
PARTICIPATION IN THE PYEONGCHANG 2018 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES: SOUTH KOREA'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OR NORTH KOREA'S STRATEGIC DETERMINATION?

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In 2017, North Korea posed a great threat to world security with its consecutive nuclear tests, which led to very tense relations between North Korea and South Korea. However, ever since North Korea's participation in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, which was held in South Korea, an atmosphere of peace and co-prosperity has been on the rise. Indeed, the heads of South Korea and North Korea held a summit on April 27th, 2018, which was followed by the summit between President Trump and Kim Jong-un on June 12th, 2018. Moreover, peace talks and subsequent agreements have been made between South Korea and North Korea in the last few months. Consequently, it is clear that North Korea's participation in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games contributed in changing the atmosphere between South Korea and North Korea. This paper addresses the reasons and logic as to why North Korea decided to take part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. Two motives will be considered here: 1) the successful South Korean government public diplomacy efforts; 2) North Korea's internal affairs and needs. This paper will first address the brief history of sports diplomacy between South Korea and North Korea. It will further assess South Korea's efforts to get North Korea to participate in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, especially in terms of its public diplomacy. Moreover, it will analyze North Korea's domestic affairs and its motivation in taking part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. The paper will conclude by providing future prospects and ways to further utilize sports diplomacy in international relations.

Keywords: *South Korea, North Korea, PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, Public Diplomacy, Sports Diplomacy*

Introduction

In 2017, North Korea posed a great threat to world security with its consecutive

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nuclear tests, which led to very tense relations between North Korea and South Korea. However, ever since North Korea's participation in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, an atmosphere of peace and co-prosperity has been on the rise. Officials of South Korea and North Korea held a summit on April 27th, 2018, which was followed by the summit between President Trump and Kim Jong-un on June 12th, 2018. Moreover, peace talks and subsequent agreements have been made between South Korea and North Korea in 2018.

Consequently, this paper would like to address the reasons and logic behind North Korea's decision to take part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. Was this due to the successful public diplomacy efforts by the South Korean government or was it mainly due to North Korea's strategic determination and needs? This paper will first address the brief history of sports diplomacy between South Korea and North Korea. Next, it will assess South Korea's efforts to get North Korea to participate in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, especially in terms of its public diplomacy. Additionally, North Korea's internal affairs and environment along with its motivation in taking part in the Winter Games will be analyzed. The paper will conclude by providing future prospects and ways to further utilize sports diplomacy in international relations. Indeed, it is argued that the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games were more than a mere sporting event and that North Korea's participation in the Winter Games changed the atmosphere between South Korea and North Korea.

History of Sports Diplomacy Between South Korea and North Korea

South Korea has achieved significant economic growth after its liberation from Japanese colonialism and the devastation of the Korean War. In terms of the traditional measurements of power, it has, as of 2018, the 7th most powerful military in the world and its economy ranks 11th worldwide.¹ After South Korea's democratization and the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), the South Korean government increased and shifted its focus to *public diplomacy* in order to assert more soft power, which can be exemplified by the success of the "Korean Wave." Although the definition of the term is subject to debate, public diplomacy is a "diplomatic engagement with people" and a "multi-disciplinary area of scholarship that is now receiving more attention from scholars than any other aspect of diplomacy."² It can be understood as a "government-to-foreign people program" and "a governmental or governmentally funded foreign policy activity."³ Other classifications oppose traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy, mainly because

1 "2018 Military Strength Ranking," GlobalFirepower.com - World Military Strengths Detailed. Accessed July 08, 2018. <https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>.

2 Pauline Kerr and Geoffrey Wiseman, *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

3 Roberts W. R., "What Is Public Diplomacy? Past Practices, Present Conduct, Possible Future," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (2007): 36-52.

of the latter's acknowledgment of foreign publics.⁴ Furthermore, the concept of new public diplomacy is defined by its recognition of new actors and various objectives.⁵

Likewise, the objective of public diplomacy is "to create, for a given country, as positive a climate as possible among foreign publics in order to facilitate the explanation and hopefully acceptance of its foreign policy."⁶ Because sports diplomacy should be understood as one form of public diplomacy, it appears important to outline its characteristics and influences. The main strategic objectives of sport diplomacy are:

*"(a) providing an unofficial reason and location for international leaders to meet and begin a dialogue; (b) providing insights into the host country and educating others about it; (c) bridging cultural and linguistic differences among nations and seeking common ground through sports; (d) creating a platform for new trade agreements or legislation; (e) creating awareness for the international relationship through sport ambassadors; (f) creating a legacy for the host country, improving its image in the world; and (g) using sport to provide legitimacy for a new nation."*⁷

Moreover, soft power, a term coined by Joseph Nye, points to the influence a country has over other states and over the public based on its "attraction". The notion of soft power is built upon three state resources: "its culture (in places where it is attractive to others); its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad); and its foreign policies (when others see them as legitimate and having moral authority)."⁸ The promotion of one's soft power is widespread and has led to fierce competition among Northeast Asian countries, such as China and Japan. As Hall pointed out: "There are two arms races happening in Asia today: one for military capabilities and another for the weapons of 'soft power.'"⁹ Another useful concept is "nation branding," which is defined as "a conscious effort to influence the social imaginary of a nation."¹⁰ In recent days, a development from soft power to smart power—understood here as "the ability to combine hard and soft power into

4 Geun Lee and Kadir Ayhan, "Why Do We Need Non-state Actors in Public Diplomacy? Theoretical Discussion of Relational, Networked and Collaborative Public Diplomacy," *Journal of International and Area Studies* 22, no. 1 (2015): 57-77.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Judit Trunkos and Bob Heere, *Sport Diplomacy: A Review of How Sports Can Be Used to Improve International Relations* (2017).

8 Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power the Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2009).

9 Ian Hall and Frank Smith, "The Struggle for Soft Power in Asia: Public Diplomacy and Regional Competition," *Asian Security* (2013): 1-18.

10 Felicia Istad, "A Strategic Approach to Public Diplomacy in South Korea," *Korea's Public Diplomacy* (December 2016): 49-80.

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a successful strategy”—is on the rise.¹¹ The importance of non-state actors is being reevaluated as well. Indeed, as Lee argues, “both from a pragmatic and normative perspective, state agencies should look for partners actively as well as opening the channels for passive partnerships (contractor and collaboration).”¹²

Table 1. Comparison of Three Types of Public Diplomacy

	Conventional Diplomacy	Old Public Diplomacy	New Public Diplomacy
Subject	Government	Government	Government, Non-governmental Actors
Resources/ Assets	Hard Power	Soft Power	Foreign Publics; Government; Virtual Global Space
Medium/ Carrier	Governmental Dialogues & Negotiations	Public Relations (PR) Campaign; Propaganda; Old Media	Diverse Media, Including New Digital Media
Communication Type	Horizontal, Closed Negotiations	One-way, Unilateral, Asymmetric, Closed	Two-way, Horizontal, Symmetric, Open

Kim, Taehwan. “Paradigm Shift in Diplomacy: A Conceptual Model for Korea’s “New Public Diplomacy”.” *Korea Observer* 43, no. 3 (Winter 2012): 527-55.

