

# Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula: A Blessing for South Korean People

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In-depth Report: [NORTH KOREA](#)

*We have gone through, for the last three months, unusual experiences.*

*We could admire the humanism in sports; we were touched by the beauty, the elegance and the professionalism of North Korean singers and dancers.*

*We saw, through the Kim-Moon summit and the North-South exchange of musical groups, that **the North-South blood tie was stronger than the North-South regime divide.***

*We were hoping with all our mind and heart for the closing of the last pages of the Cold War. But we realized that the Pyongyang Wall was pretty high.*

*We pray that the Singapore summit will make the Pyongyang Wall crumble, once and for all, as did the Berlin Wall.*

*We have been, for the last three month, hearing and reading, in connection with the nuclear issues, about governments, political leaders, diplomats and different events.*

*But, we seldom hear or read about the people who have been affected in different ways by the nuclear crisis.*

*Well, in this paper, I will discuss about how the South Korean people have been affected by the nuclear crisis.*

To better understand the impact of the nuclear crisis on South Korea and its people, it is better to examine its internal political history.

In South Korea, there are two distinct groups in connection with the nuclear crisis. The one which has benefitted from the nuclear crisis is the conservative government and its supporters. The other one is the South Korean people for whom the nuclear crisis and North-South conflict were a heavy burden.

The principal negative impact of the nuclear crisis on the South Korean people includes the retreat of democracy, the increased Korea risk hurting foreign direct investments and the destruction of the groundwork of reunification.

My argument is that these heavy cost incurred by the South Korean People is attributable, mainly, to the dictatorship of the conservative government, which was facilitated by the Korean nuclear crisis and North-South tension.

On the other hand, **as far as the conservative government and its supporters are concerned, the nuclear crisis has been very beneficial.**

There are two reasons for this.

First, the nuclear crisis of North Korea has allowed the conservative government to scare the voters with frequent fabricated threats from the North and to get the votes in its favour. It has made itself elected many times owing to this unethical tactic.

Second, the nuclear crisis has given the conservative government ample opportunities to enrich, through illegal kickbacks, bribes and other illegal means, those individuals and the institutions involved in the production and the transactions of weapons.

Consequently, the **denuclearization is a losing game** as far as the conservative government and its supporters are concerned; they may even wish the Trump-Kim summit not to be successful.

To see this, we have to learn a few things from the Korean political history of the post-Pacific War era.

We will see how the conservative government has exploited the North-South conflict for its political ambition and financial greed.

When Korea was liberated from the yoke of Japanese colonialism in 1945, a conservative democratic government was established in the South under President, **Syngman Rhee** and a communist government, in the North under President, **Kim Il-sung**.

Thus, from the beginning of the post-Pacific War era, Korea was divided along the line of ideology. This was bad enough, but what was even worse was the division along the line of pro-Japan and anti-Japan positions.

The South Korean government was formed essentially by those who served the Japanese during the colonial era and who participated in the torturing of the Korean patriots and in many other crimes against Koreans, while the North Korean government was established by those who fought the Japanese armed forces.

In this way, the Korean peninsula was divided into pro-Japan democratic conservative group in the South and communist anti-Japan group in the North.

This double-line division of the Korean peninsula has created mutual mistrust, animosity and hostility. Under this situation, the conservative South Korean government and its supporters have developed "**anti-North Korea culture**" in which North Korea was demonized. North Korea was described as the eternal enemy of South Korea and a source of great danger.

Therefore, in the eyes of the conservative government, those who were sympathiser of North Korea were also enemies of South Korea, or more precisely, the enemy of the conservative government and its supporters.

The anti-North Korea culture made it easy for the conservative government to label all those who criticized it as "sympathizers of North Korea" and to punish them harshly in the name of the National Security Act.

All those who criticized the conservative government or who were not friendly to it were categorized as **“Red”**.

The **“Red-Culture”**, called in Korean language (Palgaing-ie-moon-hwa) emerged. Under the Red-Culture, even if you are pure democrat, you are a “Palgaing-ie”, if you are not with the conservative government.

Under this situation, it was easy to impose dictatorship. In fact, all the conservative governments since 1948 were ruled by dictators.

President Syngman Rhee (1948-1960) had the most aggressive anti-North Korea attitude. He accused more than two hundred thousand civilians for being “Red” and killed them all in areas of Jeju, Yosu and Soonchon.

His government was one of the most corrupted governments and it ruled the country through the police dictatorship.

On April 19th, 1960, more than sixty thousand students revolted and chased Rhee out of Korea. He escaped on board of an American CIA plane.

We call this student revolt as **Revolution-4.19** (Sa-il-goo-hyung-myung)

The next brutal government was that of General **Park Chung-hee** who ruled from 1962 to 1979 through military-CIA dictatorship. To silence voices of criticism and objection, he used innocent citizens to produce false North Korean spies.

Millions of families which had nothing to do with North Korea were the target of police harassment for the simple reason of knowing somebody who had liberal ideology.

There were many who killed themselves by burning, because, in the absence of freedom of speech, it was perhaps only way of accusing injustice and violation of human rights.

From October 16 to 20 of 1979, more than fifty thousand students in Busan and Masan (BU-MA) areas revolted against electoral fraud committed by General Park and this is known as **Resistance-BU-MA** (Bu-ma-hang- jaing).

