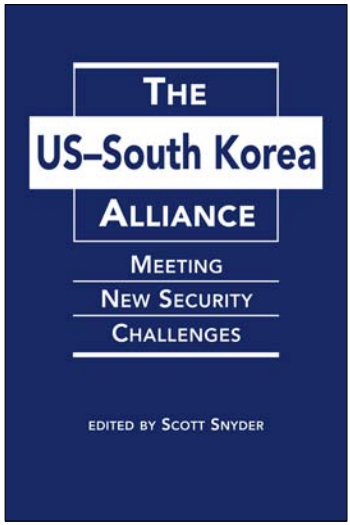
The US–South Korea Alliance: Meeting New Security Challenges

edited by
Scott Snyder



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LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS
1800 30th Street, Ste. 314
Boulder, CO 80301
USA
telephone 303.444.6684
fax 303.444.0824

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Expanding the US–South Korea Alliance

Scott Snyder

THE SECURITY ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND the Republic of Korea (ROK, or South Korea) has demonstrated success by both its longevity and its ability to maintain peace on the Korean peninsula. But the purpose and effectiveness of alliances as post–Cold War tools for achieving security aims are increasingly being questioned. The United States has emphasized the need for flexibility and resistance to deployment of fixed assets for a single purpose, while alliance partners have resisted being dragged into out-of-area commitments in locations that are distant from immediate security interests.[1] Advances in technology have allowed the United States to project force from its own mainland without relying on forward-deployed forces, while overseas bases may become sources of vulnerability to direct attack by regional actors who themselves are expanding their own threat projection capabilities. As a by-product of these changes, some have argued that alliances will be replaced by coalitions of the willing while others predict that collective security arrangements will obviate the need to mobilize against a common threat.[2] The implication of these arguments for the US-ROK alliance is that its demise is inevitable: either it is in terminal decline or China's rise and pull on the peninsula and a resulting divergence of interests between the United States and South Korea will inevitably bring about the decline and dissolution of the alliance.[3]

Despite South Korea's relative rise in power vis-à-vis North Korea, the rise of China-led regional economic integration, and the development of complex economic interdependence between the United States and China, the United States and South Korea are retaining, revitalizing, and promising to expand the dimensions of cooperation within the US-

ROK security alliance. Only a few years ago many analysts were predicting the end of the US-ROK alliance during the tenure of South Korea's progressive president Roh Moo-hyun, so it is surprising that both the US and ROK governments are embracing grand plans designed to establish a "comprehensive security alliance" with global reach, resulting in a surprisingly far-reaching Joint Vision Statement in June 2009.[4] The Joint Vision Statement builds directly on the "strategic alliance for the 21st century" concept that Presidents Lee Myung-bak and George W. Bush had announced the previous year.[5] Given South Korea's increasing capability and self-sufficiency, the apparently waning North Korean conventional security threat, and traditional South Korean public resistance to being drawn into conflicts off the peninsula, this affirmation of the value and strength of the US-ROK security alliance as a foundation for twenty-first-century security cooperation may seem surprising. At the same time, South Korea's democratic and economic development gives it a stake in US-led global stability on the basis of common values and newfound capacity to act as a partner with the United States on a comprehensive agenda for cooperation. The foundations are coming into place for the types of comprehensive cooperation that have come to characterize the transatlantic relationship[6] at a time when Asia's rise enhances the US need for like-minded Asian partners who share common regional and global interests.

Today, South Korea plays a leading role in securing its own defense and is a rising contributor of public goods in the areas of peacekeeping, overseas development assistance (ODA), and postconflict stabilization. As a leading player in the global economy, South Korea has the capacity to shape its own interests instead of being subject to the whims of neighboring powers. Its contributions to and influence on the international community are also expanding, creating opportunities for expanded partnership, in both functional and geographic scope.[7] All of these factors might easily provide justification for ending or drastically reducing the scope of the traditional alliance, yet the two governments are retooling the security relationship and mapping plans for expansion. Why, and why now?

This volume evaluates the potential, rationale, and existing capabilities for both sides to support expanded US-ROK cooperation in response to specific nontraditional and global security challenges. In many cases, these are new frontiers for US-ROK security cooperation. The book covers nine areas of cooperation, including counterterrorism, maritime security, space, pandemics, postconflict stabilization and reconstruction, peacekeeping, overseas development assistance, nonprolif-

eration, and climate change. Through analysis of these newly identified priorities, many of which have been explicitly identified in the US-ROK June 2009 Joint Vision Statement, it is possible to evaluate the likely path of future development of the US-ROK security alliance and also compare efforts to adapt the US-ROK alliance to a post–Cold War and post–September 11, 2001 (9/11), security environment with similar adaptation in both the US-Japan alliance and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[8]

The next section provides a brief summary of developments in the US-ROK alliance over the course of the last two decades, including a comparison of these developments with efforts to adapt the US-Japan alliance and NATO to a security environment that prioritizes security cooperation to respond to nontraditional or global threats. This is followed by an identification of major principles and characteristics of alliance cooperation that will be required to meet the mutual interests of the United States and South Korea going forward. These considerations frame the in-depth assessments of the nine practical global and nontraditional areas of US-ROK security cooperation provided by the subsequent chapters. The concluding chapter ties together and assesses the implications of cooperation in each of the nine areas for the potential for establishing a comprehensive US-ROK security alliance.

