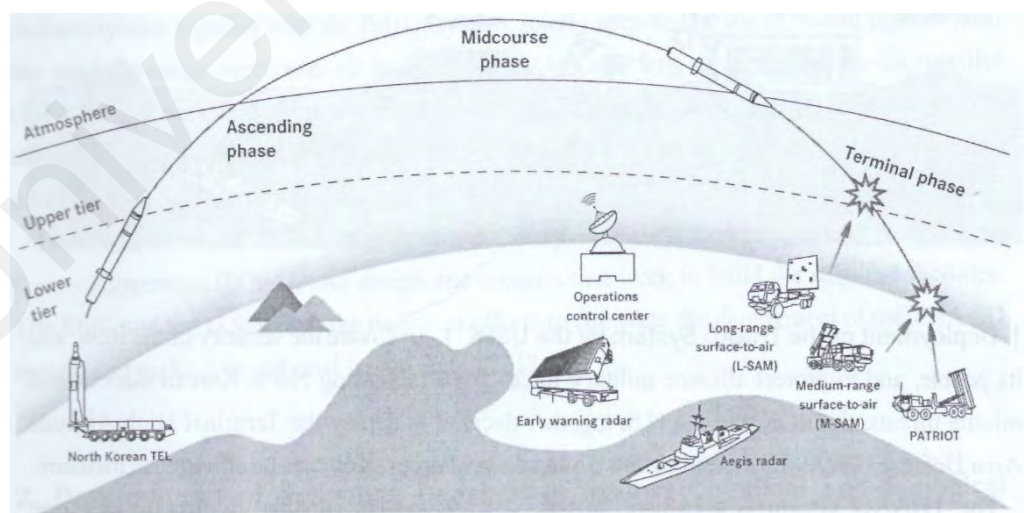
Diagram 2.2: Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD). Diagram from Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea White Paper (2016).

The third and final axis of the 'triad system' is the Korea Massive Punishment and Retaliation (KMPR) system. The idea of the KMPR system is to punish and retaliate

against North Korea in the event of a North Korean strike against South Korea, deploying missiles capable of simultaneous and massive-scale precisions strikes as well as deploying special operations units which are aimed directly at the North Korean leadership, including its war headquarters. With the KMPR system, South Korea's ballistic and cruise missile capabilities which are already sufficiently capable of delivering a considerable level of punishment and retaliation against North Korea, will be maximised with the introduction of a new optimised missile launch system and large-capacity, high-performance warheads (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). Although the KMPR system is designed to target North Korea specifically in the event of a North Korean attack, it is reasonable to assume that the technology and tactics employed by the KMPR system, like the technology of the 'Kill-Chain' and the KAMD, can also be repurposed and reoriented to deter other neighbouring powers from attacking South Korea if they do become hostile towards South Korea. If South Korea is capable of expanding the reach of its KMPR system, it would be safe to assume that South Korea would have the capability to retaliate against any attacker or aggressor in its geographic region or vicinity in the event of open hostilities, rising the attacker's cost of war.
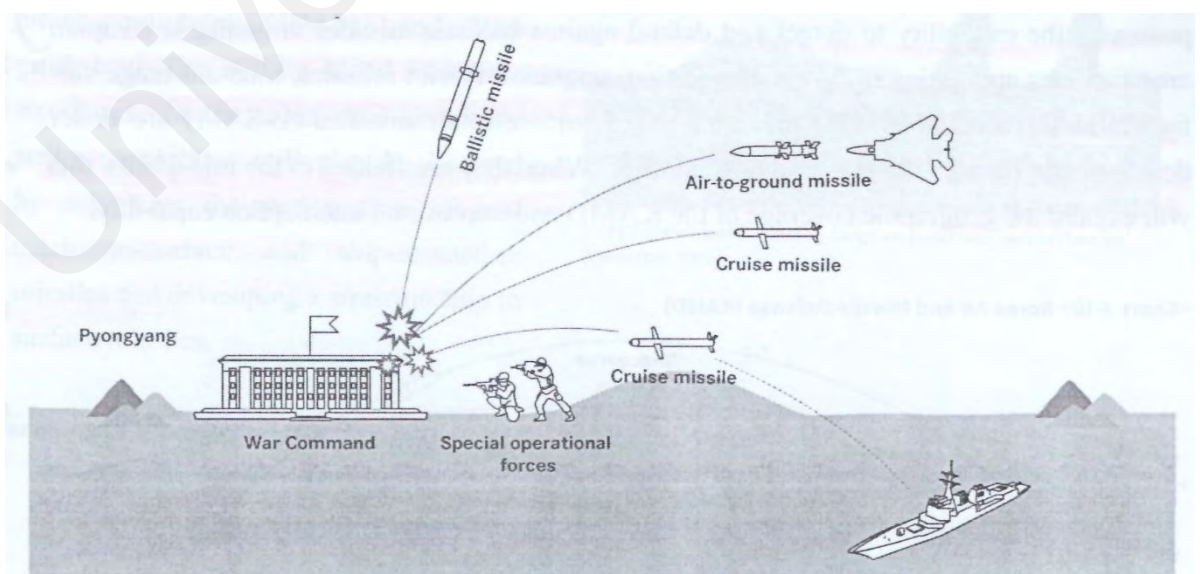
Diagram 2.3: Korea Massive Punishment and Retaliation (KMPR). Diagram from Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea White Paper (2016).

It is evident from this chapter that the South Korean government has spent a lot of its resources to not only modernise the armed forces with state-of-the-art technology but to prepare its personnel for real-life combat situations using realistic training. However, the question remains, can South Korea defend its core national interest? This question is a difficult one to answer. Many of the advanced military assets and acquired by South Korea over the years remains untested in an actual military situation or operation. This, therefore, brings into question their effectiveness in an actual combat situation or operation. On paper, however, it is evident that South Korea has the capability of fully defending its core national interest from any threat that is posed to it. South Korea's advanced capabilities on paper should be enough of a deterrent to any party which would wish it and its people harm. Therefore, this paper concludes that South Korea, based on its capabilities, is capable of protecting its core national interest. South Korea's ability to defend its core national interest fulfils the first element of the systemic impact approach to evaluating 'middle power'. The next chapter will evaluate South Korea's impact on the international system in the area of the global economy and finance, global development, global 'green growth', and global security.

CHAPTER 3: EVALUATING SOUTH KOREA'S IMPACT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

4.1 Introduction

The second element of the systemic impact approach to evaluating whether a country can be classified as a 'middle power' is by analysing their capacity and ability to change a specific element or elements of the current international order through formalised structures, such as international treaties and institutions as well as through informal means such as norms or balances of power. Unlike the behavioural approach, the second element of the systemic impact approach to evaluating 'middle power' status looks at the impact of an action taken by a state and not just the action alone. This section will, therefore, be analysing whether South Korea has made any impacts on the current international order through its leadership capacity. The areas this section will be analysing is South Korea's impact on three areas of the international system: the global economic and financial system, global development, environmental issues and global security.

New global challenges and the rise of non-Western states are reshaping the rules and institutional foundations of the post-World War II international order. Although the United States is still currently the most powerful and influential state in the global arena, its unipolar dominance of the international system is ending. With the decline of the United States as the hegemon of the international order, scholars like Roger Kagan argues that countries like China would not be willing to maintain the current international order which was built in the United States' image after the Second World War (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). The scholar Charles Kupchan also argues that in the current international order, the United States no longer has sole 'ownership' of the rules and norms that make up the international system and order (Kapchan, 2012). With the rise of states like Brazil, Russia, India and China in the international order, different values and set of ideologies are brought to the system by them. In a world where the United States' power is declining,

American driven liberal ideas or systems may come under threat or become less influential as American power wanes over time.

Although the rise of countries like Brazil, Russia, India and China brought new values and ideologies to the table and may compete to become a leader of the international system, they are in no way contesting the basic rules of the existing international system. In fact, countries like China wants the protections that the system's rules and institutions provide (Ikenberry, 2008). Further evidence that countries like Brazil, Russia, India and China are in no way contesting the basic rules of the existing international system is the fact that all four countries are members of major multilateral organisations. Therefore, the ongoing struggle over the new international system should be viewed through the lens of established and emerging powers negotiating for the redistribution of power and authority between them and not one based solely on ideological differences or polarisation.

With established and emerging powers negotiating for the redistribution of power and authority in the international system, the presence of 'middle power' states situated in between established and emerging powers can significantly affect both the stability and makeup of the new global governance system. According to the scholar Gareth Evans, 'middle power' leadership is essentially being a good international citizen who actively cooperates with others in order to solve international problems, particularly problems which cannot be solved by any one country acting alone (Evans, 2011). With the ongoing shifts and transformations in the international system, 'middle powers' are needed more than ever to cement the collective behaviour in support of the international system.

South Korea has become one of the countries that have taken on global responsibilities in several areas ranging from global economic cooperation to global developmental assistance to global security in the years after the end of the Cold War (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). As presented in an earlier chapter, it was during the presidency of President Lee

Myung-bak where South Korea began to take on responsibilities or actions that are typically linked with 'middle power' behaviour under the 'Global Korea' initiative. With all the responsibilities South Korea have taken on over the years, has it yet made any impact on the international system as a whole? This chapter will, therefore, look at South Korea's impact on the global economy and financial system, global development, global 'green growth', dan global security.

4.1.1 South Korea's Impact on the Global Economy and Finance System

The growth of South Korea's economy is nothing short of a miracle. In 1960, South Korea's GDP was a mere USD 3.958 billion. By 2017, South Korea's GDP is valued at USD 1.531 billion, making it the 12th largest economy in the world (World Bank, 2019). South Korea's meteoric rise has made it into an important player in the global economy. Data published by the World Trade Organization in a report in 2018 indicate that in 2017, South Korea was ranked 6th in the world in terms of overall merchandise export. South Korea has become an integral part of the global supply chain, becoming an important exporter in manufactured goods, chemicals, office and telecom equipment, automotive parts, and iron and steel. South Korea is ranked the fifth-largest exporter of manufactured goods in the world, the sixth-largest exporter of chemicals in the world, the fifth-largest exporter of office and telecom equipment in the world, the fifth-largest exporter of automotive products in the world, and the fourth-largest exporter of iron and steel in the world. The World Trade Organization's statistics indicate that South Korea's share of the total world export in 2017 was 3.24%, valued at 573,694 million USD. In the same report published, the World Trade Organization indicated that 40.7% of South Korea's total GDP came from trade alone (World Trade Organization, 2017).

