

From Russia with Love: A Historical Analysis of Russia Foreign Policy toward North Korea

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ABSTRACT

The The collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism has changed the policy of Russia toward North Korea. However, North Korea has been associated as the closest ally of Russia, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This article will explain the transformation of the Russian and Soviet Union relationship using a zero-sum approach. This article shows that Russia prefers to maintain a close relationship with North Korea, with extensive opportunities to improve its economic and security interests within the region of East Asia. Russia will avoid high-risk conflict because it focuses on economic stability. As the closest and critical ally of Russia, North Korea tends to depend on Russia as the sole partner in economic and security. This research will employ a historical approach to unpack the foreign policy dynamics of Russia toward North Korea. The historical analysis is critical to explaining significant factors toward stable relations between two countries.

Keywords: Rusia, North Korea, Foreign Policy, Zero-Sum Approach

A. INTRODUCTION

Russia is the country that always becomes the patronage of communist countries, despite the political change that happened in Russia after the collapse of Soviet Union. Russia has grown tremendously as the arms dealer for communist countries and other countries that experience embargo from the Western states. The fact that Russia is the great arm producer could only be overcome by the US (Lo, 2003: 61). Thus, this makes several countries still considered that Russia is the great power politics. Unfortunately, Russia could have considered as the great power politics only in the context of military power. In the context of economy, Russia has fallen into the crisis since 1998 also deteriorated by the recent crisis that happened in 2014. In contrast, Russia still preserves high expenditure on military in order to maintain its predicate as the great power politics in the world (Lo, 2003: 108).

North Korea has already become a communist country since its creation in the 1950s. The growing military capability of North Korea could not be separated from the historical and strategic context of Cold War and aftermath (Zhebin, 1995: 726). North Korea had been supported by the Soviet Union since the Korean War happened short after World War 2. The support of the Soviet Union toward North Korea was the implementation of proxy war against the Western alliance and military alliance of communist states. The Soviet Union abundantly supported North Korea with the latest war technologies, arms, and weapon at that time. With the support from the Soviet Union, North Korea successfully counterbalance the power of South Korea that supported by the Western alliance (Zhebin, 1995: 734). The

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foreign policy of the Soviet Union during Cold War was dominated by the opposing the interest of the Western alliance, especially in the Korean peninsula. In the broader sense, Soviet Union wanted to deliver such an aggressive policy and to make its regional dominance in the East Asia, more specifically in Northeast and Southeast Asia. During this time, Soviet Union was maintaining support for every communist country in the Asia, either financial, material or military support.

North Korea, in this case, has become one of the concerns of Soviet Union foreign policy. With the strategic geographical position of North Korea with the closest allies of Western states such as Japan and South Korea, Soviet Union convinced enough to preserved North Korea as the communist and satellite state for the communist alliance (Zhebin, 1995: 727-728). Moreover, the foreign policy of the Soviet Union toward North Korea did not change until the collapse of communism and the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991. Since then, Russia changed all of its approach on foreign policy, including the perspective about North Korea and Northeast Asia. Under new leadership and as the post-communist countries, Russia focuses on the performing economic reform and establishing policy for restoring economic stability (Zhebin, 1995: 738). Russian failure integration with the European economic community led to the intensification of economic interest toward the far east region and Northeast Asia. With the tremendous economic development that happened in Northeast Asia, Russia encouraged to improve bilateral and economic partnership with several most advance economic states in Northeast Asia, which are South Korea and Japan.