US-ROK Alliance Adaptation Following the End of the Cold War

The US-ROK security alliance was forged in direct response to pressing security needs on the Korean peninsula. South Korea's vulnerability to renewed attack from North Korea, and its strategic importance as a bulwark against the spread of Communist aggression at the start of the Cold War, knit US and South Korean security needs together. Formed in October 1953 with the signing of the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty after the Korean War hostilities ceased, the alliance provided a security guarantee to a weak South Korea completely dependent on the United States for its defense.

Throughout the Cold War, the overarching South Korean concern was the possibility of US abandonment. For this reason, Nixon's announcement of the withdrawal of troops from South Korea despite a significant commitment of South Korean troops to support US-led efforts in Vietnam in the late 1960s was a shock to Park Chung-hee. Likewise, President Carter's efforts in the 1970s to fulfill a campaign promise to

withdraw all US forces from South Korea on the basis of human rights concerns under Park Chung-hee's authoritarian rule posed another serious challenge to the alliance. A further complication came in the context of Chun Doo-hwan's coup d'état in May 1980, at which time South Koreans widely perceived the US Forces Korea (USFK) as complicit with if not supportive of Chun's suppression of South Korea's prodemocracy movement, sowing the seeds for South Korean resentment of USFK, especially among prodemocracy activists who later became known as the "386" generation.[9]

Despite the end of the Cold War, South Korea's rapid economic development, and its political transition from authoritarianism to democracy, efforts to further reduce US forces and transfer key roles and missions to South Korea under the 1990 Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim, known as the East Asian Strategic Initiative (EASI), faced strong opposition from the South Korean government, which was still pursuing an international competition for influence with the North.[10] Efforts under EASI came to a halt by 1992 as a result of rising tensions over North Korea's nuclear development efforts.

The first stage of the EASI restructuring plan, carried out over three years from 1990 to 1992, involved a 7,000-person US troop reduction, appointment of an ROK general officer to head the Military Armistice Commission, and the transfer of a number of operational tasks to South Korea as part of its goal of moving the United States from a "leading" to a "supporting" role on the Korean peninsula. The second phase of the plan envisaged transfer of patrol duties at the Joint Security Area (JSA), removal of two brigades of the US Second Infantry Division, and a reorganization of the Seventh Air Force into one fighter wing. The third stage involved determination of the appropriate long-term size of USFK based on a joint threat assessment and other regional needs that might be met by USFK, relocation of Yongsan to another location outside of Seoul, and transfer of the area under the responsibility of the US Second Infantry Division along with changes in the authority of wartime operational control (OPCON) and development of a US-ROK parallel command system.[11] Although the first stage of the EASI was implemented, the rise of the North Korean nuclear crisis in 1991–1992 led then–secretary of defense Dick Cheney to freeze implementation of the EASI pending a resolution of the crisis.[12]

USFK in the early 1990s made a small reduction in forces, gave up a golf course at Yongsan, and ended combined forces' control over South Korean military forces during peacetime, but there was almost no change in the essential structure of the US-ROK alliance. USFK head-

quarters remained in Seoul with a footprint essentially unchanged since the Korean War, with US bases occupying choice ground in every major South Korean city. But South Korean and US views of the world, the region, and North Korea were no longer in lockstep with each other. Differences began to emerge. For the United States, North Korea became another flashpoint for regional conflict to be managed and was no longer a second front in a global ideological standoff while North Korea continued to be South Korea's primary national security concern. At a political level, this difference in views—and the fragile psychological gap behind those views—became apparent as the Clinton administration chose to negotiate directly with North Korea over nuclear weapons in 1993, no longer deferring to South Korea over how to manage political contacts with the North.

By the mid-1990s, South Korea had become an industrialized economy whose cities had begun to surround even US bases that had once been located in the countryside, while simultaneously undergoing a political transition from authoritarianism to democracy. North Korea could not compete with the South for international legitimacy anymore, but it remained an isolated conventional military threat while developing nuclear and missile capabilities. Despite these revolutionary changes in the strategic context surrounding the peninsula, most of the changes in the US-ROK alliance were evolutionary. The United States was still primarily responsible for South Korea's defense. USFK maintained a level of operational flexibility befitting a wartime setting and had not undergone the type of consolidation of bases that had occurred in Japan in the 1970s. South Korean public perceptions of US bases had changed from a source of economic opportunity, when South Korea was poor, to a traffic irritant and occupier of prime real estate once South Korea had become rich.

A missed opportunity to address some of these concerns and possibly put the US-ROK alliance on a firmer footing came in the mid-1990s with the Nye Initiative and the reaffirmation of the US-Japan alliance. This review came about in part as a result of perceptions that the United States was losing its influence and might consider further force reductions in Asia, inciting concerns in Japan and a desire to strengthen the basis for a continuing US presence in the region. A review of the US-Japan alliance relationship led to a US-Japan joint review of the regional security environment, a revision of guidelines, and a reaffirmation of the US-Japan relationship that was announced by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto in 1996.[13] That effort had been intended to encom-

pass the US-ROK alliance, but the process of reaffirming the alliance with South Korea never got off the ground.