South Korean companies like Samsung Electronics, Hyundai Motor, POSCO, Kia Motors, LG Chem, Hyundai Heavy Industries, and SK Hynix have become major players in the global economy, becoming an integral part of the global supply chain (Naidu-

Ghelani, 2012). As of 2016, Samsung is the number one producer of OLED for smartphones in addition to holding 60% of the worldwide mobile DRAM memory chip market (Kang, 2016); POSCO is the fifth-largest producer of steel in the world as of 2018, producing a total of 42.86 million tonnes (World Steel Association, 2018); Hyundai Heavy Industries as of June 2019 is the world's largest ship-builder (Yonhap News Agency, 2019); and Hyundai-Kia in 2017 was the 5th largest car manufacturer in the world, producing almost 1.6 million units of cars (Minnock, 2017). Any major downturn or crash in the global economy or financial system will greatly impact South Korea negatively, as seen in the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis and the 2008 global financial turmoil (Lee, 2017). South Korea, therefore, has become an active participant and contributor to several international multilateral economic and financial bodies in order to ensure that the global economic and financial system remains stable.

In November 2010, South Korea became the first non-G7 nation to host a G20 summit, hosting the summit in its capital city, Seoul. The G20 Summit in Seoul was South Korea's first official debut as an active and responsible player in global decision-making forums (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). In fact, many observers of the G20 note that South Korea, besides Australia and the United Kingdom, is one of the most active members of the G20. South Korea from the moment it joined the G20 decided it would aggressively lead the global discussion on methods on how to overcome the global financial crisis which was caused by the United States subprime loan crisis. During the G20 summit in Washington, President Lee Myung-bak called for a moratorium on trade protectionist measures by G20 members in order to prevent a trade war which would have deepened the economic recession (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Since the Washington Summit, South Korea has worked hard to not only bridge the gap between the developed and developing members of the G20 but also to institutionalise the summits by proposing issues of mutual interest for sustainable and balanced economic growth (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). During the

2010 G20 Summit which was hosted in Seoul, South Korea played an important role as a mediator and honest broker between the United States and China who were engaged in a currency battle with one another, each side blaming the other for the global imbalances. China was accused by the United States of manipulating its currency to export more while China accused the United States of pumping money to buy economic growth. South Korea, using its unique position as a traditional ally of the United States and major trade partner for China, came to the fore and stepped in as an honest broker between the two powers as few were willing to challenge the two economic superpowers. Knowing full well from history that China will not accept the appearance of bowing to Western foreign pressure due to Beijing wanting to avoid political humiliation, South Korean officials steered the G20 debate away from currency discussions and towards boosting domestic demand in China, ultimately achieving the same goals as pushing China to revalue its currency (Hwang and Jo, 2011). South Korea also played an active and instrumental role in hammering out the so-called indicative guidelines to prevent competitive currency depreciation and trade war in the future. World leaders agreed in the Seoul Communique that the exchange rate system had to move towards a more 'market-determined' system and that exchange rate flexibility had to be enhanced to properly reflect underlying economic fundamentals and to refrain from competitive devaluation of currencies (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

South Korea leadership also played an important role in ushering in reforms to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Dominique Strauss-Khan, the former Managing Director of the IMF acknowledged that South Korea played an important role in the reforms of the IMF by bridging together the two camps in the G20. The overhauls of the IMF brought changes to the body's voice and governing structure, enhancing the international crisis-fighting body's legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness which the adoption of an agreement which saw capital increases and quota changes. The overhaul

of the IMF, which was supported by the G20, saw a six per cent shift in quota shares from advanced countries in the body to the emerging economies and from over-represented to under-represented countries while at the same time still protecting the quota shares and voting powers of the poorest members. The overhaul of the IMF saw Europe give up two of their seats in the IMF board while more voting rights were given to China and Brazil (International Monetary Fund, 2010). South Korea's role in reforming the IMF continued with it working together with the IMF in an effort to eliminate the stigma surrounding taking an IMF loan. Many Asian countries remain understandably wary of engaging the IMF ever since the IMF's controversial role in responding to the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis. During the 1997 Asian financial crisis, South Korea suffered painfully due to the IMF's rescue program. Because of this experience, South Korea has the credibility to bridge the divide between the two camps within the IMF, serving as an effective mediator between the two camps. South Korea, working together with the IMF, introduced the precautionary credit line (PCL) and the flexible credit line (FCL) to prevent destroying the credibility of loan borrowers (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). The introduction of these two programs will provide emerging countries with a firewall to protect themselves when seeking economic development as they help to limit the worries of unexpected foreign capital flight. The reforms South Korea helped the IMF carry out also facilitated the efforts for global rebalancing by reducing the need for emerging countries to accumulate foreign reserves as self-insurance against volatile capital outflows (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

South Korea continued to show its leadership capacity during the G20 Summit in Seoul by presenting new agendas like: a global financial safety net that will help protect emerging economies from external shocks and development for poor countries. The new agendas brought forth by South Korea helped the G20 evolve from an ad hoc crisis management body which only met in times of economic crisis to an institution that can

contribute to the burgeoning system of global governance which also reflect the interest of non-member countries (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). South Korea's idea of a global financial safety net has attracted strong support from emerging countries, especially from those who are vulnerable to volatile capital flows across the borders. Despite strong oppositions led by Germany and other developed countries, talks led by South Korea during the G20 Seoul Summit over excessive liquidity and financial safety net produced recommendations on national, regional, and multilateral responses in the event of sudden capital outflows (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

Outside of the framework of the G20 and the IMF, South Korean leadership was also instrumental in trying to prevent a currency crisis in the Asian region. South Korea strongly supported the adoption of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization Agreement, a regional foreign-currency reserve pool that would consist of South Korea, China, Japan and Southeast Asian nations. The agreement was made in order to keep the export-dependent region from external financial shocks. On the urging of South Korean policymakers, the reserve pool size was doubled in May 2012 to US$240 million. The setting up of a precautionary credit line by the countries of the ASEAN+3 is another example of South Korean leadership in action. The precautionary credit line would allow members to tap into the reserve pool to prevent a financial crisis without being linked to the International Monetary Fund. The formation of this financial self-protection arrangement is a significant development in the area of regional and global financial stability, as Asia holds more than half of global foreign exchange reserves yet remains constantly vulnerable to a currency crisis. Many countries in Asia still vividly remember the financial and currency meltdown brought to their respective countries due to the devaluation of the Thai baht which triggered a domino effect which resulted in many Asian countries having to take loans from the IMF which led to painful IMF-led restructuring (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). With many countries in Asia still wary about

taking a loan from the IMF or engaging with the IMF due to painful experiences of the IMF-led restructuring after the Asian financial crisis, the introduction of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization Agreement and precautionary credit line by South Korea is timely and welcomed.

4.1.2   South Korea's Impact on Global Development

In addition to its impact on the global economy and financial system, South Korean leadership was also instrumental in making an impact in the realm of international development aid and assistance. South Korea's recent development position from that of a poor country to one of the richest countries in Asia and the world works favourably for it to take up a leadership role in any discussion involving development. After the devastation of the Second World War and the Korean War, South Korea spent years receiving aid from the international community. In the years after the Korean War, the United States along with multilateral development, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other foreign aid donors, funnelled a total of USD 13 billion into South Korea. Though struggling throughout the mid-20th century, the international economic assistance and aid received by South Korea from its allies and NGOs allowed it to eventually build up its economy to one of the most robust economies in Asia, making it an economic powerhouse in the region. Finally, in 1987, after decades of receiving foreign aid, South Korea began to slowly but steadily transition itself from a receiver of foreign aid to a contributor of Official Developmental Assistance (ODA). In 2009, after more than a decade since it first started donating international aid, South Korea was selected to become a member of the highly regarded Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). The DAC members consist of a select group of OECD aid providers that work together in concert to increase as well as to improve the delivery of international development aid. The inclusion of South Korea into the membership of the DAC of the OECD is a testament

to South Korea's continued commitment in supplying international aid. South Korea's inclusion into the DAC is also historic, as it is the first time in the history of DAC where a former aid recipient who had transitioned to a donor has joined the advanced nations assistance club (Roehrig, 2013).

An OECD report published in 2018 indicated that in 2017, South Korea donated US$1.62 billion in bilateral assistance and US$590 million in multilateral assistance. South Korea's total donation of US$2.2 billion made it the 15th largest donor country among DAC members (OECD, 2018). The 2017 report indicated that 49.3% of South Korea's ODA was distributed to the Asian and Oceania region alone, with the remaining 50.7% distributed between the Sub-Saharan region (33.5%), Latin America and the Caribbean (11.1%), the Middle East and North Africa (5.8%), and Europe (0.3%) (OECD, 2018). Top recipients of South Korea's ODA in 2017 include: Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Tanzania, the Philippines, Laos, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Mozambique, Bangladesh, Ghana, Mongolia and Nicaragua (OECD, 2018). Statistics released by the OECD report that the majority of South Korea's ODA in 2017 went to Least Developed Countries (36.2%) and Low Middle-Income Countries (36.3%). In total, South Korea's total ODA contribution in 2017 made up 1.49% of the US$147.16 billion ODA contributed by all DAC member countries. Bilaterally, South Korea's ODA contribution in 2017 made up 1.53% of the DAC's total bilateral ODA contribution of US$105.560 billion. Multilaterally, South Korea's ODA in 2017 made up 1.41% of the DAC's total multilateral ODA contribution of US$41.6 billion (OECD, 2018).