With the extreme change on Russian national interest, the policy regarding North Korea also experiencing significant changes (Buszynski, 2009: 810). Russia during the leadership of President Yeltsin considered to made a distance with North Korea. It should be done because of regional perspective regarding Korean crisis. As noted, all of the states that have a strategical factor for Russian interest are against the North Korea under any circumstances. South Korea for example, that technically still at war with North Korea could not allow any countries that have ties with the South Korean government to have significant relations with North Korea. The relations with North Korea will alter the most fundamental interest of South Korea, and Russia could not underestimate this situation if Russia wants to preserve economic or strategic partnership with South Korea (Buszynski, 2009: 811). On the other hand, Japan is also experiencing insecurity toward the aggressiveness of North Korean policy regarding nuclear program and military. Japan will be easily provoked by the intense relation with North Korea, again, Russia also could not deprive Japanese insecurity if the economic relation between Russia and Japan want to be preserved. Based on this argument, I intend to research the extent to which Russian foreign policy toward North Korea under

President Putin during contemporary era of Russian role as great power politics. Furthermore, this research will try to understand the North Korean foreign policy toward Russian as the post-communist state.

B. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Determinants of Russian Foreign Policy Toward North Korea under Vladimir Putin

Russian under Putin leadership has slight different with his predecessor policy. In some extent, Putin still preserves the tendency to be more focus on the economic aspect (Toloraya, 2003: 33). However, Putin is also intensifying several aspects that never become the priority of his predecessor. Regarding North Korea, Putin decides to intensify Russian relation with North Korea in early 2000 (Toloraya, 2004: 38-39). In this context, Putin tries to attract closer ties with China. Through intensifying relation with North Korea, Russia could be integrated into the regional strategy of China that will lead to the most comprehensive relation between China and Russia. Putin also tries to regain the legitimacy and increase the power of Russia after the devastated crisis that happened in 1998. In this case, Putin tries to involve on the regional issue and increase participation in the UN Security Council agenda that correlated with the North Korea (Toloraya, 2004: 38). Putin also maximizes Russian influence in the UN Security Council in order preserving strategic rivalry with the US (Lo, 2003: 73). The rivalry between Russia and the US is the tremendous strategy to acquire international perception toward Russia and build the legitimacy as 'reemerging' great power politics in the multipolar era of foreign policy.

Putin's ambition to regain the status as a great power has been influencing Russian foreign policy since the end of Yeltsin Era. The Putin's vision also inspired by his career as the front liner in the Cold War and experience how the decline of Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union (Lo, 2003: 73). Moreover, Putin's vision also changes the mindset of Russian stakeholders from the mainstream strategy that underlining the role of geopolitics and military to the economization of Russia, which means that Russia has to engage with the international economics dynamics and building many economics partnerships with many advanced economic countries. However, the radical change in the Russian policy never implies that Russia will holistically disregard the importance of military and geopolitics. Otherwise, Russia will use the military and geopolitics as the tools that will strengthen the bargaining power of Russia in international politics (Lo, 2002: 19). Putin also implements counterbalance strategy in order to overcome the Western domination by establishing a closer relationship with the countries that acclaimed as the 'opposition' of the West.

The definition of 'opposition' is the countries that labeled as undemocratic, an authoritarian country, countries that embargoed by the Western because of various reason. Putin has consistently become the alternative solution for this kind of countries that seeks the support from the 'superpower' but failed to comply with the Western regime (Mankoff, 2003: 30). Putin conveniently provides the countries that oppose the Western regime and 'rogue' countries in order to build the grassroots of the Russia reemergence as the great power politics. In this case, Russia becomes the main arms dealer and supplier for these countries,

and Russia also becomes the closest ally that might increase the bargaining position of the Western domination. The general assumption is North Korea included into 'rogue states' by the Western countries (Mankoff, 2003: 302). It is because North Korea was notoriously known by the undemocratic system, human rights violation and rogue leadership. In early 1991, Russia had maintained long distance with North Korea in order to erase the image as Communist patron. The policy was implemented because of Russia want to become the part of European economic community and the main goal of revolution to become a democratic state at that time (Takeda, 2006: 192). Maintaining, relationship with North Korea will extremely harmful for those two interest of Russia. Russia will lose the opportunity to integrate with the European community and adopt democracy as the new system.