There were some attempts by USFK to adjust to new South Korean conditions. In the late 1990s the Clinton administration negotiated initial steps in a Land Partnership Plan (LPP), whereby USFK prepared to vacate and return bases and land to South Korea and revised the terms of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) to provide greater South Korean autonomy and responsibility in handling offenses by US military personnel in the case of off-duty offenses.[14] But these changes did not correspond to the scope of change in the strategic environment, the structure of South Korean domestic politics, or the political economy of the relationship of the bases to the broader South Korean population.

Another major development influencing the context for the alliance relationship was South Korea's change in approach toward North Korea under Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine Policy, most dramatically represented by the June 2000 inter-Korean summit. Kim Dae-jung's trip to Pyongyang and the first-ever meeting between North and South Korean leaders was a historic event that had powerful reverberations for South Korean perceptions of security on the Korean peninsula. Upon Kim Dae-jung's return from the North, he declared that his visit had forestalled the possibility of war on the Korean peninsula. Although this statement was widely regarded as overoptimistic, it served to both validate and facilitate a transformation of South Korean public perceptions of the North from the image of enemy to that of brother-in-need. Such a transformation carried with it a subtle implication for South Korean public perceptions of the US force presence in the ROK from that of necessity to that of luxury or even a legacy of the past era of inter-Korean conflict.[15] Coinciding with the 2000 inter-Korean summit was an uptick in public incidents involving USFK personnel that was partially reflective of such a shift in perceptions among the South Korean public. These incidents were symptoms of a much deeper problem: the US-ROK alliance remained on autopilot, based on Cold War premises, structures, and patterns of interaction, but no serious effort had been made to review and update the strategic framework underlying the alliance in a manner similar to the process that led to the reaffirmation of the US-Japan alliance.

The first major incident that revealed the extent to which the standard operating procedures that had governed the US-ROK alliance were out of sync with new realities on the Korean peninsula was a traffic accident in 2002, when a US Army vehicle returning from exercises hit and killed two middle-school girls. The South Korean public response to

the incident revealed an underlying feeling by South Koreans that USFK had not updated its perceptions of South Korea as a partner in line with South Korean economic and political accomplishments of recent decades.

Second, South Koreans—fresh from a new national confidence deriving from their cohosting of and performance in the 2002 soccer World Cup—were grappling with South Korea's improved international standing and implications of apparent progress in inter-Korean relations for South Korea's security posture, stirring for the first time a domestic debate over whether the future direction of South Korean foreign policy should be tied so closely to the policy direction of the United States. This debate was fed by skepticism within South Korea's emerging elites about the US motivations for invading Iraq in 2003 as well as about the rise of China as South Korea's number-one economic partner from 2004.

Third, the 2002 traffic accident provided a concrete illustration of how USFK presence might intrude on and conflict with the daily lives of South Koreans in ways that appeared to reduce rather than enhance South Korea's security. Comments by President Bush in the 2002 State of the Union Address characterizing North Korea as part of the "axis of evil"[16] further inflamed South Korean opinion and raised doubts about whether the alliance would contribute in practical terms to enhancing South Korea's security.[17] All of these concerns served to underscore the lack of an updated rationale, shared vision, or articulation of mutual interest necessary to provide the alliance with political ballast to survive what should have otherwise been easily manageable incidents in the relationship.[18]

The traffic accident and its aftermath were an important catalyst for a broader reevaluation of many aspects of the security relationship. The incident coincided with US efforts under Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to review and update its global force posture to respond to new threats and new needs following 9/11, as well as increasing needs for troops to serve in Iraq. In South Korea the Roh Moo-hyun administration came into office in 2003 seeking greater independence and greater equality in its relations with the United States, simultaneously seeking "cooperative, self-reliant defense" while also maintaining the alliance.[19] South Korea's quest for greater recognition in the relationship coincided with the US preoccupation with the war on terror in Afghanistan and Iraq. The US prioritization of those conflicts made the extent of South Korea's "out of area" contributions a focus of the alliance and revealed a perception gap between Washington and Seoul

regarding how to respond to challengers in the international system, including North Korea.

Despite rhetoric that regularly suggested that the Roh and Bush administrations were philosophically out of sync with each other, especially on policy toward North Korea, both sides cooperated well to implement the reconfiguration of US forces on the peninsula and transfer of primary responsibility for security along the demilitarized zone (DMZ). Talks on the Future of the Alliance (FOTA) (2002–2004) and the Security Policy Initiative (SPI) (2004–2008) managed specific institutional and structural adjustments, including setting a timetable for replacing the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC) with separate command arrangements in which the United States would play a supporting role. These efforts represented a significant evolution in the structure of alliance cooperation mechanisms that had been envisioned in the early 1990s as the third stage of implementing the EASI, but were conducted under Presidents Bush and Roh in the absence of a jointly identified shared vision for the future of the alliance.