General Park was assassinated by his CIA director, **Kim Jae-kyu**, on October 26, 1979.

The conservative government following Park Chung-hee’s was that of General **Chun Doo-hwan** who ruled from 1979 to 1987. He was as brutal, if not more, as General Park.

His most subhuman crime was the massacre of Kwang-ju citizens on the 18th of May, 1980.

About nine hundred were killed by the Korea army who used even helicopters to shoot down the citizens of all ages; more than one thousand were injured.

It started by a peaceful demonstration against injustice and violation of human rights, but General Chun wanted to destroy the very roots of complaints against him and falsely accused the citizens as soldiers from North Korea.

This incident is called **Kwang-ju Fight for Democratization-5.18** (Oh-il-pal- kwang-ju-min-ju-hwa-un-dong).

General Chun was tried and condemned to death but pardoned by President Kim Dae-jung. He was also accused for embezzling several hundred millions of US dollars.

The dictatorship of the conservative government had continued until June, 1987 when far more than one million citizens took the street to stop the system of indirect election of president and amend the constitution allowing direct presidential election.

This huge demonstration is called the **June Resistance** (Yu-wol-hang-jaing).

Chun was succeeded by another general, **Rho Tae-woo** (1987-1993) who continued military rule. He was condemned and imprisoned for the embezzlement of millions of dollars and corruption.

After the five-year rule of the government of **Kim Yong-sam** (1993-1998) during which the military domination became less visible, the two liberal progressive governments took power.

Ten years of liberal progressive government of **Kim Dae-jung** (1998-2003) and **Rho Moo-hyun** (2003-2008) was a period of peace and North-South multi-dimensional cooperation.

**And democracy was restored.**

But, the restoration of democracy and inter-Korea peace was broken when President **Lee Myong-bak** took power in 2008.

He ended all inter-Korea contacts in 2010 by virtue of a decree of May 24 of 2010, called **Policy Measure-5.24** (Oh-ie-sa-jo-chi).

This Policy Measure prohibited North Korean ships from using South Korean harbours, cut off all North-South trade, prohibited South Korean citizens from traveling to North; it made illegal South Korean investments in North Korea. In addition, it stopped all aids to North Korea.

In short, the Policy Measure-5.24 meant a complete cessation of North-South dialogues and cooperation.

The end result of this Policy Measure was the intensification of the North-South tension, which inevitably facilitated the conservative government's control of media and political movement of the liberal progressive group.

Lee Myung-bak ruled through the dictatorship of CIA, the police and even military intelligence service.

Lee Myong-bak is now in prison and accused of the manipulation of social media for his presidential election, embezzlement of millions of dollars, abuse of power and transaction of influences and several other crimes of corruption.

His successor, Mme **Park Geun-hye** (2013-2017), daughter of General, Park Chung-hee, took power in 2013. She repeated what Lee Myung-bak had done, may be even more.

She made a black list of ten thousand artists, filmmakers, actors, journalists and civil movement leaders to silence their voice of criticism.

She has embezzled a huge amount of money in complicity with her friend Choi Sun-sil; she mobilized the whole government agencies of power for her personal greed and ambitions.

She is now in prison to serve 24 years of imprisonment.

Thus, South Korea has had six conservative presidents. Of these six, one was chased away by students, one was assassinated by his CIA director, four are or were imprisoned for abuse of power, embezzlement of public funds and violation of human rights.

The Korean people have, under these politicians, endured the 55-year dictatorship; they suffered from fear and anguish produced by the brutality of authorities; they were fed up with the never - ending corruption of high-placed people.

But, they did fight back; for seven months from 2016 to 2017, 17 million people of all ages, all regions and all sectors of the society took the sub-zero cold streets of Kwanghwah-Moon of Seoul and elsewhere in the country.

And they produced the miracle of **the Candle-Light Revolution** (Chop-pool- hyung-myung).

The Candle-Light Revolution impeached Park Guen-hye and elected, as President, one of the most honest, the most competent and the most loving men in the modern history of Korea.

His name is **Moon Jae-in** who will lead the destiny of Koreans toward the society of security, justice, equality and prosperity. More than 80% of South Koreans have faith in him.

With Moon Jae-in, the North-South tension is attenuated and the **democracy is restored again** after 55-year dictatorship of all sorts committed by the conservative government

The second type of cost imposed on South Korea was the increase in Korea risk preventing a normal inflow of foreign direct investments (FDI). South Korea shows one of the lowest FDI ratios among the OECD countries. In 2017, the ratio of inflow FDI stock to GDP was 12.0 % as against 52.0% for OECD countries.

Finally, another heavy cost was the total destruction - by Lee Mung-bak and Park Gun-hye - of the groundwork of Korean reunification carefully established by the two liberal progressive governments of Kim Dae-jung and Rho Moo-hyun

In short, the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula has imposed heavy cost on South Korea and its people. This cost includes, as seen above, the retreat of democracy, the destruction of the groundwork of the country's reunification and negative impact on its economy.

To conclude, if the Singapore Summit is successful so that denuclearisation takes place, it will be a **great blessing** for South Koreans.

They will be able to further develop true democracy, advance toward the reunification of the Korean peninsula, a new round of the rapid economic development.

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