Table 2. Categories of Public Diplomacy

Resources	Soft Power Assets	Public Diplomacy (PD) Realms
Political Economic Expense, Values & Institutions	Information Knowledge	Knowledge Diplomacy
Cultural Heritage	Korean Wave	Culture Diplomacy
Language & Academic Resources	Korean Language, Korean Studies	Korean Studies Diplomacy

11 Joseph Nye, “Smart Power,” *The Huffington Post* (May 25, 2011). Accessed July 10, 2018. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/joseph-nye/smart-power_b_74725.html.

12 Geun Lee and Kadir Ayhan, “Why Do We Need Non-state Actors in Public Diplomacy? Theoretical Discussion of Relational, Networked and Collaborative Public Diplomacy,” 57-77.

Corporate Resources	Corporate Competitiveness, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Corporate Diplomacy
Sports & Tourism Resources	Competitiveness Tourism Package	Sports & Tourism Diplomacy

Kim, Taehwan. "Paradigm Shift in Diplomacy: A Conceptual Model for Korea's "New Public Diplomacy"." *Korea Observer* 43, no. 3 (Winter 2012): 527-55.

Among the many themes related to public diplomacy in the context of hard and soft power, and with the rise of the relevance of soft power, sports diplomacy can essentially be explained by two distinct perspectives. First, sports diplomacy creates a "convenient opportunity for politicians or diplomats to meet," and it may be utilized as "a direct diplomatic tool and sometimes a driver for political rapprochement."¹³ Similarly, David Rowe states that "sports diplomacy is a fairly safe and mild means of 'making friends' and defusing conflicts."¹⁴ Jacquie L'Etang explains that governments utilize sports as a medium to signal their intention to enhance current relations.¹⁵ The second perspective is somehow of a wider scope. It asserts that "sport is used as a tool to enhance – or, sometimes, aggravate – diplomatic relations between two parties."¹⁶ This outlook is different in that it draws "attention to problematic relations."¹⁷ Moreover, sports boycott and sports isolation are the two main methods for states to express dissatisfaction or expose international conflicts through sports.¹⁸ Nygard and Gates further explain that sport is employed for four main objectives: 1) image building; 2) creating a platform for discussion; 3) building trust toward reconciliation; 4) as a vehicle for integration and anti-racism.¹⁹ In this sense, and because such interactions are regarded as low-politics, sports diplomacy is especially influential in that it can facilitate the trust-building process between states that have tense political relationships. As Larson argues: "Events such as the Olympics and the World Cup are highly desirable venues even if they are not especially profitable because they further embed a country in both the global economy and the minds of

13 Michał Marcin Kobierecki, "Sports Diplomacy of Norway," *Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal* 20, no. 1 (2017): 131-46.

14 David Rowe, *Global Media Sport: Flows, Forms and Futures* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).

15 Jacquie L'Etang, *Sports Public Relations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2013).

16 Michał Marcin Kobierecki, "Sports Diplomacy of Norway," 131-46.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Nygard and Gates, "Soft Power at Home and Abroad: Sport Diplomacy, Politics and Peace Building," *International Area Studies Review* 16, no. 3 (2013): 235-43.

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global citizens.”²⁰ Considering the peculiar relationship between South Korea and North Korea, sports diplomacy can be applied extensively and with great potential.

The sporting interactions between South and North Korea can be divided into two categories, one being sporting events that take place between the two countries, and the other, international sporting events in which the two countries are taking part together, whether it is as one unified team or as two separated entities. If they compete as one team, there are certain elements that the two countries have to agree upon, such as the official name, the flag, and the anthem of the unified team. For the Winter Games, the official name of the unified team was Korea and the flag, one with a white background showing the Korean peninsula in the middle, painted blue.²¹ The anthem was the 1920s version of Arirang.²² Some of the more sensitive agendas were the athletes selection process, who the head of the unified team should be, how to train the athletes and the organization that will be in charge of the entire process. Nonetheless, North and South Korea have experience in negotiating with each other.

The trends of sports diplomacy between South Korea and North Korea and the meaning they imply has changed over time. South Korea first took part in international sporting games when it joined the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in June 1947. In the 1960s, President Park Chung-hee put more emphasis on sports and the participation of South Korea in international sporting events increased, as demonstrated in the graph below (Figure 1).²³ The number of people taking part in international sporting events increased from 1,543 in 1969 to 5,313 in 1980 and to 8,091 in 1991. The number of total events increased from 108 in 1969 to 429 in 1980 and to 527 in 1991 as well. This trend continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Interestingly, during the 1980s, South Korea hosted two major international sporting events: the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Summer Olympics. South Korea went to host the 2002 FIFA World Cup, 2014 Asian Games, and the most recent 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

The objectives and participation of North Korea changed over time as well, which affected the global political atmosphere. During the Cold War, ideology and propaganda were one of the main objectives of sports diplomacy. However, after the Cold War, a different approach—one that attempted to ease tensions between states and to normalize international relations, and that emphasized the branding of one’s

20 Chris Larson, “South Korean Sports Diplomacy and Soft Power,” *International Journal of Foreign Studies* 9, no. 1 (2016): 93-116.

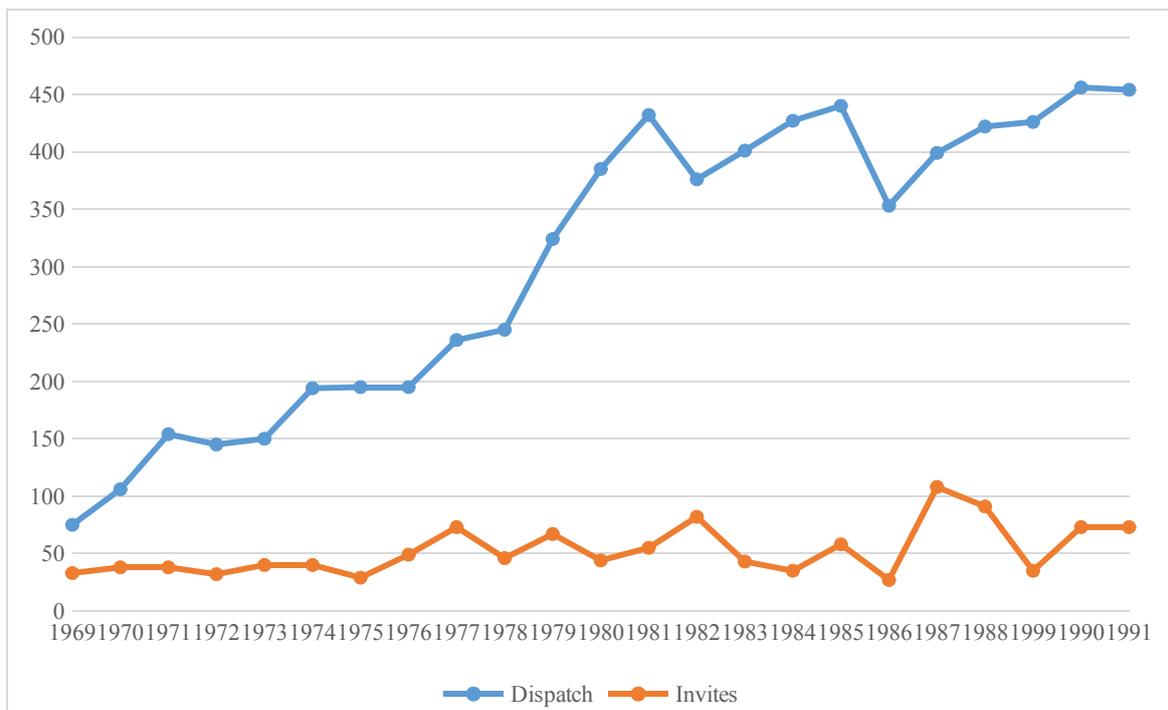
21 Kim Chae-Woon, “The Current State of Sports Exchange between South and North Korea and Solutions for Vitalization,” *Journal of Sport and Leisure Studies* 63 (February 2016): 23-33.