In the context of the Rumsfeld-initiated Global Posture Review, which sought to position US forces around the world more flexibly to be able to respond to a multiplicity of uncertainties and types of threats, the United States and South Korea worked together to realign the US force presence on the peninsula and revise command arrangements in support of a broader vision and regional role for the alliance. The realignment of USFK included a planned one-third reduction amounting to 12,500 troops, removal of US forces positioned in several camps along the DMZ to a central camp north of Seoul, and the redeployment of one of two US combat brigades from South Korea to Iraq, with the South Korean military taking over the major roles and missions near or at the DMZ. A second area of focus has been the dissolution of CFC in favor of arrangements that allow South Korea to retain sole operational control of its forces, with the United States providing "bridging capabilities," especially in the areas of air support and intelligence collection.[20]

During this period, the Bush and Roh administrations came to a limited understanding on "strategic flexibility," under which USFK forces may be deployed for missions off the peninsula and the South Korean government is not obligated to provide political or military support for such deployments. They also agreed on the dissolution of CFC and return of sole responsibility for operational control of Korean forces on the peninsula in wartime to the South Korean government, implemented a comprehensive security assessment, and laid the foundations for the US-ROK Joint Statement adopted by Presidents Bush and Roh at

Gyeongju in November 2005. In this joint agreement, "The two leaders agreed that the alliance not only stands against threats but also for the promotion of the common values of democracy, market economy, freedom, and human rights in Asia and around the world"; affirmed alliance cooperation through the establishment of the Security Consultation for Alliance Partnership; and affirmed a range of security and political cooperation measures, including cooperation to address the North Korean nuclear issue.[21]

Under the Roh and Bush administrations, it sometimes appeared that the United States and South Korea had divergent interests that would result in the dissolution of the alliance. Some analysts in the United States and South Korea saw structural, political, ideological, and cultural reasons to write off the alliance as having little, if any, remaining strategic value. Adaptations on the margin sometimes seemed like an attempt to bail out a sinking ship. However, despite political differences in priority and approach to specific tactical issues regarding policy toward North Korea, it is also possible to argue that there is increasing overlap between the underlying political interests of both countries on a broad range of issue-specific areas where new forms of cooperation may potentially be built. Although Roh's style of managing relations with the United States was politically contested within South Korea and entailed costs in terms of distancing South Korea from the traditional protection it had enjoyed through close security relations with the United States, the Roh administration was able to work together with the Bush administration on many sensitive alliance issues, including configuration of US forces, troop dispatch to Iraq, and negotiation (but not ratification) of a potentially strategically significant free trade agreement with the United States.

By declaring that restoration of the US-ROK alliance is his top priority, Lee Myung-bak articulated South Korea's traditional policy approach. The day after his election in January 2008, Lee Myung-bak affirmed his intent to "restore the US-ROK alliance based on the established friendship"[22] as a primary anchor of South Korea's foreign policy, suggesting that a decade of progressive rule had aimed at making South Korea more independent at the expense of its ties with the United States. During his first stop in the United States in April 2008, Lee declared that the "politicization of alliance relations will be behind us" and pledged that the alliance going forward should be based on the principles of "common values, trust, and peace."[23]

The June 2009 US-ROK Joint Vision Statement signed by Presidents Lee and Barack Obama takes a step forward in identifying specific

objectives for implementation of a broader alliance vision pledged under Bush and conveys a sense of partnership that reflects many of the underlying attitudes and principles of partnership necessary to the pursuit of mutual interests in Washington and Seoul. But the all-inclusiveness of the Joint Vision Statement gives no sense of priority among tasks and purposes for the alliance and risks creating overexpectations regarding the real capacities and priorities of the relationship by leaving the impression that the alliance is related to any world event. An issue-by-issue approach may instead yield many small steps that when taken together add up to a comprehensive framework for the US-ROK alliance.

The Bush administration's conceptualization of the war on terror as a universal threat had led it to frame the NATO alliance as well as the US-Japan and US-ROK alliances in global terms and to demand "out of area" contributions to postconflict stabilization efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.[24] These efforts contributed to a sense of entrapment by alliance partners who faced pressure to support global postconflict stabilization operations alongside the United States.[25] US demands engendered varying measures of resentment and doubt among alliance partners in NATO, as well as in Japan and South Korea, regarding the sustainability of a global vision for their respective alliances with the United States. But South Korea's newly elected president Lee Myung-bak embraced the vision of a comprehensive US-ROK alliance from the beginning of his presidential term in 2008 and advanced the concept of a "global Korea" at the same time that US demands for out-of-area contributions from NATO and Japan were becoming a source of strain.[26] Meanwhile, US efforts to enhance global security cooperation with Japan foundered on long-standing constraints imposed by Japan's postwar peace constitution, and a historic shift in power to the Democratic Party of Japan shifted the main focus of the US-Japan alliance to the question of how to resolve a protracted stalemate over the future of the Futenma Airbase in Okinawa.[27] Although South Korean contributions to international security remain modest, the Lee Myung-bak administration has prioritized the US-ROK alliance, laid the foundations for South Korea's hosting of the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit, and enabled a surprisingly close personal relationship between Lee and President Obama.