However, during Putin leadership, Russia declined to the lowest position in terms of economic and political stability. After the crisis, Russia wants to emerge as the new emerging economic power and stabilize the domestic economy (Takeda, 2006: 193). Russia in this context wants to improve the export of any commodities that might reduce the impact of the crisis. The main commodities are oil and weaponry. Russia needs to create a market for its commodities, which leads to the growing interest in Northeast Asia and China. Since the 2000s, Putin wants to conduct a more serious relation with all of Northeast Asian countries including China. Even Putin conducted several state visits to show such a good gesture toward Northeast Asian countries. Just a few months in power, Putin already visited North Korea and strengthened diplomatic relations that before was disturbed by the Yeltsin foreign policy (Takeda, 2006: 196). In the 2000s, Putin has deeply concerned with the grievances of Yeltsin foreign policy and failure to stabilize Russian economy, in which that Putin want to improve the loosened relation with North Korea. Putin successfully made a joint agreement with North Korean, which called Treaty on Friendship, Good-Neighborly Relations and Cooperation (Wilson, 2009: 297).

Unfortunately, the harmony between Russia and North Korea did not last for a long time. Right after the North Korean Missile Test in 2006. Russia was in favor with the UN Security Council Resolution 1695 that condemned the North Korea missile test (The United Nations, 2006). North Korean relation with Russia grew unstable after that resolution took in effect. Furthermore, Russia was supporting the further sanction for North Korea in respond of North Korea nuclear program. Because of the aggressiveness of North Korea toward a nuclear program, Putin considered that North Korea could become a serious threat to regional and international stability, more importantly, it could cause a confrontation with all great powers politic in the world such as the US, the UK, and France (Ha and Shin, 2006: 33). Furthermore, the missile tests also can increase a threat to the security of far east region of Russia. Putin saw that any armed conflict would intervene Russian interest because Russia shares direct borders with North Korea. Therefore, there is a reason for make distance once again with North Korea. Like the fact, there are several inconsistencies in Putin's policy towards North Korea. Besides the support of Russia in the sanction for North Korean nuclear program, Putin has decided to prohibit any arms and weapons trading with North Korea, forbid any activities of transit and/or transit of weapon and any materials that relevant from Russian territories and ban any financial aid and educational supervision that correlated with the North Korean nuclear weapon (Joo, 2007: 143)). Those policies have shown that Russia

maintains a constant distance with North Korea to avoid any devastated problem in the region and international stability.

Determinants of Russian Foreign Policy Toward North Korea under Vladimir Putin

There are many determinants that influenced the dynamic of Russian foreign policy toward North Korea. The first determinant is the psychological aspect of Russia. Before, the fall of the Soviet Union, it clear that Russia was the 'superpower' country, and only comparable to the US. In the aspect of the sphere of influence, the Soviet Union had more legitimacy and capacity for influencing world politics, more importantly, become the only rival of the US and Western dominations. On top of that, the Soviet Union had become the only patron of all communist states in the world. Psychologically, this made the Soviet Union become the sponsor and supporter for any communist country and enjoying the status as the most valuable ally for all of the communist country (Zhebin, 1995: 727). The psychological consequences of being patronage of the communist country are the abundant support toward all of the communist states. It means that North Korea will automatically enjoy the support from the Soviet Union in almost all aspects military, politics, and economy. It had seen towards the foreign policy of Soviet Union toward North Korea during Korean War. In every aspect, the Soviet Union had supported North Korea by arms, weaponry, financial aid and backed up the diplomacy of North Korea in the international arena (Zhebin, 1995: 729). On the other hand, when the communism failed, and the Soviet Union dissolved, Russia has become a new country that no longer preserve communism and have the capability to become sponsor or patronage of a communist country. Russia has lost its capability in military, economy, and politics to provide meaningful support for the communist country. In other words, Russia is not the same with the Soviet Union. In the sensible situation, Russia has been far away from the predicate of 'superpower', this condition has been deteriorating since the economic crisis happened in 1998 (Lo, 2003: 54). Consequently, Russia needs to change its policy in order to preserve economic and political stability.

