

Korea's Expanding Global Role: The Rise of a Middle Power

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Introduction: Contributions to Security

- Growing international role despite ongoing NK threat
- One of three objectives in Defense White Paper:
“contributing to regional stability and world peace”
- Capacity: 3,000 person standing unit for overseas deployment, legislation for deployment >1,000 personnel to UN PKOs prior to NA authorization, strengthened PKO training center; 12th largest military expenditures (2010)
- Implies long-term commitment
- Justification: high dependency on int’l trade
export oriented economy = stake in global stability

Evolution of Debate

- Past: framed in an alliance context
 - Korean contributions result from entrapment and dependency on U.S. for security
 - Intended to strengthen American commitment to Korea
 - examples: Vietnam, Iraq
- Present: manifestation of a Global Korea
 - raising country's profile
 - fulfilling global responsibility
 - reciprocating international assistance

Contributions

- PKO
 - experience since '93 (engineering battalion to Somalia)
 - current contributions: 637 personnel to nine operations
 - standing: 33rd in personnel, 10th in funds to UN
- Anti-piracy: CTF-151 participation
 - experience: Gulf of Aden; recovery of Samho Jewlery ('11)
- PRT
 - 336 personnel in Afghanistan; \$93.4 million in assistance
- PSI
 - active participant since 2009
 - strengthened export controls and cooperative efforts

Alliance as a Platform for Global Korea

- Assistance to Korea
 - extend Korea's capabilities in int'l stabilization and peacekeeping
 - enhance effectiveness in concert with other contributors
 - Facilitate new joint efforts, e.g. stability and development in Afghanistan
- Benefits to Alliance
 - practical experience; honed interoperability
 - joint efforts reduce budget demands on respective countries
 - Experience earned abroad can be applied in Korea
 - lateral networking

Moving Forward: Obstacles to Sustainability

- North Korean instability
 - flare-up of tensions or destabilization and limited resources
- Domestic political commitment
 - transition to a new administration
 - uptick in casualties
- Demographic and budget constraints

South Korea's Emergence as a Contributor to International Security

- From consumer to provider of security
- Established capacity and experience
- Non-NATO capabilities in center of NE Asia
- Strong rationale for continuing partnership
 - trend toward greater stake in international trade and global stability
 - benefit of preparation and positioning for instability in NK