22 Ibid.

23 Kim Youngin, “Rethinking of Korean Foreign Policy’s Practical Strategy: Focusing on Sports Diplomacy toward the Communist Bloc during the Cold War Era,” *East and West Studies* 29, no. 4 (2017): 5-38.

national image—emerged. In the 1960s, at the height of the Cold War, communication between South Korea and North Korea was highly limited. Nonetheless, there were still limited interactions between the two countries during sporting events. The hope was that such interaction might potentially influence both states’ politics. Indeed, efforts were made to form a unified team at the 59th International Olympic Committee (IOC) council in Moscow on June 14th, 1962. Additionally, three meetings between the two countries took place, where the formation of a unified team for the 1964 Summer Olympics was discussed. Unfortunately, those efforts failed. The 1970s were significant in terms of sports diplomacy because of the success of the US/China “détente” and its famous ping-pong diplomacy. This, once again, proved how sports can be used to reach political goals, such as the development of peaceful relations between countries. Similar strategies were further implemented between South and North Korea.

Figure 1. North-South International Sports Exchange



The Relative Success of South Korea’s Public Diplomacy Efforts

Successful public diplomacy is determined by the achievement of one state’s objective and goals through public diplomacy. In the particular case of the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, North Korea’s participation was the criteria of success in conducting public diplomacy. In this context, although rankings are not absolute figures, it does indicate a general understanding of how influential a state could be in conducting public diplomacy. Rankings and the success of public diplomacy

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efforts of a state are correlated, which means that the higher a state's ranking is, the higher the general influence and possibility of success in conducting public diplomacy could be. This, in turn, relates to the probability of a state achieving its diplomatic goals by conducting public diplomacy. Therefore, examining such figures can help to provide a broad overview of the possibilities and influence of a state's public diplomacy efforts.

Several measurements will be observed in order to assess how effective South Korea's public diplomacy has been, especially in exerting its soft power. These measurements provide a general overview of how much influence South Korea's public diplomacy efforts can have on North Korea. The first measurements discussed here is the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) World Competitiveness Rankings: "The IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY) is the world's most thorough and comprehensive annual report on the competitiveness of nations, published without interruption since 1989."²⁴ Moreover, it analyzes "the totality of their competencies to achieve increased prosperity," with the belief that "an economy's competitiveness cannot be reduced only to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and productivity because enterprises must also cope with political, social and cultural dimensions."²⁵ The ranking considers four categories, namely: 1) economic performance (domestic economy, international trade, inter-nation investment, employment, prices) with 5 subfields and 83 criteria of assessment; 2) government efficiency (public finance, fiscal policy, institutional framework, business legislation, societal framework) with 5 subfields and 73 criteria of assessment; 3) business efficiency (productivity, labor market, finance, management practices, attitudes and values) with 5 subfields and 71 criteria of assessment; 4) infrastructure (basic infrastructure, technological infrastructure, scientific infrastructure, health and environment, education) with 5 subfields and 115 criteria of assessment. South Korea's rankings show continuous improvements, as demonstrated in the graph below.

Another notable factor is the IMD Digital Competitive Rankings, which "introduces several new criteria to measure countries' ability to adopt and explore digital technologies leading to transformation in government practices, business models and society in general."²⁶ This analysis is based on three themes and 10 subcategories of knowledge (talent, training & education), technology (scientific concentration, regulatory framework, capital), and future readiness (technological framework, adaptive attitudes, business agility, IT integration). The IMD Competitive Rankings and the IMD Digital Competitive Rankings of South Korea point to two conclusions. First, despite some fluctuations, South Korea has shown continuous improvements in its IMD Competitive Rankings. Second, according to the IMD

24 "Copyright," IMD World Competitiveness Online. Accessed July 08, 2018. <https://world-competitiveness.imd.org/>.

25 Ibid.

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Digital Competitive Rankings, South Korea has a comparative advantage in the field of digital diplomacy and knowledge diplomacy. Considering South Korea’s unique advantages as well as its overall performance, it is very likely that South Korea’s public diplomacy efforts had an influence on North Korea’s decision to partake in the Winter Games.

Figure 2. World Competitive Rankings and World Digital Rankings



“Copyright,” IMD Competitiveness Online. Accessed July 08, 2018. [https:// worldcompetitiveness.imd.org/](https://worldcompetitiveness.imd.org/).

A second important form of assessment is the BBC World Service Polls. This poll indicates if people perceive a specific country as either “mainly positive” or “mainly negative.” The results change every year and are related to both the domestic and international conditions of that specific year. In 2013, 36% held positive views while 31% had negative sentiments towards South Korea and in 2014 South Korea polled 38% mainly positive and 34% mainly negative reviews. In 2017, South Korea received 37% mainly positive and 36% mainly negative critics. These numbers are quite competitive and indicate how South Korea’s public diplomacy efforts could have a significant influence on North Korea.

Thirdly, there are sources that rank the value of a nation’s brand such as the Anholt/GfK Roper Nation Brands Index,²⁷ the Bloom Consulting Country Branding Rankings, and the fDi Intelligence brand rankings.²⁸ The Anholt/GfK Roper Nation Brands Index assesses the brand value of a country based on six criteria, which are people, tourism, exports, governance, culture and heritage, as well as investment and immigration. In 2008, South Korea ranked 33rd and in 2009, South Korea

27 “Nation Brands Index,” Nation Brands Index. May 07, 2018. Accessed July 08, 2018. <https://nation-brands.gfk.com/>.

28 “Home.” FDI - FDIIntelligence.com. Accessed July 08, 2018. <https://www.fdiintelligence.com/>.