As the concern of new Russian government, North Korea has considered as trouble for Russian economic interest, and North Korea will disturb the economic partnership with many European states and economic power in Asia. With the aggressiveness of North Korea toward its nuclear program, it contends Russia to have considerable insecurities toward Russia's far east region and regional stability in Northeast Asia (Legvold, 2007: 344). Russia considers that intense partnership with North Korea will be giving more disadvantages rather than advantages, especially after the probability of open conflict between Russia and several advanced economic countries in Asia strengthened. Russia, in this case, have not any capability for involving or facing conflict because of psychologically; Russia has been facing degradation of power and military capabilities since the dissolution of Soviet Union. Involvement in the open conflict will harm economic stability and security of Russia.

Therefore, in the psychological approach, it could conclude that more sensible to preserve hypocrisy and 'standard' relation toward North Korea. President Putin had implemented this kind of policy toward the Treaty on Friendship, Good-Neighborly Relations and Cooperation that signed in 2000 (globalaffairs.ru, 2004).

North Korea is the only country that has less strategical meaning for Russian interest. It is because North Korea has maintained the isolation policy toward international community (Kim, 2010: 85). North Korea also give insignificant impact toward Russia regarding recovering 'superpower' predicate. Putin is just interesting in the expanding regional influence of Russia in Northeast Asia by engaging on conflict resolution of Korean crisis (Ponomareva and Rudov, 2015: 46-47). Strategical position of Russia has tremendously contested by China. China considered Russia as the 'outsider' on the Korean crisis issue, and China prefers to extend its role in the Korean crisis alone rather than involve Russia. Russia was aware of this situation and preferably playing neutral on the Korean crisis and actively engage in the bilateral relations with other parties that affected by the Korean crisis, such as Japan and South Korea (Ponomareva and Rudov, 2015: 51-52). It can be derived from the concern of Russia about the regional economic partnership with every key player in the Northeast Asia. Russia has already changed its foreign policy to become more intense with Japan, China, and South Korea. In the strategical approach, Russia is putting the extent of influence to become a mediator on the Korean crisis and gain sensible bargaining power to intensify closer relationship with Japan and South Korea. It can be said that Russia has no strategical interest for pursuing further relations or partnership with North Korea.

However, the post of the North Korean nuclear crisis has drawn the further role of Russia to be more proactive as the mediator (Ponomareva and Rudov, 2015: 53). Along with China, Russia has tried to persuade the leadership of North Korea to reduce the aggressiveness for pursuing a nuclear weapon. In the aspect of the military, Russia still becomes the role model for the North Korean military. Despite become role model, Russian military also gives a direct contribution to the capability extension of North Korea military. Before North Korean launched nuclear missile test on 2006, North Korea still maintained arms and weapons trading with Russia (Takeda, 2006: 203). Furthermore, there are only two main suppliers for the North Korean military, which are Russia and China. The extent to which Russian military have a direct contribution to the North Korean military becomes strategical potency for Russia to become a mediator in the Korean crisis. Demographically, Russia could easily supply North Korea with weapons and arms, even though the law has prohibited such an action to trade weapons and arms with North Korea. Both countries still share direct borders, and it could make easier to smuggle weapon from Russia than anywhere else. Therefore, the role of Russian toward capabilities of North Korea still giving significant influence for the leadership of North Korea (Takeda, 2006: 204).