In addition to contributing a great deal of ODA , South Korea, since joining the OECD DAC in 2009, has taken a more active leadership role, leading development cooperation as demonstrated through its work during 2010 G20 Summit held in Seoul and the Fourth High-Level Forum for Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) which was held in Busan in 2011. South Korea's ability to take a more active role is due to its unique position as a bridge

between the developed and developing countries of the G20. During the 2010 G20 Summit in Seoul, South Korea officials sought to put forward a development agenda, as it was one of the agendas that most countries had a vested interest or stake in. South Korean officials, therefore, promoted a developmental agenda which would focus on creating self-sustaining growth through capacity development, which differed fundamentally from past approaches that centred on the unilateral provision of aid to recipient countries. Utilising its experience as an aid recipient to an aid donor, South Korea persuaded developed countries that a differentiated development agenda can stimulate emerging countries to participate more actively and gain a positive stake in the development efforts. South Korean officials also argued that in order for the G20 to achieve its ultimate goal of sustainable and balanced development, global economic inequalities must be first reduced significantly (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). During the Seoul Summit, South Korea also sought to differentiate the discussions on development from previous ones and strived to find commonality amongst member states in order to formulate a concrete plan of action. South Korea sought to increase the practicality of the G20 agreement by clearly outlining the principle agents and deadlines for the agreement. The introduction of the Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth, which was much wider in scope compared to the than the Washington Consensus, was a comprehensive set of development pillars which was introduced by the South Korean government to add some value in the area of international development (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). The 'Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth' also emphasised the notion that underdeveloped countries should be equal partners with rich countries and that a 'one size fits all' development model is no longer applicable, shifting away from the 'Washington Consensus' which emphasised fiscal discipline, privatisation and trade liberalisation (Hwang, 2017). The 'Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth' focused on 'nine pillars'. Those 'nine pillars' are: infrastructure, human resource

development, trade, private investment and job creation, financial inclusion, growth with resilience, food security, domestic resource mobilisation and knowledge sharing (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). As a testament to South Korea's role as an agenda-setter in the framework of the G20, infrastructure and food security, which are among the 'nine pillars' of South Korea's Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth, have been given more weight in policy discussions and is becoming one of the core agenda items for the G20. During the G20 Summit in Mexico in 2012, infrastructure and food security was chosen to be the main development agenda of the summit (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

South Korea once again showcased their leadership and mediating capacity like it did during the G20 Summit in Seoul. During the Fourth High-Level Forum of Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in 2011 which was held in Busan, South Korea. The HLF-4 in South Korea comes at a time where aid effectiveness has become a major theme. During the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development, developed countries agreed to increase spending in response to calls from the developing world. At the same time, the developed countries also insisted that there be a focus on the quality and not just the quantity of the aid being given (United Nations, 2017). In 2005, during the Paris High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness which was organised by the OECD, the Paris Declaration was signed by representatives of governments and international organisations, pledging to shift the emphasis on assistance planning to the recipient governments of aid, giving greater weight to their own national priorities as well to greater accountability. The theme of aid effectiveness continued during the 2008 Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-3) which was held in Ghana. During the 2008 summit, participants focused on reviewing the commitments that were made in Paris three years earlier in addition to highlighting the best practices in aid effectiveness (OECD, 2017). South Korea, as host of the HLF-4 in Busan, forged an inclusive partnership for effective development cooperation, building on the success of the G20 Seoul

Development Consensus. South Korea role as a mediator was also critical in brokering the Busan Partnership. The Busan Partnership affirmed the shared principle of ownership, results, inclusive partnership, transparency as well as accountability when it comes to effective development cooperation. South Korea, also recognising the difference and complementarity of South-South cooperation, agreed to make differential commitments to achieve common goals (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

In order to create an inclusive partnership necessary for effective development, South Korea mediated between developed and developing countries while at the same time encouraging the active participation of emerging non-Western countries who have been passive or even negative towards international development cooperation. In a bilateral meeting with China, South Korea explained that the Busan Forum differed from the previous Paris and Accra Forum which applied the same international norms to all participants. South Korea also convinced China that non-members of the OECD DAC were willing to form a partnership with the international community on development issues by strongly pushing for their participation at the Busan Forum. The reason as to why South Korea placed such an emphasis on emerging non-Western countries in global development cooperation is because South Korea does not want the poor performance of traditional lenders of aid passed on to newly emerging countries. Due to the efforts put in by South Korean officials, South Korea was able to persuade China and India to agree on the common principles mentioned in the resolution. In successfully persuading China and India to agree on the common principles mentioned in the resolution, a significant step was made to formally include emerging countries within the framework of international development cooperation (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

South Korea has made also made an impact on Global Development through the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). In 2017, South Korea for the third time voluntarily contributed a total of seven-hundred-thousand United States Dollars (USD)

to the APEC Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation account to bring about greater economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region. South Korea's funding is set to finance APEC projects that seek to improve the technical capacity of member economies to liberalize and facilitate trade and investment, and further enhance the regional economic integration. According to APEC Secretariat Executive Director Dr Alan Bollard, South Korea's contribution is timely as it will boost the APEC's ability to move the region towards a path of inclusive growth and sustainability at a time when small and medium businesses are looking for more efficient ways to do business (APEC, 2017).

Perhaps the most noticeable impact that South Korea has made in the realm of Global Development is through its Saemaul Undong initiative. The Saemaul Undong initiative or 'New Village Movement' was a development initiative launched by former South Korean president Park Chung-hee in the 1970s in an effort to modernise the South Korean countryside after noticing that there was a growing gap between urban and rural areas despite the successes in South Korean industrial development. Originally, the initiative targeted only underdeveloped rural areas, but Saemaul Undong soon inspired the entire nation, with the cooperation of communities across the country rallying together, becoming a driving force behind Korea's economic modernisation and rapid economic growth. Saemaul Undong worked by 'educating' and 'mobilizing' the villagers themselves with the help of state-sponsored campaigns as well as government funds. The core tenant of Saemaul Undong is its emphasis on the villagers themselves making the decision or decisions on what to build and how the money allocated to them should be spent. Official data indicates that rural Korean villages acquired a total of 79,000 new bridges, 37,000 village assembly halls and 28,000 autonomous water-supply systems throughout the 1970s (Lankov, 2010).

The success of the Saemaul Undong initiative in modernising the South Korean countryside has made many developing countries around the world look to South Korea

as a model for economic development and success. For example, in 2002, the Philippines launched its own local version of Saemaul Undong, inspired the initiative's success in developing the South Korean countryside. Soon, other countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mongolia and Cambodia began to operate their own local version of Saemaul Undong. To add to that, over seventy countries have expressed their interest in utilising Saemaul Undong for development in their own country (Lankov, 2010).

The desire for many countries in the developing world to adopt the Saemaul Undong initiative as a model for development and growth among has led the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to work together with South Korea to launch a global program for development by updating, integrating and scaling up model of Saemaul Undong, recognising the value of the South Korean initiative. The UNDP and South Korea in a memorandum of understanding signed between the two parties have agreed to cooperate in four areas of activity. Firstly, the UNDP and the South Korean government will conduct a joint study on Saemaul Undong to analyse the lessons learned from South Korea's past development experiences and consider the possibilities of developing Saemaul Undong as a local development model in regards to its applicability and scalability in order to complement other relevant solutions for sustainable local development. Secondly, the UNDP and the South Korean government will work together in order to adapt elements of Saemaul Undong into a UNDP global program that is based on a set of agreed principles between the two sides before applying them to an initial list of countries, with South Korea's Priority Partner Countries taking priority over other countries. Thirdly, the UNDP and South Korea government will utilise South Korea's Saemaul Undong experiences in an effort to scale-up the impact of the integrated local development model to be an effective platform to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable local development through the sharing of evidence-based results and by supporting South-South and triangular cooperation. Lastly, the UNDP and South Korea

will draw on the activities of the global program through the use of rigorous monitoring and evaluation in addition to the use of systematic documentation in order to provide adequate inputs to global and regional discourse (United Nations Development Program, 2013).

In addition to the UNDP, another global body who has recognised the efficacy of South Korea's Saemaul Undong's initiative is the World Bank. Starting in 2014, the World Bank and South Korea worked together through the World Bank Group Korea Office Trust Fund Agreement, supporting a broad range of development partnerships and programs by leveraging on the World Bank's knowledge and convening power and South Korea's impressive development experience. According to Victoria Kwakwa, the Regional Vice President of the World Bank for the East Asia and Pacific Region, the World Bank has successfully shared South Korea's extraordinary development experience and best practices with over a dozen countries due in part to the close and strong partnership shared between the World Bank and South Korea. In 2018, the World Bank and South Korea signed an expansion to the partnership the two parties signed back in 2014. With its partnership with South Korea, the World Bank is able to draw upon even more on South Korea's development expertise in order to enhance the exchange of knowledge and to inform the World Bank's projects, addressing critical developmental challenges (World Bank, 2018).

By proactively reflecting the recent transformations in the development regime and balance of power in the current international system, South Korea was able to successfully facilitate the smooth transition away from the old development framework to a new development framework. By responding to new demands from more actors with varying needs and situations and by addressing weak parts of the current system, South Korea was able to provide legitimacy and validity to the existing liberal international order (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). According to the Korea Civil Society Forum on International

Development Cooperation (KOFID), a watchdog organisation comprised of Korean development NGOs, South Korea performed well during the HLF-4. South Korea was able to bridge the divide between the developed and developing countries due to its own experience in being in both camps (Sohn, 2011). From this section it is clear that South Korea has indeed made an impact in the realm of global development, its developmental success story and experience has become a benchmark for global development, with many developing countries in addition to international bodies like the UNDP and the World Bank seeking knowledge from South Korea's developmental experience. To add to that, as a former impoverished nation and a currently wealthy and developed nation, South Korea is also able to bridge the divide between the global south (developing nations) and the global north (developed nations) to bring a more forth a more inclusive model for growth, aid, and development.