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ranked 31st. In addition, the Bloom Consulting Country Brand Ranking on Trade and Tourism is published annually “to extensively analyze the brand performance of 193 countries and territories worldwide and the Digital Country Index - Measuring the Brand appeal of countries and territories in the Digital World.”²⁹ This analysis is based on variables such as economic performance, digital demand, CBS rating, and online performance. The global top 25 performers were the United States of America, Thailand, Spain, Hong Kong, Australia, France, China, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Turkey, Macao, Singapore, Japan, Canada, Mexico, Switzerland, Austria, Greece, Portugal, Republic of Korea, India, Malaysia, Netherlands, and Taiwan. Moreover, the fDi Intelligence brand rankings³⁰ has a brand ranking score that ranges from 0 to 100. 0 points, 20 points, 35 points, 50 points, 65 points and 80 points are respectively for falling brand ratings, weak brand ratings, average brand ratings, strong brand ratings, very strong brand ratings, and extremely strong brand ratings. The top 10 best-performing brands of 2017 were Iceland, Spain, China, Vietnam, South Korea, Greece, Estonia, Philippines, and Thailand. The top 10 most valuable brands of 2017 were the US, China, Germany, Japan, UK, France, Canada, India, Italy, and South Korea.

The will of the South Korean government to further promote public diplomacy as an important element of their national agenda is reflected in government documents. One of the most representative is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs report “South Korea, First Plan on Public Diplomacy: 2017-2021.” This report offers an overall blueprint on the strategies and policy directions of South Korea’s public diplomacy. The report states its vision as, “South Korea’s charm, communicating to the world with its citizens,” and its five main objectives are described as follows: “strengthening the national image by utilizing abundant cultural assets, expanding a correct understanding and perception of South Korea, creating a friendly strategic environment in implementing policies, settlement of mutual cooperation systems and strengthening public diplomacy actors.”³¹ The specific strategies to reach such goals are divided into four categories: “cultural public diplomacy, knowledge public diplomacy, policy public diplomacy, public diplomacy conducted with citizens, and public diplomacy infrastructure.”³² One notable feature is that under the fourth objective, i.e. “creating a friendly strategic environment to implement policies,” the report claims “securing the support of the international community in achieving peace and unification on the Korean peninsula.”³³ This indicates how the South Korean government hopes to use public diplomacy to achieve peace and unification on the

29 “Bloom Consulting | COUNTRY BRAND RANKING,” Bloom Consulting | Nation Branding & City Branding. Accessed July 08, 2018. <https://www.bloom-consulting.com/en/country-brand-ranking>.

30 “Home.” FDI - FDIIntelligence.com. Accessed July 08, 2018. <https://www.fdiintelligence.com/>.

31 South Korea. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2017.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

Korean peninsula. The three related specific plans are: “implementing unification public diplomacy to each states considering their perception of the situation on the Korean peninsula, creating strategic contents analyzing the benefits of unification to each states and passing on the public opinions of the foreign state, and expanding general sentiments of agreement on Korean unification among foreign students and Koreans living abroad.”³⁴

Furthermore, public diplomacy is systematically organized and analyzed, in various regional and administrative levels. “South Korea, First Plan on Public Diplomacy: 2017-2021” provides an overall blueprint, while the 2018 Public Diplomacy Ministry of Foreign Affairs annual report is more of a guidance report for the central government, the local government, and the major cities. For instance, there are separate reports on big cities such as Seoul, Busan, Daegu, Daejeon, Incheon, Gwangju, Ulsan and Sejong. The concept of sports diplomacy is mentioned in each of these reports. The report promotes the “strengthening [of] the national image by utilizing abundant cultural assets,” such as the “effective utilization of international sporting events.”³⁵ Especially, it emphasizes “the promotion of the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games and the Paralympics.”³⁶ The goals and expected outcomes are stated as: “spreading awareness of South Korea and seeking to improve the national image via successful bids of international sporting events and successfully hosting such events.”³⁷ The report also states that South Korea should continue cooperation and benefit from the momentum with various people in the sports industry even after the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. In addition, another policy related to sports diplomacy is hosting Taekwondo competitions. The goals and expected outcomes are as follow:

“Expanding public diplomacy efforts and improving the national image via Taekwondo, expanding intimate acquaintances by introducing Taekwondo and Korean culture in general, arranging infrastructure needed by expanding the supply of Taekwondo and keeping its stance in future Olympic games reaffirming the stance of being a Taekwondo suzerain.”³⁸

The value of Taekwondo in terms of sports diplomacy has been broadly studied. Indeed, “Taekwondo is an effective traditional cultural diplomacy means which can diffuse Korea’s traditional values with low cost among the international cooperation’s main projects such as short-term invitation for training, dispatching medical staff, providing grants, dispatching performers.”³⁹ Therefore, the government hopes to

34 Ibid.

35 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, South Korea, 2018.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Yoon Kyu Choi, “The Role of Taekwondo as a Means of Sports Diplomacy,” *The International Conference of Taekwondo* (2017): 67-72.

expand Taekwondo by holding national competitions and strengthening the global Taekwondo network. Taekwondo has an important presence in South Korea in that it is an official Olympic sport since 2000, has a long history and originated from South Korea.

Moreover, by observing South Korean government documents from the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, one can observe the emphasis put in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games by the South Korean government. The government seems to be increasing its awareness and focus on sports diplomacy. According to the 2018 annual plan, the most urgent issue is indeed the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. First, the report considers the preparation for the games, i.e. how they should prepare for the cold weather by providing blankets and heaters.⁴⁰ The documents also emphasize safety (medical service) and terrorism prevention. Marketing tickets for the games was mentioned as well. Finally, it clearly states the hope to generate “peace Olympics,” by “successfully cooperating with other agencies and supporting North Korea’s participation in the Olympics as well as promoting cultural exchange.”⁴¹ Secondly, in terms of receiving guests, plans to create a comfortable environment are illustrated.⁴² For instance, improving accommodation facilities, transportation, and also providing basic guidance in touring the region. Thirdly, improving the competitions by providing experts and medical care are elaborated.⁴³ Fourthly, an accessible environment for the disabled was mentioned.⁴⁴ Finally, by active promotion, an exciting atmosphere was hoped for. For instance, promotion could be done via various media platforms and by promoting specific symbolic events to create a passionate atmosphere.⁴⁵ A variety of cultural events were also introduced.

South Korea sought North Korea’s participation in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games as it would draw more international attention and increase the significance of the event. The participation of North Korea in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games drew much attention from international media and head of states. The official report from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) stated North Korea’s participation as the historic moment of the event.⁴⁶ Furthermore, PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games enjoyed the largest amount of broadcast coverage and was the most digitally watched games in history.⁴⁷ Other benefits could also be expected with North Korea’s participation. For instance, a peaceful

40 Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, South Korea, 2018, 1-38.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 International Olympic Committee, Factsheet the Olympic Winter Games, June 5, 2018, accessed November 28, 2018, <https://www.olympic.org/documents/games-pyeongchang-2018-olympic-winter-games>.

47 Ibid.

atmosphere between South Korea and North Korea could lead to more international investments and business opportunities in South Korea, with the reevaluation of economic risk factors.