The 2009 US-ROK Joint Vision Statement provides a framework by which to expand US-ROK alliance cooperation beyond the peninsula and to new dimensions of international security, but many of these forms of cooperation are not new in the context of NATO or even the US relationship with Japan, in which security cooperation developed on

the basis of common democratic values. Having gone through earlier transformations that redefined their rationales from the task of responding to a local threat to cooperation based on common democratic values, these alliances have already witnessed similar expansion in the scope of their security cooperation.[28] Still, as was the case in NATO and the US-Japan alliance, the expanded areas of cooperation represent a significant step forward in the US–South Korea alliance relationship. A consequence of enhanced South Korean capabilities and aspirations to make a more sustained international contribution, they enable the realization of new potential for the bilateral alliance.

In addition, a comparison of the structure of NATO and the US-Japan alliance with the US-ROK alliance reveals the importance of maintaining both a strategic purpose and an operational structure that are conducive to effective joint cooperation. From this perspective, the opportunity to operationalize US-ROK cooperation on off-peninsula security issues also strengthens alliance capabilities, reflecting South Korea's growing interests and capacity and US efforts to work together with like-minded partners to preserve global stability.

Establishing a Mutually Beneficial Rationale for a US-ROK Comprehensive Security Alliance

The US-ROK alliance has clearly long ago outgrown the patron-client status that characterized the relationship when it was first established. The institutional structures for cooperation have also adapted in line with changes in respective military capabilities and needs, most notably in the transition to South Korea's leading role in providing for its own national defense, with USFK providing critical support. The existing institutional structures, vested interests, and deeply ingrained routines of cooperation tend to inhibit a ground-up assessment of the respective interests, trends, and emerging challenges that are likely to demand future attention and cooperation if they are to be effectively addressed.

Perhaps the most effective way of determining the type of cooperation that would be most conducive to the mutual interests of alliance partners in the twenty-first century might be to try to build the relationship from the ground up, without the benefit or constraints imposed by the existing institutional structures that bind together the United States and South Korea. The critical variable underlying such an approach will be the task of determining the qualities and characteristics of the type of relationship most likely to serve the mutual interests of the two

countries. The first step toward identifying those characteristics is to identify the main factors shaping the international security posture and needs of the two countries. The development of such a shared vision might include the following assumptions regarding the respective security interests of the United States and South Korea.

The United States will remain a global leader, but is no longer in a position to be the sole provider of public goods in the area of security. Moreover, global leadership in the twenty-first century requires a mix of specialized economic, political, security, and technical requirements that no single country can provide on its own. Thus, US leadership is constrained by a need for cooperation with other states, but no other state except the United States is likely to be willing to bear the lion's share of the burdens of leadership. The United States will continue to play a leading role in responding to international crises, but it will increasingly seek partnerships with other like-minded countries to meet the political, security, and technical requirements to supply the public goods necessary to ensure global stability, security, and prosperity.

South Korea as a leading global economy has expanded its capacity to the brink of the first rung of global leadership as the host and chair of the G-20 in November 2010. South Korea's military capacities have grown in selected areas, but given the size and advanced level of neighboring military forces in the region, South Korea will still not feel completely comfortable on its own as an independent player in East Asia. South Korea will also have difficulty broadening its view of global affairs—seeing over the shoulders of China and Japan, respectively—in order to make contributions requisite to its size and status in a global context. Although South Korea has grown as an increasingly capable actor in a regional context, the fundamental choices of independence, alignment within the regional context of Northeast Asia, and alliance with a distant offshore balancer remain essentially the same. South Korea's diplomatic profile has become more multidimensional at the same time that its political dependency on the United States has diminished, enhancing South Korea's desire for diplomatic independence as well as its potential attractiveness as a partner with a different type of history and development experience from that of the United States.

On the basis of these trends, one might argue that the following are potentially important characteristics of a newly reformulated partnership between the United States and South Korea:

1. A comprehensive alliance should be formed on the basis of a broad convergence of political interests and include traditional security

as one among many areas of cooperation rather than as the primary focus of cooperation.

2. A comprehensive alliance should reflect a mutual commitment in which needs and responsibilities are shared, rather than being a one-way commitment in which there is an obligation by the United States to provide security without a reciprocal commitment to the partnership.

3. A comprehensive alliance should derive its primary raison d'être from common values internal to the alliance rather than being driven by an external threat (although it is entirely possible that provocative actions by third parties could become the focal point for alliance-based cooperation); however, alliance relations will continue to require exclusivity in sensitive spheres of security cooperation.

4. A comprehensive alliance, in principle, might be expanded or regionalized to include other partners with shared mutual interests in such a way that expands the capacity for security cooperation and production of public goods that enhances regional or global stability.

5. A comprehensive alliance will spread the risk and cost of provision of public goods and will be most effective when partners bring unique skills to meet common traditional or nontraditional security challenges.