Unfortunately, in the economically, North Korea is never giving a meaningful contribution. In contrast, it will harm the Russian economic interest for other countries in Northeast Asia. It can be understood that Russia will found dilemma on the maintaining relation with North Korea (Buszynski, 2009: 816-817). Japan and South Korea has already considered North Korea the main problem for insecurities in both countries. It means that Russia could not maintain a close relationship if Russia has a greater economic interest in

South Korea and Japan. The reflection of Russian foreign policy will be coherent with Martha Finnemore remarks on the hypocrisy on the international relation. Finnemore argued that in order to maintain stability and gain interest with minor risk, it is very important to implement such a hypocrisy on the diplomatic relations with another country (Finnemore, 2009: 72-73). Thus, it can be seen that Russia has already done the hypocrisy toward North Korea, maintained a good bilateral relation, but never have the intention to support such a national interest of North Korea whatsoever. Russia will gain more by implementing the hypocrisy because it will expand the legitimacy and bargaining power of Russia toward Korean crisis. Moreover, Russia also will be considered as a valuable actor in the Northeast Asia, and it will lead to an intensification of economic relation with South Korea and Japan (Ponomareva and Rudov, 2015: 47).

Russian-North Korea Political, Economic and Military relations under Vladimir Putin

Sit Russia and North Korea have already been maintaining diplomatic relation since the beginning of North Korea. Historically, North Korea was the part of the occupied territory of the Soviet Union as the following aftermath of Allied victory in World War 2. The Soviet Union and North Korea had already maintained a close tie with the further intention of the Soviet Union to made a communist country in Korean peninsula (Mikheev, 2001: 30). Thus, the Soviet Union has given tremendous support and aid to the North Korean leadership, in this case, Kim Il Sung to establish such a communist country. The intention succeeded and caused the catastrophic event, called Korean War in the 1950s. With the following aftermath of Korean War, the Soviet Union then became the major supporter and patronage of North Korea. Since then, North Korea has attached with Russia and fully dependable to the Soviet Union in almost every aspect, such as military, politic and economic (Mikheev, 2001: 39).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism, Russia has turned to become reluctant with North Korea. Motivated by economic reform, President Yeltsin decided to avoid intensive relation with North Korea. However, this policy did not last for a longer time, because in 2000, the new leadership under President Putin implemented dissenting approach with his predecessor (Mikheev, 2001: 32). Putin has several policies regarding North Korea, first of all, is about normalizing with North Korea in order to stabilize Russia's far east region. This policy is in coherence with the changing gesture of Russian foreign policy in the late of 1999. Russia always maintains close political ties with North Korea, even short after Putin become the president, North Korea was one of the countries that Putin visited (Mikheev, 2001: 28). Putin was aware that Yeltsin policy toward economic integration with European economic communities had failed. Therefore, motivated by the failure of Yeltsin foreign policy, Putin want to change the Russian interest to the far east region (Mikheev, 2001: 35).

The political relationship between Russia and North Korea was the one relationship that unstable and dynamics (Mikheev, 2001: 39). In this case, political and economic reformation in Russia heavily influenced the extent to which Russia conduct a political relationship with North Korea. Since 2000, Putin was aware of worsening relations with North Korea that caused by the Yeltsin foreign policy. Putin decided to normalize the

political relations by signing Treaty on Friendship, Good-Neighborly Relations and Cooperation in 2000. In traditional perspective, North Korea still considered Russia as the closest allies alongside with China. Unfortunately, Russia is not considering in accordance with North Korean foreign policy. Russia still maintains 'standard' and normative relations with North Korea despite historical ties that might still have influence between two countries (Mikheev, 2001: 48). In the following North Korean nuclear crisis in 2006, the political relation was deteriorating again. Russia condemned the aggressive policy regarding the North Korean nuclear program and outraged with the intention to launch confrontation with South Korea.