In addition, North Korea's participation was beneficial in increasing support for the Moon Jae-in administration in terms of South Korea's domestic politics. Although Moon Jae-in became the president of South Korea with an overwhelming support rate of 81 percent, the success of hosting the Olympics was crucial to the president and the administration. The president ascended to the presidency in May 2017 with the sudden impeachment of the former president Park Geun-hae. Considering the special circumstances of South Korea, such as the timeline of hosting the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics and how president Moon Jae-in emphasized peace and harmony with North Korea, the success of the event was crucial to the evaluation of his administration in its early stages.

Furthermore, North Korea's participation in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games was considered to soften South Korea and North Korea relations in the context of sports diplomacy. There have been many cases in which the success of major sporting events led to warm relations between states. One of the most representative is the ping-pong diplomacy between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States during the Cold War. There are also other successful cases such as the baseball games between the United States and Japan after World War II, which were instrumental in re-engaging Japan into the international sphere. In this sense, it is natural that South Korea also sought to exert sports diplomacy for its benefit.

North Korea's Strategic Determination

In terms of public diplomacy, there was almost no interaction and no channel of communication between South Korea and North Korea before 2018, especially with the high level of sanctions due to North Korea's nuclear tests. There are various kinds of sanctions imposed on North Korea. Some are imposed by international organizations like the United Nations while some are imposed by individual entities such as the United States, South Korea, Japan, the European Union, and China. The United Nations, specifically, imposed a series of sanctions (as demonstrated in the graph below). In addition, the United States imposed various restrictions, such as the Trading with the Enemy Act, starting from the 1950s. In 2016, President Barack Obama enacted the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act followed by the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act in 2017. Travel was also banned to North Korea after the death of Otto Warmbier on July 2017. Recently, President Donald Trump imposed Executive Order 13810 as well. Similarly, South Korea imposed separate sanctions, especially after the sinking of the South Korean naval ship, the Cheonan, in 2010. This incident is known as the 24 May Measure. President Park also evacuated the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) as a response to the nuclear tests in 2016. KIC is an economic collaboration project launched in 2004, largely financed by South Korea and located in North Korea near

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the demilitarized zone.⁴⁸ 124 companies from various industries including “clothing and textiles, car parts and semiconductors”⁴⁹ are situated in the Kaesong Industrial Complex. Moreover, Japan also imposed separate sanctions starting from 2016 and the European Union imposed a series of sanctions starting from 2006.

China has been one of the traditional allies of North Korea due to its political interests. Nonetheless, because of high international pressures, China has also banned exports of some petroleum products and limited trade with North Korea, therefore aligning with the sanctions of the United Nations. A series of sanctions were imposed on North Korea by the UN Security Council; Resolution 825 (1993) was first imposed as a response to North Korea’s withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), urging North Korea to reconsider.⁵⁰ Later, Resolution 1695 (2006) banned selling materials needed to bolster North Korea’s ballistic missiles program.⁵¹ After each nuclear tests, Resolution 1874 (2009) expanded trade embargos and member states were encouraged to inspect and destroy ships or cargo suspected of carrying nuclear weapons. Resolution 2094 (2013) imposed sanctions on money transfers with the objective to exclude North Korea from the international financial system. Resolution 2270 (2016) banned the export of gold, vanadium, titanium, rare earth metals, coal and iron to North Korea.⁵² The recent Resolution 2397 (2017) was a response to the launch of Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile. It condemned the missile launch and tightened sanctions, restricting fuel imports, trade, and North Koreans working abroad as well as freezing assets.⁵³ Therefore, in this international and domestic context, where imposing sanctions and secluding North Korea is common, it is unlikely that South Korea was able to greatly influence or exert its public diplomacy efforts over North Korea.

In addition, documents from the Ministry of Unification of South Korea further illustrate how there was almost no communication between South Korea and North Korea before the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. For instance, aid to North Korea can be categorized into governmental aid and non-governmental aid. Both governmental and non-governmental aid have been on the decrease and there was almost no aid since 2016. Moreover, in terms of North-South interchange, there was almost no interchange of vehicles and vessels since 2016. There was almost no interchange of people since 2015, but there was a sudden increase in 2018, which can be attributed to North Korean’s participation in the PyeongChang

48 “What Is the Kaesong Industrial Complex?” BBC, February 10, 2016. Accessed February 11, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-22011178>.

49 Ibid.

50 “Security Council, SC, UNSC, Security, Peace, Sanctions, Veto, Resolution, President, United Nations, UN, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution, Prevention,” United Nations. Accessed November 28, 2018. <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions>.

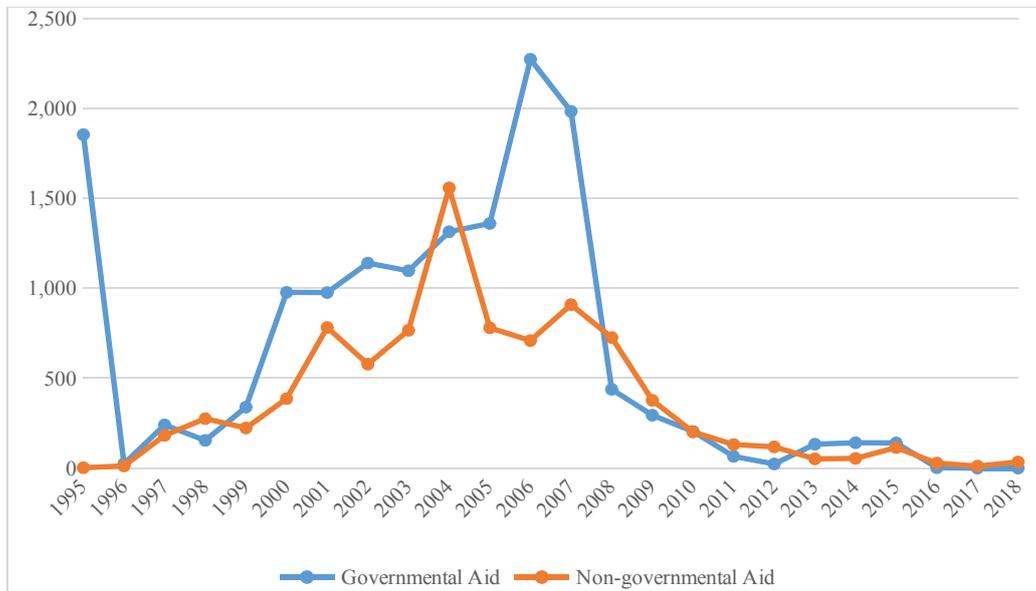
51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