These five characteristics, or principles, of a comprehensive alliance between the United States and South Korea have the following implications for considering how to revamp the existing alliance relationship to more effectively meet shared needs:

• The US-ROK alliance should be based on a broader foundation of political cooperation than currently exists. The existing structure of security cooperation has been critical to sustaining the alliance, but is not sufficient to meet the needs of the expanded political and security partnership. The security alliance has important implications for South Korean security in the event of military conflict, but the true benefits of a comprehensive alliance for South Korea are political—not military. A primary benefit South Korea seeks to derive from the alliance relationship in its modern diplomacy is to utilize the alliance as a platform and as a basis on which to enhance its political leverage in dealing with neighboring countries and to strengthen its position and status in the international community. These needs are not fully served by a relationship that is inordinately focused on military cooperation. As a country that is outside the core power groupings but is nonetheless an important secondary actor in international affairs, South Korea faces the challenge

of how to improve its influence and standing to make a difference on global issues. Cooperation with the United States can be a politically effective and cost-effective way of enhancing South Korean influence without necessarily sacrificing South Korea's status as an important and independent actor. Instead, a much broader structure of political coordination must be established in order to derive full advantage from the political aspects of alliance cooperation.

• In line with its economic and political transformation, South Korea has already taken a leading role in providing for its own defense, relieving the United States of the full burden that was originally assumed when the United States took responsibility for South Korea's defense. Given these changes, the terms of the military alliance need to be rewritten—and accompanied by a revolution in the way both countries think of the military alliance. Military commitments to mutual defense should be reciprocal, involving responsibilities and obligations to work together in response to peninsular, regional, and global threats. South Korea has already taken on such burdens in practice in Vietnam and Iraq, reflecting a step toward mutuality in security relations, but the fundamental terms of the relationship should be revised to reflect mutuality in the relationship.

• The raison d'être for a US-ROK comprehensive alliance in the twenty-first century should derive from the common interests of the countries in alliance and focused on contributing to a broad conception of security rather than being justified on the basis of targeting a single threat; instead, military cooperation should be organized in such a way as to maximize respective capacities and contributions to preserve regional stability. If military coordination is organized in such a way as to maximize capacity to respond to multiple threats and is embedded in a broader politically based partnership designed to respond to regional, global, and functional security needs, it will be harder for neighbors to object to such cooperation. While there is no immediate reason for alliance coordination to be targeted against a single country, such coordination would retain a level of readiness sufficient to respond to the emergence of threats regardless of their origin.

• An interest-based comprehensive alliance might lay the foundation for cooperation with like-minded countries on missions that serve common interests, both within and beyond Northeast Asia. Such an approach would allow for the flexibility to develop a bilateral and a regional response capacity in the event of natural disasters and humanitarian missions such as tsunami relief, environmental accident response, and search-and-rescue missions. Such cooperation might form the core of an

eventual mechanism for multilateral security cooperation that would respond to common regional and global threats.

• A comprehensive alliance already provides a means by which to reduce security costs through burden sharing. Determining a more equitable and sustainable method for spreading those costs—while also developing planning capabilities through which it might be possible for South Korea to develop specialized capacities that might be utilized as a means by which to contribute to international security—would in principle yield cost efficiencies that would free up budgets in both countries for investment in nonmilitary areas. Clear delineation of benefits from cost sharing and recognition of the alliance as a means by which both countries can yield cooperation dividends in the area of security would be an important step toward laying a sustainable foundation for such cooperation.

Based on this analysis of specific new and emerging opportunities for US-ROK global and nontraditional security cooperation covered in the remainder of the book, the concluding chapter uses these assumptions as a benchmark for evaluating the areas that might be most promising as building blocks for promoting cooperation necessary to strengthen and expand the US-ROK alliance.

North Korea: The Centerpiece for Expanded US-ROK Alliance Coordination

As one considers the future of the US-ROK alliance in the near term, deterrence toward North Korea remains the raison d'être for the alliance and a near-term sine qua non for any expanded vision of alliance cooperation. This priority has intensified with North Korean nuclear and military provocations in 2010. These incidents have strengthened US-ROK cooperation to deter North Korea, but have also revealed gaps in bilateral coordination. The long-term vision for a comprehensive alliance also looks past North Korea toward continued cooperation to meet regional and global security challenges. This vision is necessary if the US-ROK security alliance is to be sustainable beyond the North Korean threat, but the North Korean threat remains the primary object that motivates effective alliance coordination.

Many newly developing aspects of global cooperation potentially have direct relevance for the future tasks that the alliance may face on the peninsula, thereby serving as a vehicle by which to gain experience

abroad in preparation for future challenges that may directly affect stability on the Korean peninsula. At the same time, South Korean defense planners face tension between the need to develop expeditionary resources and the potential immediate demands for capacity to meet new challenges in response to North Korean provocations or instability. While this volume focuses attention on new forms of security cooperation against the backdrop of the 2009 Joint Vision Statement and the implications of a "global Korea," North Korea remains an integral part of the discussion, both because the threat from the North has provided the original rationale for the alliance and because nontraditional security lessons learned by South Korean troops abroad may find particular future relevance at home.