Since the devastating event in political relation with North Korea, Russia also has reduced the intensification of economic and military relations with North Korea. Economically, Russia is one of the main debtors of North Korea (Ponomareva and Rudov, 2015: 49). Russia has become the economic sponsor and aid provider to North Korea since the Soviet Era. With the isolation policy that North Korea implemented, there are not many countries could have economic relations with North Korea. Russia and China are the main trading partners of North Korea. However, mainly economic Russian economic relation with North Korea is never giving meaningful contribution (Takeda, 2006: 198). It is because Russia just becomes the aid providers and debtors, but North Korea never give any advantages toward Russian economic interest in any circumstances. The only advantage that Russia could gain from North Korea is consumerism of Russian oil (Takeda, 2006: 194). North Korea was the one oil consumers of Russia, but the impact for Russia trade is minimum. Since 2000, Russia provides several aids to North Korea in respond of massive famine that happened in North Korea. North Korea is providing food and medicine to help North Korea solve the famine disaster. Nonetheless, Russia has never gained any significances on the economic relation with North Korea. The economic relation has forced to end because of North Korean nuclear crisis. Russia decided to prohibit and yielded any economic aids and deals with North Korea by the UN Security Council 2087 (The United Nations, 2013). In this agreement, Russia will stop any financial and economic transaction with North Korea until the North Korean nuclear program canceled.

The situation of political and economic relations is very identical with the military relation. Since 2000, Russia has intensively exports many arms and weapons to North Korea including the technical support in uranium enrichment and development of nuclear ballistic missile (Joo and Kwak, 2001: 311). Evidently, most of the arms and weaponry of North Korea military came from Russia, and Russia is one of the main suppliers of North Korean military. Furthermore, at that time, Russia could improve their exports by selling arms and weapons to North Korea. Moreover, Russia and North Korea had agreed on building the military industrial complex in order to boost economic development in Russia's far east region (Lo, 2015: 161). The both government has never realized it because of the ramification of the series of the UN Security Council Resolutions from 2006 until 2009. Russia has always consistently supported economic sanction toward North Korea but ever agree with the military solution. With the consistent policy of Russia to impose sanctions toward North Korea, Russia has an obligation to prohibit any arms and weapons trading. Since then Russia has stopped all of the military supports and supplies towards North Korea (Lo, 2015: 156). Furthermore, Russia also

required an inspection to all of the North Korean submarine in order to participate in the effort to prevent North Korea developing its nuclear program.

With the recent development of Korean crisis, there is no justification to intensify relations with North Korea. In order to succeed Russian economic interest in Northeast Asia, Russia has to maintain a distance with North Korea and follow the international viewpoint. There are minimum advantages for Russia to preserve the closer tie with North Korea, especially in the contemporary era of Russian foreign policy (Lo, 2015: 65). Moreover, if Russia imposes to have intensive relation with North Korea, it will cause hostility among vital partner of Russia in Northeast Asia. Militarily, Russia could not afford any confrontations in order to back up North Korea. It will harm the stability, peace and security in the region. The involvement of Russian military in the Korean crisis will provoke Western allies and lead to the devastating war. In other words, Russia will not endure the ramification of military support for North Korea. In the political aspect, it is important to preserve normal relation with North Korea. Despite the close relation with North Korea, normal relation with North Korea will help Russia to gain its legitimacy as the 'great power politics' in world politics (Lo, 2015: 45). Russia will have a more extensive role in the diplomacy and negotiations related to Korean crisis.

The Russia-North Korea Relation and the US

Since the Korean War, the US government has put much effort on the understanding the extent to which the relation between Russia and North Korea. After the following nuclear missile test in 2006, the US has already suspected that Russia provided North Korea support for developing its nuclear program (Kerr, 2005: 421). It was highly likely that Russia was providing such a support to the North Korea. It is because, since 2000, Putin policy was focusing on the normalization of Russia-North Korea relations. Unfortunately, there no evident that could support the US suspicion toward Russia and North Korea nuclear program. However, since the North Korean nuclear crisis happened in 2006, Russia has been consistently supporting all of the UN Security Council Resolutions toward North Korea. In accordance with the resolutions, Russia also imposes military blockade and economic sanction toward North Korea (Putin, 2000). The consistency of Russian foreign policy toward sanctions to North Korea adamantly became the reason for halting aggressiveness of North Korean nuclear policy. The US government could have a more optimistic view when Russia join six-parties talk alongside with China. The six parties talk is the only solution for establishing regional stability and security and preserving the regional interest of the US in northeast Asia (Joo, 2004: 121-122).