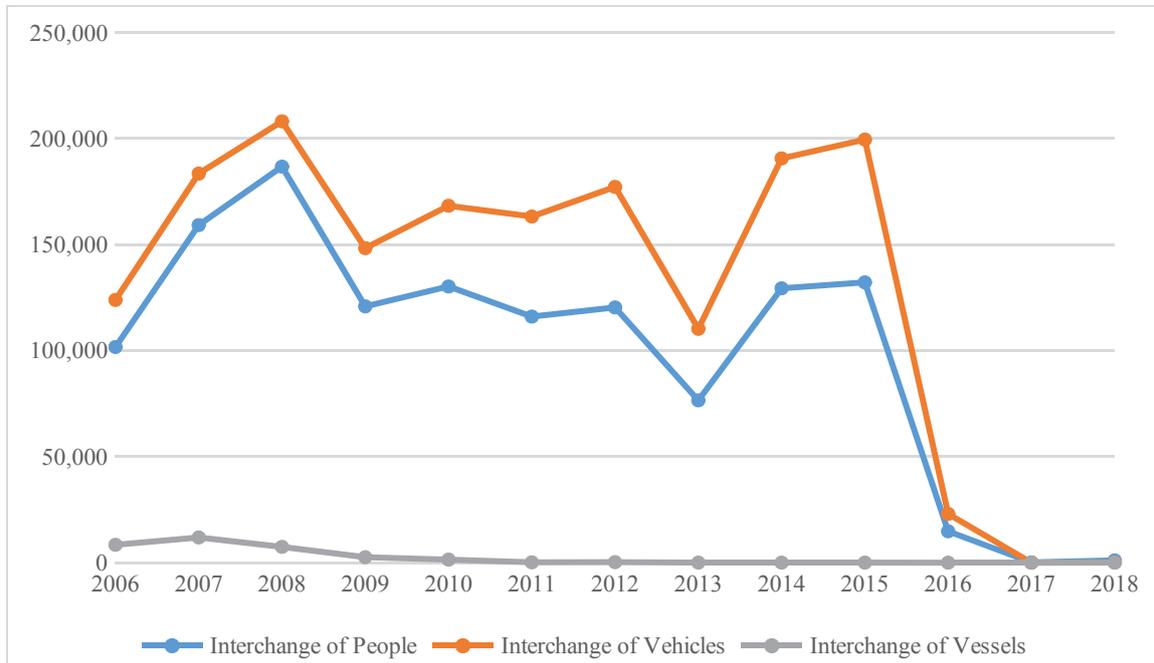
2018 Olympic Winter Games. Additionally, the total amount of trade between South Korea and North Korea drastically decreased since 2016, with the close of the Kaesong Industrial Complex and because of additional sanctions imposed on North Korea. Finally, the number of summits held at various governmental levels continuously decreased since 2008 and reached zero in the years of 2012, 2016, and 2017. However, this number slightly increased in 2018. Likewise, there are no infrastructures that facilitate any kind of public diplomacy efforts in North Korea, which differentiates North Korea from other states that South Korea has successfully exerted public diplomacy over. For instance, most North Koreans do not have access to the internet and the television. Even among the elite, which has access to the internet, a large proportion of data is censored by the North Korean government. Even South Korean diplomats and embassies are non-existent in North Korea.

Figure 3. Aid to North Korea



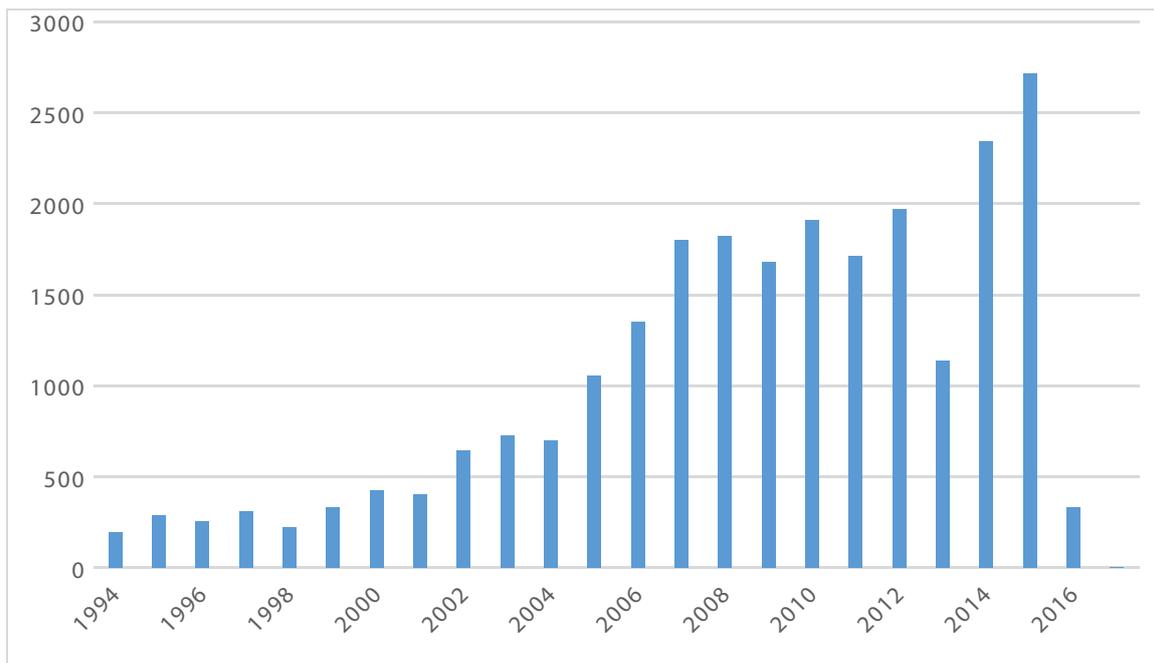
South Korea, Ministry of Unification, Humanitarian Cooperation, September, 2018, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://www.unikorea.go.kr/unikorea/business/statistics/>.

Figure 4. North-South Interactions



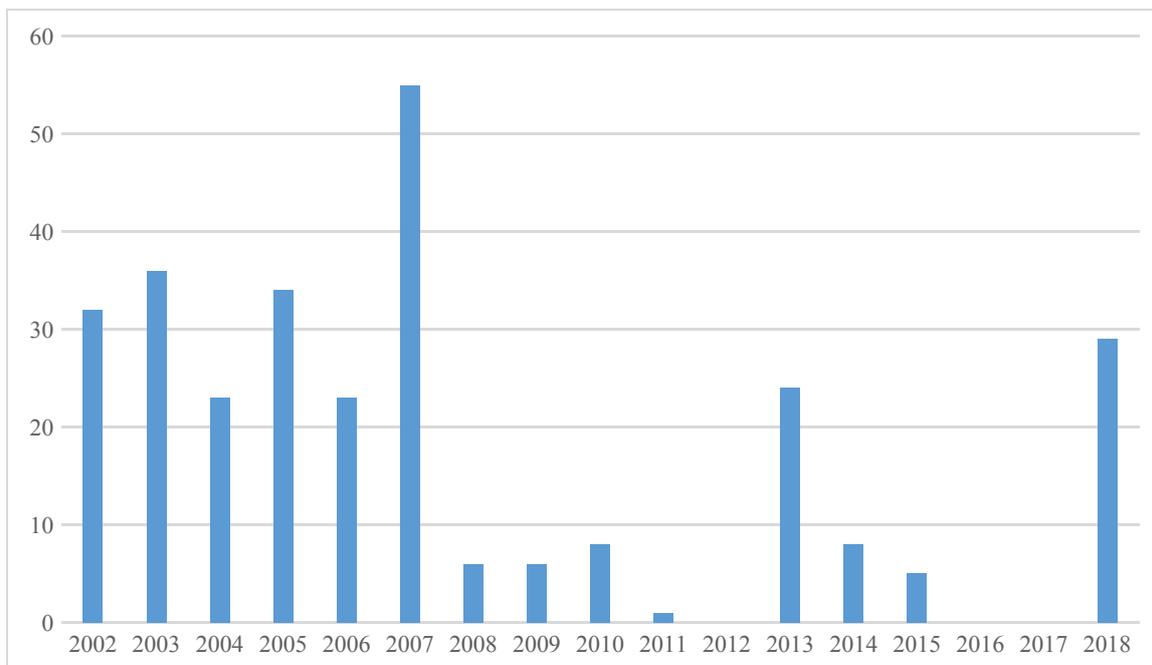
South Korea, Ministry of Unification, North Korea-South Korea Exchange of Human and Material Resources, May 2018, accessed November 29, 2018. <https://www.unikorea.go.kr/unikorea/business/statistics/>