Outline of the Book

This volume evaluates the existing capabilities and potential contributions that South Korea and the United States might make to support expanded US-ROK cooperation to meet a wide range of nontraditional and global security challenges. The following analysis of these newly identified priorities for expanded alliance-based cooperation will provide a concrete basis for evaluating whether these new forms of alliance cooperation can strengthen the foundation for an enduring US-ROK security alliance, despite apparent new challenges to the idea of alliance-based political and security coordination in other parts of the world. This volume focuses primarily on the security aspects of US-ROK cooperation forming the bilateral alliance relationship and does not include an assessment of the ROK-US free trade agreement (KORUS FTA), despite the clear benefits of enhanced integration of the two economies for their long-term strategic partnership.[29] In addition, while the volume is a collection of US assessments, the purpose of each contribution is to assess the prospects for practical cooperation in the respective issue areas based on the position of both the United States and South Korea and their mutual interests as they relate to expanded alliance cooperation.

Topics have been selected to cover the following areas, starting with issues that are closest to the traditional forms of security cooperation that have formed the core of coordination for many decades. In Chapter 2, Michael McDevitt analyzes the recent expansion of ROK naval capacity, drivers of such developments, and significance for the future of the US-ROK alliance and bilateral navy-to-navy relationship. Kevin Shepard, in Chapter 3, explores the development of a wide range of

counterterrorism activities through the US-ROK alliance that have been pursued on and off the peninsula in the wake of 9/11. Shepard suggests that South Korea's growing regional leadership and participation in counterterrorism efforts offer an important opportunity for further strengthening alliance cooperation with the United States while solidifying its value as an active and equal partner.

In Chapter 4, Fred McGoldrick considers prospects for a new bilateral civil nuclear energy agreement as a practical lens through which to assess potential cooperation, recognizing new opportunities and concerns arising from the major changes in South Korean capacities and approaches to nonproliferation over the past few decades. James Clay Moltz, in Chapter 5, examines space cooperation as a relatively new area of bilateral interest despite the long duration of the military alliance, and suggests prospects for civil and military space cooperation especially since 2008 and in recent multilateral contexts. In Chapter 6, James Schoff assesses prospects for expanded cooperation to prevent pandemic disease and biological threats, focusing on avian influenza as a challenge that the alliance has relevant resources and capacities to address. He considers US-ROK pandemic cooperation both within and outside the military realm and specifically in the alliance context. Given the emergence of green growth as a major theme of the Lee Myung-bak administration and arguments that South Korea can play a bridging role between developing and developed nations in tackling climate change, Heejun Chang and Lily House-Peters consider in Chapter 7 institutional channels for pursuing these goals and how the United States and South Korea could effectively cooperate in the context of the UN and other venues where global aspects of climate change are being discussed.

The volume also highlights the challenges and opportunities inherent in cooperation on global security issues. In Chapter 8, Balbina Hwang highlights South Korea's past experience with peacekeeping operations in such countries as East Timor and Iraq, the types of support activities the alliance could offer for expanded ROK peacekeeping missions, constraints on US support, and costs and benefits from the South Korean perspective. She explores the South Korean political debate over peacekeeping cooperation pursued through the bilateral alliance as opposed to independent ROK efforts under a UN mandate. Considering recent South Korean experience in such postconflict countries as Iraq and Afghanistan, Michael Finnegan analyzes in Chapter 9 ROK support to US-led missions abroad and implications for alliance-based cooperation in military and broader terms. In Chapter 10, Edward Reed assesses US-ROK cooperation in ODA activities given current

South Korean contributions and plans to triple its ODA commitments as a new member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee.

In the concluding chapter, I consider whether the expansion of the US-ROK alliance agenda to include global and nontraditional security cooperation will ultimately strengthen or weaken the US-ROK alliance. I also identify some challenges that may result from a functional approach to expanded cooperation within the alliance framework, and evaluate whether the vision that has been put in place thus far—and initial efforts to implement that vision—truly add up to a strong foundation for the future of the US-ROK alliance or whether peninsular, regional, and global changes are likely to finally result in a transformed environment that will ultimately preclude the realization of such an ambitious vision for US-ROK partnership on the foundations provided by the US-ROK security alliance.

Notes

1. US Department of Defense, *Global Posture Review*, 2005.

2. Rajan Menon, *The End of Alliances* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

3. One scenario that suggests the plausibility of the decline of the alliance is laid out in S. Enders Wimbush, "A Parable: The U.S.-ROK Security Relationship Breaks Down," *Asia Policy*, no. 5 (January 2008): pp. 7–24, http://www.nbr.org.

4. Joint Vision for the Alliance of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, June 16, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov.

5. Statement of the US-ROK Summit, August 5, 2008, http://seoul.usembassy.gov.

6. Inspired by the end of the Cold War and the September 11, 2001, attacks, NATO's purpose and subsequent missions evolved from a focus on defending Western Europe to seeking the peace and stability of the wider Euro-Atlantic area, and then began to take on global missions. Cooperation within NATO has since come to encompass a force readiness to manage crises and execute peacekeeping or peace enforcement, as well as defend against biological, chemical, and radiological threats and terrorism. For more information on NATO's evolving purpose, see NATO, "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept," November 7–8, 1991, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_23847.htm; and NATO, "The Alliance's Strategic Concept," April 24, 1999, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm.

7. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea, *2008 Diplomatic White Paper*, October 27, 2008, http://www.mofat.go.kr/English/.