4.1.3 South Korea's Impact on Global Green Growth

In recent years, the idea of green growth has emerged as a new global agenda. Green growth embraces the notion that there is a synergetic relationship between environmental and economic goals rather than a trade-off between one of the two. The concept of green growth has been given different meanings over the years and has been discussed in different forums around the world. Professor Paul Elkins from Keel University describes 'green growth' as an 'environmentally sustainable economic growth.' Professor Elkins makes the argument that an increase in energy and environmental taxes and a simultaneous decrease in other taxes such as labour taxes will reduce environmental pollution as well as streamline the distribution and the utilisation of resources, thereby stimulating economic growth through improved income distribution (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

In the realm of politics, the concept or idea of 'green growth' was first mentioned by policymakers during the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development

in Asia and the Pacific (MCED-5) in 2005. The final report produced at the end of the Conference stipulated member countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) should renew their commitments to Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and other subsequent agreements and programs in order to promote sustainable development. The MCED-5 also clarifies that the environment is not an obstacle when it comes to economic growth. Instead, it opens up opportunities for sustainable growth, promoting markets for environmental technologies, products and services, as well as encouraging capacity-building and technology transfer initiatives for countries with developing countries (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

Another impact that South Korea has made on the international system is on the issue of 'green growth'. In recent years, South Korea has emerged to become one of the major proponents of the concept of 'green growth'. South Korea's green growth strategy is rooted in the policy's efficacy as an alternative strategy for economic growth and development, replacing the old unsustainable 'brown growth' model for economic growth and development, which depended on the exploitation of cheap imported fossil fuels and other natural resources (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). South Korea defines 'green growth' as a 21st-century economic strategy that utilises environmental policies to drive economic development. There are two distinctive features when it comes to South Korean green growth. The first feature highlights the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while pursuing environment protection in a wider scope. As such, the efficient reduction of GHG emissions is the first item of South Korea's ten strategic directions for green growth. The South Korean government, in line with the first item of its ten strategic directions for green growth, has set a goal to mitigate GHG emission up to 30 per cent by the year 2020. In addition to that, President Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013) pledged South Korea's voluntary and unilateral reduction target at the fifteenth Conference of Parties

(COP 15) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which was held in Copenhagen. The second feature highlights South Korea's green growth strategy as a new engine for growth, promoting investments into environment technology, renewable energy, and the creation of green jobs (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

As stated earlier on, South Korea's 'green growth' model is derived to be an alternative strategy for economic growth and development, replacing the old unsustainable 'brown growth' model for economic growth and development. South Korea has actively promoted 'green growth' as a global agenda as environmental degradation caused by the traditional 'brown growth' model is transnational and not territorially bound. During the G8-plus Summit in Tokyo in 2008, South Korea took its first step in promoting 'green growth' as a global agenda. During the Summit, President Lee stated that South Korea would establish the East Asia Climate Partnership to assist developing countries to achieve economic growth while reducing GHG emission (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

South Korea also mobilised its diplomatic resources during the OECD Meeting of the Council at Ministerial Level in June 2009 in order to make 'green growth' an agenda for the meeting (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). During the meeting, South Korea moved behind the scenes to persuade individual member countries to make 'green growth' the agenda for the meeting. As a result, the meeting adopted its 'Declaration on Green Growth' (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). The 'Declaration on Green Growth' was a defining moment in which the international community acknowledged 'green growth' as a global agenda. The declaration highlighted the need for international cooperation in pushing forward a low-carbon sustainable economy. In addition to that, the declaration also called on the OECD to develop, as a horizontal project, a 'green growth' strategy in order to achieve not only economic recovery but environmental and socially sustainable economic growth (OECD, 2009). The OECD, in line with the request made by the declaration, published a report titled 'Towards Green Growth' in 2011. In the report, the Secretary-General of

the OECD, Angel Gurria, made it clear that the OECD will continue to support global efforts to promote the 'green growth' agenda. In addition to that, the report also stated that the OECD would reflect 'green growth' in OECD country reviews and the output of future OECD work on 'green growth' indicators, toolkits and sectoral studies, to support countries' implementation efforts towards 'green growth' (OECD, 2011). The OECD Secretary-General also credits South Korea as the first country in the world to adopt 'green growth' as a long-term strategy for economic growth. As such, the OECD Secretary-General called President Lee Myung-bak as the 'father of green growth'. (Shin, 2011). The acknowledgement of South Korea's 'green growth' model by the OECD is clear evidence that South Korea's 'green growth' model for economic growth was acceptable to the international community as a new global economic paradigm.

South Korea's 'green growth' model has also been promoted at high-level international forums. During the G20 Summit in Seoul in 2010, the South Korea government included 'climate change and green growth' as an agenda at the Summit. At the end of the Summit, G20 leaders came to an agreement on 'green growth', adding three relevant paragraphs in the final document. G20 leaders gave their support to country-led 'green growth' policies that promote environmentally sustainable global growth along with employment creation while ensuring access to energy for the poor. The leaders of the G20 also recognised that sustainable 'green growth' is inherently a part of sustainable development, and it is a strategy for quality development, enabling countries to leapfrog old technologies in many sectors through the use of energy-efficient and clean technology (G20, 2010). Capitalising on the momentum the 'green growth' agenda gained during the G20 Seoul Summit, South Korea worked closely with Mexico during the agenda-setting process of the G20 Summit in Los Cabos to ensure that 'green growth' remained on the agenda. In the final document published at the end of the Los Cabos Summit, G20 leaders confirmed that they would promote inclusive 'green growth' and sustainable development

as appropriate to a country's circumstances. G20 leaders at the Los Cabos Summit also committed themselves to maintain a focus on inclusive 'green growth' as part of the G20 agenda and in light of the agreements made during the Rio+20 and the UNFCCC (G20, 2012). As a result of South Korea's hard work, the agenda of 'green growth' was established within the architecture of the G20, elevating 'green growth' to the international level.

In addition to elevating the 'green growth' agenda to the global stage, South Korea also served as an important mediator when it came to 'green growth' negotiations. As the reduction of GHG emissions is one of the two features of South Korea's 'green growth' model, climate change negotiations are of great interests to South Korea. The 'You First' approach is the fundamental reason behind the long-standing stalemate of the UNFCCC negotiations on emission reduction. This is because countries are afraid that the reduction of emissions will bring about economic losses. And as long as the 'You First' mindset remains amongst countries, the UNFCCC is not likely to reach a consensus on climate actions. The 'Me First' approach was then introduced to address the 'You First' approach. The 'Me First' approach encourages countries to domestically implement their 'green growth' strategy and internationally come to an agreement on emission reductions. South Korea was the first country in the world to adopt the 'Me First' approach and is responsible for changing the frame for climate change negotiations (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

In line with the adoption of 'Me First', South Korea announced a voluntary target to reduce GHG emissions at the COP15 which was held in Copenhagen in 2009 by 30 per cent. South Korea's announcement is important as South Korea is a non-Annex I country and is not bound by any reduction responsibilities. The voluntary nature of South Korea's GHG emission reduction target is a testament to South Korea's genuine interest when it comes to climate change negotiations. This is because the South Korean economy and

industry is still very energy intensive. By voluntarily targeting a 30 per cent reduction of GHG emissions, the highest target recommended to non-Annex I countries from the international community, South Korea sought to raise its voice in mediating between the developed and developing countries in climate negotiations, hoping to break the deadlock in climate negotiations (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

As an outcome of South Korea's 'Me First' initiative, the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) registry was formed. NAMA proposed that developing countries register national mitigation actions to be taken and that countries should improve the transparency of the actions taken through the measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) mechanism. Understanding that developing countries lacked confidence in designing and implementing a low-carbon strategy due to complex socio-political factors, weak financial architecture, an informal economic system, insufficient technology, South Korea proposed the NAMA registry which involved voluntary commitments at the international level and enforcement at the domestic level, highlighting 'respective capabilities' (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). South Korea's 'Me First' approach played a positive role in changing the frame for climate change to 'Me First' from 'You First'. This can be seen with the signing of the Copenhagen Accord which laid down the reduction commitments of Annex I countries and the national reduction actions of non-Annex I countries. Within a span of two months after the Copenhagen Conference, a total of 106 countries, collectively amounting to 81 per cent of global GHG emissions and 76 per cent of the global population. Perhaps the clearest example of South Korea's 'Me First' approach success is the fact that China declared its voluntary actions (Houser, 2010).

South Korea's role as a mediator and leader was yet again observed at the COP16 in Cancun. At the Cancun Conference, South Korea's model for 'green growth' played an important role as a broker to resolve conflicts that arose during climate negotiations. The

necessity for a 'low-carbon development strategy' was officially recognised by parties during the Cancun Conference. In light of this official recognition for a 'low-carbon development strategy', the Cancun Agreement articulated that 'a low-carbon development strategy is indispensable to sustainable development' and that 'addressing climate change requires a paradigm shift towards building a low-carbon society that offers substantial opportunities and ensures continued high growth and sustainable development, based on innovative technologies and more sustainable production and consumption and lifestyles' (UNFCCC, 2011). The low-carbon development strategy was positively accepted by both developed and developing countries. The positive positions taken by both developed and developing countries on low-carbon development is evidence that 'green growth' strategy can be a solution in which the interest of developed and developing countries converge, hopefully breaking the deadlock in climate negotiations.

In 2010, South Korea joined the OECD Development Assistance Committee, becoming the first-ever former aid receiver country to join the prestigious group. Since joining the group, South Korea has assisted least developed countries in shifting to 'green growth' through both bilateral and multilateral channels. South Korea at a bilateral level, has provided 'green' official development assistance (ODA) to least developed countries. In distributing 'green' ODA to least developed countries, South Korea has three criteria. The first is the promotion of eco-friendly technology and industries. The second is to support an eco-socio structure facilitating the circulation of energy and resources. The third and final criteria is that assistance should be given to 'green' activities that fulfil either a standard of the OECD DAC's 'environment marker' or a standard of UN's 'Rio marker' (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Multilaterally, South Korea has donated a total of US$27.5 million for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the ADB Future Carbon Fund (FCF) to support climate change adaption in developing countries. To add to that,

environment-related institutions like the UNFCCC, the UNEP, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) are also supported by South Korea (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). In 2012, the UN-ESCAP with the sponsorship and funding of the South Korean government and the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) respectively, published the 'Low Carbon Green Growth Roadmap for Asia and the Pacific'. In the published roadmap, South Korea's model for 'green growth' was fully supported by the UN-ESCAP (UNESCAP, 2012).