On the other hand, prominent completion between Russia and the US has grown significant after Russia established an intense partnership with China (Putin, 2007). Through collaboration with China, Russia could have more opportunities to contend the US domination in Northeast Asia and preserving economic partnership with key players in

Northeast Asia. With the growing interest of Russia toward the Far East region, the US considered that Russia has risen to regain its predicate as 'emerging superpower.' Russia has already succeeded to initiate such a new emerging economic power besides G-7 and called BRICS (Putin, 2007). Through gathering Brazil, India, China and South Africa, Russia has succeeded to call the existence of new emerging economies and put significance contribution toward the US domination. Russia has been focusing on promoting multipolarity in order to overcome the US hegemony in global economics.

In the context of Russia and North Korea, the US has disturbed by the financial aids and strategic partnership that both countries agreed on. Russia as the main partner on the North Korea economic alongside with China is giving the most systematic contribution for North Korea still stand as the stable country (Kerr, 2005: 427). Despite authoritarianism in North Korea, the economic still run normally and North Korea still far away from failed states scenario. The US government believe that Russia and North Korea trade was the source of economic in North Korea. With the intensification of Russia-China relation, it is very obvious that the US will face considerable completion in Northeast Asia. Russia and China become the major player on the North Korea issue because the only countries that have a meaningful relationship with North Korea are those countries. It can be said that the role of China and Russia is unavoidable in the context of establishing stability and security in Northeast Asia (Kerr, 2005: 415). Moreover, in order to intensify the comprehensive diplomacy with North Korea, the US also need Russia's role, it is because Russia is the country that shares direct borders and influential network in North Korea. In this context, the Russian-North Korea relation will increase the tension of competitiveness between the US and Russia. The US will constantly see that if Russia got the momentum to regain its status as 'great power politics,' it will reduce the hegemony of the US and create a multipolar environment (Kerr, 2005: 420). With the popularity of the multipolar system, Russia could preserve its traditional rivalry with the US.

C. CONCLUSION

Russia could not avoid the historical fact that the existence of North Korea is the direct ramification of the Soviet Union proxy war against Western alliance after the World War 2. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism has changed the policy of Russia toward North Korea. In the spirit of reformation, Russia decided to make a distance with North Korea in order to implement economic relations with European economic community and establishing an economic partnership with advanced economic states in Northeast Asia (Park et al., 2013: 128). Unfortunately, with the recent crisis that happened in the Korean peninsula, Russia had been disturbed by the aggressiveness of North Korean nuclear program. Russia started to consider that maintaining relations with North Korea will harm Russian economic interest. Therefore, Russia has concluded with considerable reason to signify the relations with Japan and South Korea because of more profitable toward the

economic interest of Russia (Park et al., 2013: 126-127). Russia, in this case, could not maintain a good relation on both sides. If Russia wants to economic development in its far east region succeed, Russia has to follow the international perspective regarding North Korea and support all of the sanction toward North Korea (Bauer, 2009: 56-57). Russia could not support the North Korean nuclear program because it will harm the stability and security of the Northeast Asia region and it will disturb Russian economic interest.

The zero-sum approach will define the Russian foreign policy toward North Korea or next 30 years. Russia will not support the North Korean nuclear program because of the lack of ideological based and rationality for such support. Russia after the collapse of Soviet Union has been maintaining considerable distance with North Korea and eliminate the image of the patronage of North Korea (Joo, 1996: 34). Russia will consistently maintain a normative relation with North Korea and consistently impose economic sanctions toward North Korea. With this policy, in the next 30 years, Russia will gain credential as the strategic partner for leading countries in Northeast Asia such as China, Japan, and South Korea. It is caused by the existence of the US hegemony in the Northeast Asia, and China wants to oppose this hegemony. Expanding economic capabilities will attract South Korea, and Japan joins economic partnership between Russia and China. Russia will avoid any possibility of conflict and confrontation because right now Russia is focusing on the establishing economic stability (Kim and Blank, 2010: 46).

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