8. For a detailed comparison of the military structures and objectives of NATO, the US-Japan alliance, and the US-ROK alliance, see Michael Finnegan,

"Benchmarking America's Military Alliances: NATO, Japan, and the Republic of Korea," Center for US-Korea Policy, the Asia Foundation, February 2009, http://www.asiafoundation.org.

9. Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Reading, PA: Addison-Wesley Press, 1997).

10. For a comprehensive assessment of US military policy and operations in the Asia Pacific in the context of the restructuring of US forces in the region, see James A. Winnefeld, Jonathan D. Pollack, Kevin N. Lewis, Lynn D. Pullen, John Y. Schrader, and Michael D. Swaine, "A New Strategy and Fewer Forces: The Pacific Dimension," RAND, 1992, http://www.rand.org.

11. An Kwang-ch'an, "A Study on the Military System on the Basis of the Constitution; Focused on the Operational Command Authority of the Korean Peninsula," Ph.D. diss., Dongguk University School of Law, pp. 195–206, cited in Open Source Center Document no. KPP20060214024006.

12. See *US-ROK Security Meeting Joint Communiqué*, October 8, 1992, http://www.globalsecurity.org.

13. Michael J. Green and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *The US-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999).

14. There were also negotiations at the end of the Clinton administration to revise SOFA to give South Korea's judicial system a greater role in the handling of off-duty offenses involving US service members.

15. Scott Snyder, "North Korean Nuclear Factor and Changing Asia-Pacific Alliances," in In-Taek Hyun, Kyudok Hong, and Sung-han Kim, eds., *Asia-Pacific Alliances in the 21st Century: Waxing or Waning?* (Seoul: Oreum Publishing Company, 2007), pp. 221–239.

16. Text of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, *Washington Post*, January 29, 2002, http://www.washingtonpost.com.

17. Seung-Hwan Kim, "Anti-Americanism in Korea," *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 1 (Winter 2002–2003), pp. 109–122.

18. David I. Steinberg, ed., *Korean Attitudes Toward the United States: Changing Dynamics* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2005); Derek Mitchell, ed., *Strategy and Sentiment: South Korean Views of the United States and the US-ROK Alliance*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, June 2004.

19. "National Security Strategy of the Republic of Korea," Blue House, Republic of Korea, 2003. See Scott Snyder, "A Comparison of US and South Korean National Security Strategies: Implications for Alliance Coordination Toward North Korea," in Philip W. Yun and Gi-Wook Shin, *North Korea: 2005 and Beyond* (Stanford, CA: Walter H. Shorenstein Asia Pacific Research Center, 2006), pp. 149–166.

20. Stephen J. Flanagan and James A. Schear, eds., *Strategic Challenges: America's Global Security Agenda* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2008), pp. 245–256.

21. *Joint Declaration on the ROK-US Alliance and Peace on the Korean Peninsula*, November 17, 2005, http://asiafoundation.org.

22. "President Elect Vows Creative Diplomacy," *Korea Times*, December 19, 2007.

23. Lee Myung-bak's address to the Korea Society 2008 Annual Dinner, April 15, 2008, http://www.koreasociety.org.

24. The 9/11 attacks inspired the 2002 US Security Strategy, in which the United States declared "war against terrorists of global reach," and expressed its expectation that allies would help to "promote global security." In the chapter in this report titled "Strengthen Alliances to Defeat Global Terrorism and Work to Prevent Attacks Against Us and Our Friends," the United States sought greater support from its allies in this war on terrorism, the scope of which extends beyond specific regions, requiring global cooperation.

25. See John R. Schmidt, "Last Alliance Standing? NATO After 9/11," *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 1 (Winter 2006), pp. 93–106.

26. Lee's "Global Korea" campaign is detailed in "Keynote Address by President Lee Myung-bak at Global Korea 2009," February 24, 2009, http://english.president.go.kr.

27. Michael Finnegan, "Managing Unmet Expectations in the US-Japan Alliance," The National Bureau of Asian Research Special Report #17, November 2009.

28. The Gulf War and the 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis caused tension in the US-Japan alliance and highlighted its geographic and capability limitations. The US-Japan alliance evolved in the post–Cold War period to emphasize peace and stability first in the region, and was challenged to take on global missions post-9/11. US-Japan alliance cooperation has expanded to include noncombat reconstruction, peacekeeping, and international humanitarian relief operations, rear-area support, and efforts in Proliferation Security Initiative and Missile Defense. For details on Japan's transformation, refer to Noboru Yamaguchi, "Japanese Adjustments to the Security Alliance with the United States: Evolution of Policy on the Roles of the Self Defense Force," in *The Future of America's Alliances in Northeast Asia* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), pp. 73–90. For details on NATO's transformation, see note 6, this chapter, and Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, "Global NATO," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 5 (September/October 2006), pp. 105–113.

29. For a recent US assessment of the KORUS FTA, see William H. Cooper, Mark E. Manyin, Remy Jurenas, and Michaela D. Platzer, "The Proposed US–South Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA): Provisions and Implications," Congressional Research Service Report, March 24, 2011, http://www.fas.org.