The establishment of the East Asia Climate Partnership (EACP) is another multilateral contribution South Korea has made to the multilateral arena in the area of 'green growth'. In 2008, President Lee Myung-bak contributed a total of US$ 200 million to the EACP in support of climate change adaptation of developing countries in Asia and the islands of the Pacific. The contribution made by South Korea, the second-largest ODA package contributed by South Korea, is clear evidence of its dedication to combat global climate change and to the promotion of 'green growth' (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Another contribution South Korea has made in the multilateral arena in the area of 'green growth' is the establishment of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) in June 2010. The GGGI was established as an inter-governmental organisation dedicated to supporting and promoting strong, inclusive and sustainable economic growth in developing countries and emerging countries. The GGGI strategies include: 1) the reduction of GHG emissions, 2) the creation of 'green' job, 3) increased access to sustainable services, 4) improved air quality, 5) an adequate supply of ecosystem services, and 6) enhanced adaptation to climate change. Current member states of the GGGI include South Korea, Australia, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guyana, Hungary, Indonesia, Jordan, Kiribati, Laos, Mexico, Mongolia, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Senegal, Thailand, United Arab Emirates (UAE), United

Kingdom, Vanuatu and Vietnam (GGGI, 2018). The three main activities of the GGGI include: 1) country 'green growth' planning, 2) public-private cooperation and 3) research programs which promote the development of a new 'green growth' paradigm. In addition to the three main activities, the GGGI, working with the World Bank, the UNEP and OECD, to launch the Green Growth Knowledge Platform (GGKP) (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). South Korea's GGGI initiative also presents a paradigm shift in the manner less developed countries (LDCs) are assisted, attempting to provide a more fundamental and institutionalised solutions for environmentally sustainable economic growth. To add to that, the GGGI also serves as a platform to share know-how on economic innovation with developing countries and to provide the international community with implications on the future direction of bilateral or multilateral assistance. The GGGI was finally upgraded to become a full-fledged international organisation in 2012.

The acknowledgement of South Korea's 'green growth' model by the OECD is proof South Korea's model for 'green growth' is comprehensive. 'Green growth' is defined by the OECD as an economic model which fosters economic growth and development while at the same time ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services that a country's well-being relies on. 'Green growth is defined' by the OECD as "fostering economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies. To do this, it must catalyse investment and innovation which will underpin sustained growth and give rise to new economic opportunities" (OECD, 2011). Compared to South Korea's definition of 'green growth', the OECD's definition of 'green growth' is larger in scope as it calls for the conservation of natural capital which includes climate system. The OECD also notes that when it comes to assessing a country's economic development, the country's overall 'well-being' as a while should be taken in account and not just its economic indicators (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Although not as large in scope

compared to the OECD's definition 'green growth', the acknowledgement of South Korea's 'green-growth' model by the OECD is proof that South Korea has contributed to the promotion of the 'green growth' agenda at the international level in addition to making a core global agenda.

The efficacy and comprehensiveness of South Korea's 'green growth' strategy has also resulted in it being scaled up to become a UN agenda for sustainable development as a strategic tool of the 'green economy'. During the Rio+20 Summit in June 2012, one of the main themes of the Summit was "the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" (UN, 2009). After months of complex negotiations between all the parties involved, the theme of the new global meeting was set. The United Nations Environment Program and the OECD with the backing of South Korea and other pioneering countries introduced the concept of a 'green economy'. The 'green economy' is defined by the UNEP as one that results in "improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risk and ecological scarcities." In simple terms, a 'green economy' is one which "low carbon, resource-efficient and socially inclusive" (UNEP, 2011). The concept of 'green economy' was inspired by South Korea's 'green growth' model (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). South Korea's 'green growth' model, in fact, has been introduced in UN publications as a best of green growth practice (UNDESA, 2012). The scaling up of South Korea's 'green growth' strategy to become a UN agenda for sustainable development is a further example of South Korea's contribution to the promotion of the 'green growth' agenda to become a core global agenda.

South Korea's leadership role at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development is an example of it showcasing its commitment to the discussion of environmental issues on an international level. The efforts made by South Korea in pushing the agenda of 'green growth' globally is important as it happened during a time

when major powerful countries were lacking in environmental problems as they were paying more attention to up-front fiscal problems. The lack of leadership by the major powers in the area of 'green growth' in addition to the long-standing stalemate in climate negotiations allowed South Korea to take up a leadership role in the area of 'green growth'. Based on the spirit of 'Me First', South Korea has trailblazed down a path which belongs to no particular side. In addition to that, South Korea also played the role of a mediator and bridger between the developing and developed countries to help resolve conflicts between the two camps (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

In the area of 'green growth', it is without a doubt that South Korea has proven itself to be a pioneer and as well as an important player in the area of 'green growth'. South Korea has managed to upgrade the 'green growth' agenda to become an international agenda that is discussed about in various international forums on climate change and on the environment, undertake actions by following the 'Me First' approach in GHG reduction, serve as a mediator between developed and developing countries when it came to tackling the gridlock in climate change negotiations, assist developing countries with green ODA to help them shift to 'green growth' and established various global architectures for 'green growth'. It is clear that South Korea has made a substantial and monumental impact on the international system concerning the 'green growth' agenda.

4.1.4 South Korea's Impact on Global Security

The last and final area of the international system that will be analysed to see whether South Korea has made an impact is in the area of global security. This section will analyse South Korea's contribution in the area of global nuclear security and international peacekeeping. South Korea is situated in one of the most volatile regions in the world. Therefore, it is in South Korea's interest to ensure that global peace and security is maintained, especially in its region. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, the most present threat to South Korea at this given time is North Korea, specifically its nuclear arsenal.

Because of this, the issue of nuclear security and non-proliferation is of the utmost importance to South Korea. South Korea to date has made numerous contributions to the international community and security in the area of non-proliferation. In addition to becoming a member of various international treaties contained in the non-proliferation regime, South Korea has also sought to further the democratic participation and cooperation with other members states of the regime in order to institutionalise the norms in its domestic legal framework as well as to improve the transparency and effectiveness of nuclear safeguards (Choe, 2012).

South Korea has contributed to several international security institutions. One such institution is the GICNT, whose objective is to secure fissile material and to keep material out of the hands of terrorists. Prior to the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in Seoul, South Korea made modest contributions towards the establishment of a more comprehensive non-proliferation regime. South Korean diplomats were able to successfully push states who made commitments during the previous Washington Nuclear Summit to implement the commitments they made prior to the start of the Seoul Nuclear Summit (Green, 2017). At the end of the Washington NSS, South Korea was chosen to host the next NSS. There are six reasons as to why South Korea was chosen to host the next NSS. The first is due to South Korea being an active participant in international organisations and global initiatives. The second is due to South Korea's excellent track record in supporting global non-proliferation, nuclear security, and the peaceful usage of nuclear energy. The third reason is due to South Korea being a nonnuclear weapons state with an advanced civilian nuclear sector who abides by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The fourth reason South Korea was chosen was because it could serve as an important bridging role between developed and emerging economies of the world, as it served as a model for economic prosperity and development. The fifth reason South Korea was chosen was due to the successes it had in hosting other high-level international forums like the G20

Summit and the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4). The sixth and final reason why South Korean was chosen to host the 2012 NSS was because hosting the NSS in Seoul would set an example for other countries in the Asian region and at the same time put pressure on North Korea to halt its nuclear weapons development program (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Based on all the reasons given above, South Korea has the most credibility in hosting the NSS.

South Korea played a significant role during the Seoul NSS, helping to make five significant achievements in the international arena. The first was that summit in Seoul ensured that commitments made during the Washington Summit were carried out in a timely and reasonable way. The second achievement made was the inclusion of radiological terrorism and discussion of the intersection between nuclear safety and nuclear security, expanding upon the agenda of the NSS. The third achievement made was the expansion of the summit to include six more countries and one more international organisation. The fourth achievement made during the NSS was the breakthrough made in nuclear technology and the setting up of initial steps for future technology sharing agreements. The fifth and last achievement made during the Seoul NSS was the transformation of the NSS from US-focused issues to global issues (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

Regarding the first achievement, the South Korean government outlined three key objectives for the NSS after being selected to host it. Firstly, South Korea sought to reaffirm and consolidate the political will that was generated at the last NSS in Washington. Secondly, to secure further commitments made by member countries, South Korea planned to advance the implementations made by member countries during the Washington NSS. Thirdly, to realise key nuclear security objectives, South Korea sought the drafting of a new and more integrated document (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). To accomplish the first objective, South Korean diplomats had to negotiate with both large

and small powers to get them to agree on the nuclear security threat despite differences in their military and material capabilities. In addition to that, South Korean diplomats also encouraged member countries to view their commitments as a necessity to achieve the goal of building a stronger global nuclear security regime, a regime that would keep their countries safe. In order to accomplish this, South Korean diplomats held briefings and seminars on the NSS for foreign government officials and expert groups to expand the support for the summit from the international community (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

While engaging in Summit negotiations and attempting to verify progress made on national commitments made during the Washington NSS, South Korea encountered three problems. The first was a lack of commonality amongst member countries when it came to nuclear security threat perception. The second problem arose due to the prevailing view that the NSS was excessively dominated by the United States and its interest. During and after the Washington NSS, nuclear security was seen as a primarily-US led agenda and initiative. Participating states were reluctant to make commitments as they perceived that the United States exercised too much influence in determining the agenda, hindering cooperation. The third problem South Korea faced was due to the differing material and financial capabilities of participating countries (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Fiscal austerity in many participating countries due to an economic downturn, specifically the United States and the European Union, has resulted in cuts to nuclear and broader non-proliferation programs (Patrick, 2012).