Figure 5. North-South Trade in Million Dollars



South Korea, Ministry of Unification, North Korea-South Korea Interchange and Cooperation, 2017, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://www.unikorea.go.kr/unikorea/business/statistics/>.

Figure 6. Total Number of North-South Summits



South Korea, Ministry of Unification, North Korea-South Korea Summits, September 30, 2018, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://www.unikorea.go.kr/unikorea/business/statistics/>.

Taking into account the political atmosphere, it seems that North Korea’s participation in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games was mainly due to its strategic determination. North Korea considered itself to have enough political leverage for negotiations mainly because of the success of its nuclear weapon development programs. It is likely that North Korea could not take part in negotiations even if it had such intentions, as North Korea is an internationally secluded state and does not possess any significant economic or military leverage. For such a state to have enough political leverage and succeed in negotiations, unconventional methods are one of the few ways to accumulate power at a quick pace. As demonstrated in the table below, North Korea conducted a total of six recorded nuclear tests. The first nuclear test took place on October 9th, 2006, the second on May 25th, 2009, the third on February 12th, 2013, the fourth on January 6th, 2016, the fifth on September 9th, 2016, and the most recent on September 4th, 2017. The magnitude and the frequency of nuclear tests increased over time. Almost three years passed between the first nuclear test and the second nuclear test, and four years between the second nuclear test and the third nuclear test. However, the

three most recent nuclear tests occurred within an approximately two-year time gap. Interestingly, four out of six nuclear tests were conducted during the reign of Kim Jong-un, which indicates Kim Jong-un's will to fully develop its nuclear weapons within a short time frame.

Table 2. North Korea's Nuclear Tests

Time	2006.10.9	2009.5.25	2013.2.12	2016.1.6	2016.9.9	2017.9.4
Artificial Earthquake	Magnitude of 3.9	4.5	4.9	4.8	5.0	5.7 (South Korea) 6.3 (U.S. & China)
(Estimated) Power of Explosion	1kt	2~6kt	6~7kt	6kt	10kt	Over 10kt
Nuclear Test Ingredients	Plutonium	Plutonium	Presumed Uranium	Hydrogen bomb (North Korea) Boosted fission weapon assessed	Presumed Boosted fission weapon	Hydrogen bomb (North Korea)

An, Jihye. "[그래픽] 북한 1~6 차 핵실험 비교." JoongAng Daily, September 4, 2017. Accessed November 28, 2018. <https://news.joins.com/article/21902510>.

North Korea's ambition to become a nuclear state cannot be explained solely through concepts such as deterrence or political leverage. Rather, it directly relates to its state legitimacy as well as its state identity. For instance, the country's constitution clearly states that North Korea is a nuclear state. This gives the government more reason to develop its nuclear weapons before negotiating with other major states in the international arena. Indeed, "in accordance with *Byungjin*, North Korea has proclaimed itself a nuclear state."⁵⁴ *Byungjin* refers to the parallel development policy of nuclear weapons and economic development that was adopted by the country in 2013. Moreover, Kim Jong-un's speech at the 7th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea demonstrates the importance that nuclear weapons have for its government. He promoted "the resilience of the DPRK in maintaining its independence with 'powerful arms' and boasted of North Korea's strengths in 'politics, military affairs, the economy, science and technology, and culture.'"⁵⁵

In addition, the rather sudden decision to take part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games found in Kim Jong-un's 2018 New Year speech indicates that this was a strategic internal decision. Kim Jong-un's New Year speech of 2018 is especially significant as North Korea is a communist authoritarian regime in which

54 Leif-Eric Easley, "North Korean Identity as a Challenge to East Asia's Regional Order," *Korean Social Science Research Council* (June 2017): 51-71.

55 Ibid.

the leader's voice represents the narrative of the entire state. In the 2018 New Year speech, Kim Jong-un directly states that: "in terms of the Winter Olympics that will be held soon in South Korea, it will be a good opportunity to signify the status of our entire ethnic group and we sincerely hope that the games will be a success. Likewise, we have intentions to take part in necessary measures such as dispatching representatives and the North and the South could meet to discuss such matters."⁵⁶

Furthermore, Kim Jong-un emphasized how North Korea has completed its nuclear development and claims that the United States will no longer be able to wage war against them. Such statements also indicate how North Korea felt the danger of impending war considering the aggressive and spontaneous statements made by President Trump, which were different from other previous moderate and predictable comments made by leaders of the United States. In this sense, North Korea might have speculated that it had enough political leverage to take part in direct negotiations because of its successful development of nuclear weapons and opened up to the world. Additionally, the short time span between the nuclear tests and the sudden unilateral declaration of North Korea to take part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games makes it difficult to interpret North Korea's participation as a consequence of South Korea's successful public diplomacy efforts. The most recent nuclear test took place in September 2017 and North Korea declared that it will take part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games in the New Year's speech by Kim Jong-un. There was only a four-month span between such drastic changes of narratives.

In this context, it is important to observe the most recent New Year speech of 2019. Kim Jong-un continued his narrative of peace and denuclearization stating his "full, complete, and unchanging stance of total denuclearization."⁵⁷ He also claimed that "North Korea declared to stop producing, testing, using, and spreading nuclear weapons and that they took many practical steps accordingly."⁵⁸ In addition, he expressed his will to further negotiate with the United States on relevant issues. Although Kim Jong-un also sent warnings and requests, his main policy stance did not change. Another interesting element is how Kim Jong-un presented himself in the New Year speech of 2019. Traditionally, he would stand in front of a podium and read his speech. However, in the New Year speech of 2019, he sat in a luxurious room which resembles the settings of the White House. It seems that Kim Jong-un was hoping to present North Korea as a normal state and to emphasize its power and prosperity. Sitting in a chair also indicates how relaxed his position in North Korea may be, such as his stabilized stance within North Korea after his father's death. Moreover, the way the video was structured reflects some similarities with

56 Minjung Lee. *Joongang Daily*, January 1, 2018. Accessed November 28, 2018. <https://news.joins.com/article/22250044>.