Despite all the problems faced prior to the commencement of the Seoul NSS, South Korea through patience and persistent diplomacy South Korea was able to tackle all three of the problems they faced. After undertaking intensive two-track approach negotiations and education with all 50 participating countries, perceptions towards recognising nuclear security as a global concern slowly changed. Drawing upon the trust and political goodwill it has accumulated by its participation in international organisations and forums

as well as its activities in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and energy production, South Korea was also able to position itself to serve in a credible bridging role between various participating countries. South Korea also enabled countries to come to a consensus on specific issues in the Seoul Communique by effectively coordinating and negotiating between different positions and interest, setting specific goals and engaging in coalition-building activities. Many countries also carried out their voluntary commitments and promised to contribute to the future to nuclear security as they were encouraged by South Korea's role as summit chair (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

In regard to the second achievement made during the Seoul NSS, South Korea was able to expand the NSS's agenda to include radiological terrorism and the intersection between nuclear safety and nuclear security due to it flexing its diplomatic muscle multilaterally. Following the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in Japan in 2011, to ease both domestic as well as international concerns about the safe and peaceful usage of nuclear energy and technology, South Korea pushed big for the Seoul NSS to focus part of the summit on issues like nuclear safety. Although South Korea sought to expand the range of issues to be included in the Seoul Communique, the limits of South Korea's multilateral diplomacy were soon realised. The United States, in particular, was apprehensive in expanding the agenda of the Seoul NSS. Because of this, the South Korean government had to narrow down this aspect of the Summit to areas where nuclear safety and nuclear security coincided and overlapped with one another (Pomper, 2012). Although South Korea did not manage to achieve its original goal, through continued and persistent consultation and negotiations with the United States and other countries, it managed to finally add the agenda of nuclear safety to the Seoul Communique, albeit a limited one. South Korea also faced problems in pushing forward the agenda of radiological security. For a long time, nuclear terrorism was considered to be a low probability event, but a high consequence case. Radiological terrorism, on the other hand,

was considered to be a high probability event, but a low consequence one. In the aftermath of the Fukushima accident, South Korea worked hard to add the issue of radiological security to the agenda of the NSS, as it saw a 'Fukushima-like radiological terrorism' becoming a high probability and high consequence case. Originally, the issue of radiological security was rejected because it was seen as difficult to negotiate and an unproductive expansion of the original mandate of the NSS. South Korean officials, however, with the use of their skilful negotiation tactics managed to get the issue of radiological security (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Not only did South Korea serve in an effective bridging role, but it also led by example. A pilot program was signed between South Korea and Vietnam which allowed the Southeast Asian country to construct South Korea's radiological tracking system (Pomper, 2012).

In order to attain the third achievement made during the Seoul NSS, the increase in the number of participating summit members, South Korea flexed its diplomatic muscles, trying to draw as many participating countries to the summit as possible. In the lead up to the Seoul NSS, South Korea, not sure whether all member countries which participated in Washington Summit would attend the Seoul Summit, used its skills in diplomacy to limit the participating members to only those who were invested in nuclear security issues, which assisted to maintain clarity and the goals of the Summit. Initially, the number of states participating in the Summit remained the same as the previous Washington Summit, with the sole addition being INTERPOL. Soon, however, new states expressed their strong interest to participate in the Seoul Summit, leading to an increase in the number of participating states. The expansion of the number of participating states was viewed positively by the South Korean government who held the view that expanded participation was a positive development for the strengthening of the global nuclear security regime. Although the number of participating countries the summit had increased, states like Iran and North Korea were not included in the Seoul NSS. The

reason as to why Iran and North Korea were not included in the summit was due to two reasons. The first reason was due to complicated political issues and the issue of state-sponsored nuclear proliferation. The second was that by focussing only on Iran and North Korea, the summit would steer away from the narrow nuclear security agenda of the summit (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). By skilfully utilising its role as the host of the NSS as well as its credibility as a responsible stakeholder on nuclear issues, South Korea was able to encourage the active participation by a larger number of states during the negotiation process. It also actively made efforts to steer away from the North Korean nuclear issue in order for it not to overshadow the larger nuclear security issue.

For the fourth achievement of the Seoul NSS, the breakthrough made in nuclear technology and the setting up of initial steps for future technology sharing agreements, South Korea's contribution came with it agreeing to share its 'high-density LEU' production knowledge with the United States, France and Belgium. To add to that, in March 2012, the South Korea government started building a nuclear security-training (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Though not necessarily a product of South Korea's diplomatic strength, the technical contributions made by South Korea is evidence that it is invested in nuclear security issues and can contribute further to the strengthening of the global nuclear security architecture.

Finally, for the fifth and last achievement of the Seoul NSS, the transformation of the NSS from US-focused issues to global issues, South Korean leadership was instrumental in bringing about the transformation. During the NSS, the South Korean government aggressively campaigned for the adoption and the development of the concept of global nuclear security governance in order to create a comprehensive regime that would tie together all the separate treaties, initiatives, norms, and practices that exist under the umbrella of nuclear security. At the end of the Summit, however, the Seoul Communique adopted the term 'architecture' instead of 'governance' due to different interpretations of

the term 'governance' (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). Regardless, by engaging in careful and persistent negotiations, South Korea was able to transform the NSS from a United States led initiative to a more universal-based one that would tackle more common issues and advances new agendas (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013).

It is evident from the five achievements made during the Seoul NSS that South Korea had played an important and instrumental role in helping to make those achievements. South Korea successfully utilised their diplomatic capacity to not only bridge the gap between member countries of the NSS and expand the agenda of the NSS but also to shift the NSS from US-dominated issues to more global issues concerning nuclear security. The reason as to why South Korea is so invested in the area of global nuclear security and sought to set agendas and bring changes to it is due to the North Korean nuclear issue. At present, North Korea still possess a security threat to South Korea due to its nuclear arsenal. If South Korea can continue to exercise its diplomatic and leadership capacity, it can be reasoned that South Korea in the future will be able to use its position to make changes in the arena of nuclear security that would make not only the world safer, but more importantly, the Korean peninsula safer.

In addition to the NSS, South Korea has made other impacts in the realm of international non-proliferation and counter-proliferation. South Korea from 2011 to 2013 chaired not only the United Nations Security Council but the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC). In 2010 and 2012, South Korea hosted exercises carried out by the Proliferation Security Initiative in addition to leading discussions on preventing WMD proliferation and seizing WMDs while conducting maritime interdiction training. In 2016, South Korea greatly contributed to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime by serving as the Chair of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MCTR) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016).

South Korea has also made an impact on global security by strengthening multilateral security cooperation. In order to build military confidence as well as improve the security environment of the Asia Pacific region, the South Korean Ministry of National Defense has held the Seoul Defense Dialogue (SDD) since 2012. With participants joining from America, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, the SDD is slowly transforming to become a global security cooperation consultative group. During the third SDD which was held in 2014, a Cyber Working Group Meeting was officially launched, laying the groundwork for future dialogue on the need for multilateral security cooperation on cybersecurity. In 2015, during the fourth SDD, the Declaration on the Vision of Defense Dialogue for the Promotion of Multilateral Defense Cooperation was adopted by the attending nations. During the fourth SDD, the South Korean government also explained its efforts to maintain peaceful cooperation in East Asia as well as resolve the security crisis on the Korean Peninsula. In addition to that, South Korea had also asked for further help from participating countries to be more involved in resolving the security crisis. It was at the fifth anniversary of the SSD saw the inclusion of even more countries from Europe and Africa, transforming the SDD into a fully global security dialogue forum. It was during the fifth SDD, where discussions were focussed on the North Korean nuclear issue, maritime security, cyber terrorism, and terrorism. A notable moment during the fifth SSD was when defence officials and civilian security experts from South Korea, Japan, China, the United States, and Russia came together and agreed to carry out their respective commitments thoroughly to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea 2016). The establishment of the SDD by the South Korean Ministry of National Defense is a clear example of South Korea contributing to international security by establishing a forum where countries from around the world can come together to cooperate multilaterally to contribute to world peace.

In addition to making an impact on global nuclear security and strengthening multilateral security cooperation, South Korea has also made an impact in another area of global security: international peacekeeping operations. Although South Korea has not yet emerged as a leader in the area of international peacekeeping diplomacy, South Korea still has made positive impacts in this area by contributing greatly to UN and other regional peacekeeping operations (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). South Korea has been a constant contributor to the United Nation's (UN) peacekeeping effort ever since it undertook its first UN peacekeeping mission to Somalia in 1991. Since then, South Korea has continued to actively serve as a contributor to the United Nations' peacekeeping operations. As of 2013, South Korea has provided a total of 615 peacekeeping personnel. Out of that 615 peacekeeping personnel, a total of 599 of them served as peacekeeping troops, while the remainder served as military observers and advisers. To date, South Korea has contributed greatly in three specific UN peacekeeping missions: UNIFIL in Lebanon, MINUSTAH in Haiti, and more recently, UNIMISS in South Sudan. During the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon, South Korea's *Domyeong* Unit served as an important buffer between Lebanon and Israel while overseeing a ceasefire between the two states. In addition to that, South Korea also provided a number of services to the local population ranging from providing medical care to building and repairing infrastructure. In 2010, when a devastating earthquake struck the island nation of Haiti, South Korea sent the *Danbi* unit as part of the UN peacekeeping mission to the country. The *Danbi* unit was not only tasked with repairing and rebuilding destroyed infrastructure but to provide medical care, education and vocational training to the local population. In their most recent peacekeeping mission, UNMISS in South Sudan, South Korea sent 275 peacekeepers to the country in response to UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon's pleas for UN members to send peacekeeping support to preserve the fragile peace between North Sudan and the newly independent South Sudan (Roehrig, 2013). The group of

peacekeepers sent by South Korea were mainly composed of engineers and medical personnel, sent to assist rebuilding the war-torn country, refurbishing the main airport, maintaining and expanding the city's infrastructure, constructing landfills as well as providing medical services for the local population and animals (Kang, 2013). From the examples we have seen, in all of the UN peacekeeping missions South Korea have participated in so far, South Korea has not only kept the peace but also have contributed in rebuilding destroyed local infrastructure as well as providing medical care and education to the local population.

In addition to directly supporting UN peacekeeping missions by supplying troops and personnel, South Korea has also financially contributed to United Nations' peacekeeping operations fund, which is another factor which can also be used to measure a country's backing and support of peacekeeping operations. In 2012, South Korea provided a total of US $150 million, or 1.99 % of the UN peacekeeping budget, ranking them 12th out of the top 15th contributors of the UN peacekeeping budget, coming behind traditional middle power countries like Japan, Canada and Australia. In contributing to the UN peacekeeping operation budget, South Korea has joined the ranks of traditional middle powers (Roehrig, 2013).

The desire of South Korea to engage actively in UN peacekeeping missions goes beyond supplying personnel and finances. South Korea has made it a point to expand and improve its ability to respond more quickly to calls for peacekeepers, keeping in line with its desire to expand its peacekeeping commitments and capabilities. In 2009, the South Korean Ministry of Defence created standing units which were to be devoted entirely to peacekeeping operations. To that end, a total of 3000 personnel was assigned to these peacekeeping units, total of 1000 personnel were designated as ready to deploy for overseas mission within one month of receiving the order to deploy, another 1000 were to serve as a reserve force, and the last 1000 were to serve as engineering, medical,

military police and transport units (Ministry of National Defense Republic of Korea, 2016). Another example showcasing South Korea's desire to expand their participation in international peacekeeping operations came in 2010, when the South Korean National Assembly passed the 'Law on Participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations' which allowed for a more rapid response time by providing the legal authority to send up to 1000 personnel when the UN request for help without requiring a formal approval from the National Assembly (Roehrig, 2013). The final example of South Korea showcasing its desire to expand their participation in international peacekeeping operations was when the South Korean government formed the Peacekeeping Operations Centre which provides pre-deployment education for personnel about to deploy, 'after-action' reports to assess the effectiveness of the unit deployed abroad, and finally, gather any lessons learned that could help in future peacekeeping missions (Roehrig, 2013). But why is South Korea going to such lengths to contribute to the United Nation's peacekeeping operations and budget? The reason as to why South Korea has poured so much money into the UN peacekeeping operation budget is due partly to it wanting to repay the international community for all the assistance it has given to South Korea throughout its history, most notably during the Korean War. As former South Korean President Lee Myung-bak articulated in his 2011 UN General Assembly address, South Korea desires to give back to the international community more than it had ever received, wanting to extend a helping hand to those who are in need, supplying them with the suitable resources. President Lee in his address further stated that South Korea would continue to work closely with the United Nations to play a constructive role in tackling the various challenges the international community would face (Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, 2011). South Korea's contribution to international PKO can also be viewed through a realist lens like earlier examples. The reason as to why South Korea engages in PKO is to ensure the continued maintenance of a stable

international environment to maintain its economic growth (Ikenberry and Mo, 2013). In addition to that, it is also possible to view South Korea's contribution to international PKOs as a way in which South Korea cultivates a positive global image of itself to other countries and to accumulate goodwill, goodwill that can be used later in the event of a future South Korean-North Korean conflict.

In addition to UN PKOs, South Korea has also been an active contributor to global counterpiracy operations. Since March 2009, South Korea has been an active participant of the Combined Task Force (CTF-151) that is tasked with conducting counterpiracy operations in the waters of the Gulf of Aden and Somalia's east coast. The unit dispatched, codenamed *Cheonghae*, consisted of one KDX-II destroyer and its crew and a Lynx helicopter. The *Cheonghae* unit's mission was to provide escort for ships, mainly South Korean, travelling through the pirate-infested waters of the Gulf of Aden and to participate in other operations conducted by the CTF-151. In the first two years of operations, the *Cheonghae* unit successfully rescued a total of ten civilian ships (Roehrig, 2012). In April 2010, command of CTF-151 was handed over to South Korea for the first time since South Korea joined the multinational naval task force (Roehrig, 2012). South Korea once again assumed command of the task force in 2019 (Naval Today, 2019). South Korea taking leadership of the task force on two separate occasions is a testament to South Korea's contribution to tackling piracy in the region. In addition to taking part in CTF-151 operations, South Korea's *Cheonghae* unit has also taken part in the European Union lead Operation Atalanta (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017). As of early 2019, South Korea's *Cheonghae* unit has aided a total of 21,895 ships and has executed 21 active anti-piracy interdictions (Jung, 2019). Besides taking an active role in counterpiracy operations, South Korea has also contributed financially to support the UN's counter-piracy efforts. South Korea provided a total of USD$500,000 to the UN's fund for the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) (Roehrig, 2012).

South Korea has also made other non-military contributions to tackling global piracy. In 2009, South Korea hosted the Seoul High-Level Meeting on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. The high-level meeting was attended by countries and international bodies who share the common interest in wanting to eliminate piracy in the waters around the Somali coast. South Korea's diplomatic capacity during the high-level meeting led to the adoption of the 'Seoul Statement on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia'. The 'Seoul Statement on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia' contributed to the towards the international agreement on the process to aid in capacity-building in Somalia and neighbouring countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009). In 2013, South Korea lead the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security, which brought together officials from foreign ministries, coast guard agencies, maritime ministries and defence ministries of participating countries, as well as specialists from organizations like the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013) South Korea has clearly contributed a great deal to combat global piracy. It has contributed militarily in the form of the *Cheonghae* unit, and it has used its diplomatic capacity to host high-level meetings and forums on combating global piracy.

4.2   Conclusion

So, has South Korea fulfilled the second criteria of the 'systemic impact' approach? This paper will contend that South Korea has managed to fulfil the second criteria of the 'systemic impact' approach. South Korea has proven itself as an actor that is able to leave an impact on the international community. In the realm the global economy and financial system, South Korea showed its leadership capacity by ushering change to the G20 and the IMF. Through South Korean leadership, the G20 evolve from being an ad hoc crisis management body which only met during emergencies to become an institution which is

capable of contributing to the burgeoning system of global governance by presenting new agendas. South Korea's leadership and role as a bridge between the developed and developing countries also managed to usher in reform to the IMF, enhancing the body's legitimacy, credibility, and effectiveness with the adoption of an agreement which saw a shift in quota shares from developed countries to developing countries and from over-represented countries to under-represented countries. In the area of global development, South Korea used its unique position as a current developed country and a former underdeveloped country to bridge between the developed and the developing countries, facilitating the transition away from a 'one size fits all' model of development to a new development framework which is more inclusive. Perhaps the greatest impact South Korea has made to the international system is in the area of 'green growth'. South Korea in the last decade has emerged to become a major proponent of 'green growth', utilising its diplomacy to make the discussion on 'green growth' a major agenda at forums. In addition to that, South Korea has also used its role as a bridge to serve as a vital mediator when it came to negotiations involving 'green growth'. To add to that, South Korea has also established international organisations to serve as platforms when it comes to the sharing of knowledge on the area of 'green growth. As a result of South Korea's comprehensive 'green growth' strategy, the United Nations have scaled it up to become a UN agenda for sustainable development. Finally, in the area of global security, South Korea has made an impact by using its role as a bridge to not only expand the agenda of the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) but also to shift the NSS away from US dominated issues to global issues concerning nuclear security. South Korea has also left an impact on international security by taking part in numerous Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)s across the globe, bringing stability and security to hostile regions. From the examples given, it is clear that South Korea is indeed a 'middle power' based on the systemic impact approach. Not only is South Korea capable of protecting its core national interest, but it

has also made an impact on the international system by reforming institutions like the IMF and the G20, bringing the agenda of 'green growth' to the forefront of all major forums as well as ensuring global peace and security by actively participating and contributing to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.

It is also clear that from the examples given above that the reason as to why South Korea has sought out to impact the international system was not only to be a good international citizen but also to benefit itself in some way by being a good international citizen. As such, South Korea's pursuit of 'middle power' diplomacy can be viewed through a realist lens, with each decision taken by its policymakers based on hard calculations on how a specific action or undertaking can benefit South Korea and its interests. As pointed out by researcher Sarah Teo from the National University of Singapore (NUS) in an interview carried out, South Korea carries out 'middle power' diplomacy not only because it wants to be a good international citizen, but because it also benefits them in doing so (Sarah Teo, E-mail interview, February 2018). Professor Geetha Govindasamy from the University Malaya also echoes the statement made by Teo. Professor Govindasamy states that South Korea pursues 'middle power' diplomacy out of self-interest as well as an interest to improve its image abroad. Govindasamy points out that by giving ODA and initiating funds that help infrastructure development in many developing countries and resource-rich countries, South Korea has not only fulfilled its goal of acquiring resources, but South Korea has also provided a platform in which small and medium-sized South Korean companies and businesses can operate in. In regards to improving its image, Govindasamy points out that South Korea seeks to improve its image as a means to solve the nuclear problem it has with North Korea, as South Korea cannot solve the problem with North Korea unilaterally and needs assistance from the international community (Geetha Govindasamy, E-mail interview, March 2018). It is safe to assume that South Korea's 'middle power' diplomacy will likely to continue into the

future as long as it in their self-interest to do so. This is especially true if South Korea can utilise the goodwill garnered from its 'middle power' diplomacy and initiatives to resolve the North Korean problem which it faces.

CHAPTER 4:CONCLUSION

As long as there is no consensus among scholars on what approach should be used to evaluate a country and whether or not it is a 'middle power', there will be continuous debate among scholars on whether a specific country should be considered a 'middle power' or not. Although the three traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power' has contributed much to the discourse on how a country should be evaluated when it comes to determining whether or not it is a 'middle power', the traditional approaches nonetheless fall short, having criticism levied against each one of them by various scholars. The positional approach to evaluating 'middle power' is criticized as having almost no value when it comes to predicting or explaining the behaviour or actions taken by states that are classified as a 'middle power' in addition to making scholars think in term of averages instead of a country's strategic situation and position. Where else the behavioural approach which was a response to criticisms levied on the positional approach is criticized as being tautological, a self-fulfilling prophecy. Finally, the identity approach to evaluating 'middle power' is criticized by certain scholars by posing certain questions like: what if a country stops identifying itself a 'middle power'? Does a country, therefore, stop being a 'middle power' if it stops identifying as one? The introduction of the 'systemic impact' approach to evaluating 'middle power' by the scholar Andrew Carr, therefore, is timely as it provides scholars with a new approach on how 'middle power' status is evaluated. It is in this paper's opinion that the 'systemic impact' approach avoids the pitfalls of the traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power' as it takes into consideration the criticism levied against the traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power' by incorporating aspects of the 'positional' and 'behavioural' approaches to evaluating 'middle power' and building on them. Firstly, it provides a 'meaning' and 'explanation' as to state's material capabilities and why it would seek to increase its material capabilities. Secondly, it focusses on the outcomes of a state's actions rather than

its intention. In addition to that, the 'systemic impact' approach avoids falling into the trap of tautology as well as normative idealism suffered by the 'behavioural approach'. The 'systemic impact' approach also provides a more solid ground for judgement, as it does not merely accept the words of governments and policymakers who profess that their state is a 'middle power'. Carr's 'systemic impact' approach therefore in this paper's opinion provides a holistic approach to evaluating 'middle power', one that enriches the literature as to how a 'middle power' status is to be evaluated.

It is clear that the term and concept of 'middle power' has become more prominent in South Korea, becoming an important part of its diplomatic narrative in the last two decades. South Korean presidents like Roh Moo-hyun, Lee Myung-bak, and Park Guen-hye have all expressed South Korea to be a 'middle power' during their respective presidencies. However, is South Korea an actual 'middle power'? Traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power' indicate that South Korea is a 'middle power'. However, as stated early on in this study, the three traditional approaches to evaluating 'middle power' is flawed and insufficient.

So, is South Korea a 'middle power' based on the systemic impact approach to evaluating 'middle power'. This paper contends that South Korea is indeed a 'middle power' based on the 'systemic impact' approach. South Korea has managed to fulfil the two criteria set by the 'systematic impact' approach to be considered a 'middle power'.

Firstly, South Korea has sufficient capabilities to defend its core national interest against external threats. South Korea has taken great strides in enhancing its defensive posture and military readiness to meet the threats posed to its core national interest. The South Korean military has established an advance and robust surveillance and reconnaissance network at all major contact points with North Korea, giving the South Korean military the ability to adequately respond to any threat coming from the North and to neutralise it before it can pose a threat to the people of South Korea. To add to that,

the South Korean military has also constructed additional defensive fortification in high-risk contact zones. These additional defensive fortifications at high-risk zones will make it much harder for an external force to capture the territory in these high-risk contact zones, requiring the enemy to expend additional resources to overcome a highly entrenched South Korean force. Extensive realistic and scientific training is also being conducted by each branch of the South Korean military. This to ensure its personnel are well-trained and familiar with their respective role(s) during wartime conditions, leading to an increase in operational and combat efficiency. Regular joint military exercises and training sessions are also carried out to improve the joint and combined operational capabilities of the military during wartime The realistic, scientific, and joint training carried out by the South Korean military has increased the readiness of its armed personnel for actual combat situations.

In addition to bolstering its defence posture and readiness, South Korea has also undertaken a massive military modernisation program to replace many of its ageing military assets. The South Korean Army over the last few years has introduced a number of highly advanced assets to replace its ageing assets. These new additions include the heavily armed, armoured and networked K2 Black Panther MBT; the versatile next-generation K21 IFV; the advanced domestically developed 'Chunmoo' MLRS and 'Hyungung' rocket system; and the highly advanced American made Boeing AH-64E Apache attack helicopter. The introduction of these highly advanced assets has greatly increased the offensive capabilities of the South Korean Army, making the Army a formidable opponent to any country that might try to invade South Korean soil. Like the Army, the South Korean Navy has also been modernised as a result of multiple naval modernisation programs. The KDX program undertaken by the Navy has led to the introduction of three highly advanced and heavily armed multifunctional next-generation ship classes: the KDX-I Gwanggaeto Daewang-class destroyer, the KDX-II

Chungmugong Yi Sunshin-class destroyer, and the KDX-III Sejong Daewang-class destroyer. With its advanced and state-of-the-art systems, ships of the KDX class are fully capable of responding to the maritime threats South Korea might face in the Northeast Asia region and regions beyond. Similar to the KDX program, the FFX program has also greatly increased the capabilities of the South Korean Navy. The introduction of the Incheon-class frigate and the Daegu-class frigate, both heavily armed and technologically advance warships, are fully capable of serving as a formidable deterrent to any country that might threaten South Korea's territorial waters and core national interest. The PKX program saw the creation of two new ship-classes, the PKG and the PKMR. Both the PKG and the PKMR are equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and armaments and are specifically designed to repel high-speed amphibious North Korean vessels in highly cluttered-littoral environments. The introduction of the PKG and the PKMR has vastly improved the ability of the South Korean Navy to protect its littoral waters against North Korean threats and intrusions. The South Korean Navy has also improved on its ability to project power in the region with the introduction of the Dokdo-class LDP. Mine warfare capabilities of the South Korean Navy has also been improved with the introduction of next-generation mine warfare vessels into service. The South Korean Navy submarine modernisation program, codenamed KSS, saw the introduction of three state-of-the-art submarines: the Chan Bogo-class and the Sohn Won-il-class. The introduction of the Chan Bogo-class and the Sohn Won-il class have significantly improved the abilities of the South Korean Navy to deter asymmetric threats from North Korea in addition to improving the South Korean Navy's overall strategic capabilities in the Northeast Asian region. The South Korean Navy has also taken great steps to modernise its air wing. The introduction of the advance AW159 Wildcat ASW helicopter and the Boeing P-8 has greatly improved the South Korean Navy's overall ASW and ISR capabilities, while the

introduction of the state-of-the-art KUH-1 Surion amphibious helicopter has greatly improved the amphibious lift capabilities of the Navy.

The South Korean Air Force like the South Korean Army and South Korean Navy also underwent a massive modernisation campaign. The South Korean Air Force's Next Generation Fighter Programme has introduced the F-15K Slam Eagle and later the F-35 Lightning II fighter aircraft into the service of the South Korean Air Force. The F-15K Slam Eagle and the F-35 Lightning II are both highly advance and heavily armed fighter aircraft that are fully capable of defending South Korean airspace from enemy intrusion in addition to providing ground support for friendly units.

The 'triad system' currently being developed by South Korea in response to the nuclear threat posed by North Korea has also greatly enhanced the South Korean military's ability to protect the country's core national interest. The development of the 'Kill-Chain', KAMD, and KMPR system, which integrates almost all of the advanced military assets South Korea have procured over the years, will result in the creation of a state-of-the-art missile shield over the southern half of the Korean peninsula. In addition to that, the systems will also enable South Korea to launch a devastating counterattack upon North Korea in the event of a full-scale North Korean attack. The presence of the 'Kill-Chain, KAMD, and KMPR system will no doubt raise the cost of a North Korean invasion or for that matter an invasion by any hostile party.

It is without a doubt that South Korea has the capabilities to defend its core national interest. Although geared towards deterring and countering North Korea at the current moment, the assets the South Korean military have acquired over the years can be easily used to deter and counter other threats to its core national interest if such a situation arise.

Secondly, South Korea has managed to alter specific elements of the current international system through formalised international structures using its diplomatic capacity. In the area of the global economy and finance, South Korean leadership and

agenda-setting was instrumental in transforming the G20 from an ad hoc emergency group into an institution that can contribute the burgeoning system of global governance. Furthermore, South Korea manage to transform the G20 into an institution which reflected the interest of non-member countries. South Korean leadership was also instrumental in reforming the IMF and increasing the reserve pool of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization Agreement. In the area of global development, South Korea has left a lasting impact. South Korean leadership and agenda-setting was instrumental in the introduction and adoption of the 'Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth' by the G20, the brokering of the Busan Partnership during the HLF-4, and the inclusion of emerging countries within the framework of international development cooperation. South Korea is also partnering with the UNDP and the World Bank to share its developmental model, Saemaul Undong, to developing countries across the globe. In sharing its developmental experience with the UNDP and the World Bank, South Korea has enhanced the efficacy of the UNDP's and World Bank's global development programs. Through its partnership with the UNDP and World Bank, South Korea is actively shaping how developmental efforts are carried out in the developing world. South Korean leadership and diplomacy has also managed to greatly impact the area of global green growth. South Korea managed to elevate 'green growth' to become a global agenda at many high-level international forums, changed the framework for climate negotiations and the model for climate change, resolved conflicts that arose during climate negotiations, donated funds to support climate change adaption in developing countries, and pioneered the concept of the 'green economy'. South Korea has also established global architectures for 'green growth' like the EACP and the GGGI to further promote and support the 'green growth' agenda multilaterally. The UN and the OECD have also adopted South Korea's 'green growth' strategy as the model for sustainable development, a testament to the comprehensiveness of South Korea's strategy and effort to promote the

'green growth' as a global agenda. In the area of global security, South Korea has also managed to make a positive impact. South Korea has actively contributed to global non-proliferation and counter-proliferation efforts, strengthened multilateral security cooperation, and has enhanced the security in many conflict regions through PKOs.

This study has proven that South Korea is a 'middle power' based on the 'systemic impact' approach. South Korea has the ability to defend its core national from external threats, and it has made a significant impact on the international system. Further research should be carried out on areas in which South Korea can pursue its 'middlepowermanship'. Potential areas for future research include South Korea's possible leadership or bridging role concerning Asian energy cooperation, Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia integration, and global cybersecurity. Other potential areas that can be researched on in the future include South Korean 'middle power' diplomacy during the presidency of President Moon Jae-in and the future challenges to South Korean 'middle power' diplomacy.

There are, however, many challenges that South Korea will face that may hamper its ability to function as an effective 'middle power'. The most obvious challenge South Korea faces at the moment is the escalating hostility between the United States and China due to the ongoing trade war and the South China Sea freedom of navigation issue. As the United States and China are both vital to South Korea, continuing hostility between the two superpowers will no doubt hamper South Korea's ability to act as an effective 'middle power' in the Northeast Asian region and possibly beyond. Research should, therefore, be carried out by scholars on how South Korea can utilise its 'middle power' diplomacy to either navigate through these troubling times or alleviate the tension caused by the superpower rivalry.

As the globe has become increasingly unstable, it is up to countries like South Korea to ensure the stability and continuation of international norms, frameworks, and

institutions. Only time will tell whether South Korea and countries like it will be successful.

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