57 Kim Jong-un, "New Year's Speech," 2019.

58 Ibid.

China. For instance, the video starts with the nightscape of the building and slowly zooms in on Kim Jong-un. This style of formatting can also be seen in Xi Jing Ping’s New Year address. There were portraits of his grandfather and his father in the background, signaling his political legitimacy and tradition. Therefore, the New Year speech of 2019 demonstrates how North Korea had its strategic reasons and motivations in taking part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

Table 3. Comparison of New Year Speeches

Year	Format	North/South Relations	North Korea/U.S. Relations & Nuclear Issues
2014	Kim Jong-un’s Speech (Chosun Chungang TV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respect for the North-South Summit Declarations and pursue independent international relations 2. Preparation for improving North-South relations, request to stop propaganda efforts 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If there is a war on this peninsula, it will be a nuclear disaster and the U.S. will not be safe
2015	Kim Jong-un’s Speech (Chosun Chungang TV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possibility of Summits 2. Possibility of resuming high-level talks 3. North-South talks, negotiations, communication and contact should become active in order to achieve major transition of North-South relations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Criticism of U.S. hostile policies towards North Korea, urging a change of policy narratives 2. Criticism on U.S. offensive on humanitarian issues
2016	Kim Jong-un’s Speech (Chosun Chungang TV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request to adhere to 6.15 and 10.4 Declarations 2. Request to stop cooperation with foreign states, South Korea-U.S. military drills, and ideological rivalry 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Criticism of U.S. hostile policies and avoiding offers of peace talks 2. Criticism on U.S. offensive on humanitarian issues

2017	Kim Jong-un's Speech (Chosun Chungang TV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving ties, active measures in terms of potential military clashes and reducing the possibility of war 2. Request to stop criticism, anti-communist acts, increasing military might and military drills. 3. Achieving peaceful unification 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Claimed to be in the phase of developing intercontinental ballistic missiles 2. Request to stop aggressive policies towards North Korea 3. Continuous strengthening of self-defense capabilities based on nuclear weapons
2018	Kim Jong-un's Speech (Chosun Chungang TV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expressing support for South Korea's successful host of the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games 2. Intention to dispatch delegates to the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games and request for summits to discuss related issues 3. Open to talks and communication 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achieved national nuclear objectives last year 2. With the conclusion of nuclear weapons, the U.S. will not be able to start a war against North Korea
2019	Kim Jong-un's Speech (Chosun Chungang TV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request to stop joint military drills 2. Willing to take further measures toward denuclearization and peace 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open to summits 2. Request to stop joint military drills 3. Warnings that they may take a different policy route if no further compensations are given

MK News, January 01, 2018, accessed November 28, 2018, <http://news.mk.co.kr/newsRead.php?year=2018&no=1029>.

Furthermore, compared to other major international sporting events that were hosted in South Korea, the reactions and narratives of North Korea are decidedly

different the Winter Games. Indeed, when South Korea hosted the 1986 Asian Games, North Korea did not participate in the event, although it took part in the previous three Asian Games. This trend continued in the case of the 1988 Summer Olympics in which North Korea boycotted the event. The same applies in the case of the 2002 FIFA World Cup, which was hosted by South Korea and Japan. North Korea did not take part and even tried to hinder the successful launch of the World Cups by increasing propaganda efforts near the borders. However, in the case of the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, North Korea eagerly expressed its intentions to participate and to contribute. Furthermore, not getting involved in international sporting events hosted by South Korea was based on different reasons, both domestic and international. For instance, it might have been to politically negate the comparative political and economic development of South Korea and the prestige of hosting an international sporting event. It could also have been to undermine the legitimacy of the South Korean government. Therefore, reversing previous patterns of behavior occurred with specific logic, reasons, and objectives, such as utilizing the notion of participation in major international sporting events for political and economic benefit.

All things considered, North Korea is using sports diplomacy and participation in major sporting events to achieve specific goals. First, international sporting events help to establish a stronger national identity. Udo Merkel stated that:

*“the participation in international competitions and hosting of sports events and festivals offer North Korea a versatile platform to nurture and promote two identities: first, a pan-Korean identity that stresses the close links between the strong ethnic ties and common cultural heritage of the Korean people in both states; second, a distinctive North Korean identity that emphasizes differences to the South and celebrates the uniqueness of the country, in particular its political system, the Kim dynasty, the ideological framework and achievements.”*⁵⁹

In this sense, one of the objectives of North Korea is to nurture a pan-Korean identity as well as its distinct national identity.

Secondly, North Korea seeks to enhance and strengthen the legitimacy of its state by participating in international sporting events. Taking part in an international sporting event greatly enhances and normalizes the national image of North Korea, which is often associated with a broad range of negative impressions such as being a failed state, one of the poorest states in the world, nuclear tests, and low humanitarian standards. However, by taking part in international sporting events, people, including athletes from other participating states, realize that North Koreans are also normal human beings. Such realization also became apparent in the case of the ping-pong diplomacy. One of the players from the United States stated in

59 Udo Merkel, “The Politics of Sport and Identity in North Korea,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 31, no. 3 (2014): 376-90.

an interview that “the people are just like us. They are real, they’re genuine, they got feeling. I made friends, I made genuine friends, you see. The country is similar to America, but still very different. It’s beautiful.”⁶⁰ In addition, North Korea and its athletes are exposed to the world. The International Olympic Committee reports that: “the performances of the athletes were watched by over a quarter of the world’s population, making PyeongChang the most digitally viewed Olympic Winter Games ever – an increase of 124 percent from Sochi and 870 percent from Vancouver. PyeongChang also enjoyed the largest amount of broadcast coverage in the history of the Olympic Winter Games, up 38 percent from Sochi.”⁶¹ Moreover, as legitimate states are generally entitled to take part as an independent entity in international sporting events, this greatly enhances the stance of North Korea in the international arena.

Thirdly, sports diplomacy utilizes the trust-building process between hostile states by starting with cooperation on low-politics, which often leads to successful cooperation in high-politics. Low-politics refers to the state’s welfare and is the field that is not vital for a state’s survival. On the other hand, high-politics refers to matters crucial to a state’s survival such as national security, international security and economics. States in hostile or not so good relations feel less pressure in cooperating in the realm of low-politics. Through communicating and learning the ways of the opponent, they often move on to cooperation on high-politics, which contains more sensitive agendas. North Korea seems to be heading towards this direction, especially regarding the recent summits between South Korea and North Korea as well as the summit between the U.S. and North Korea. In addition, there are various successful cases that took a similar path. “Sports diplomacy has demonstrated its potential to normalize hostile relations (US/Iran), ease domestic sociopolitical anxieties (Afghanistan), exert pressures from stakeholders concerning international laws and norms (South Africa), and contribute to the reunification of a divided state (Yemen).”⁶² Another representative case is the ping-pong diplomacy between the U.S. and mainland China during the cold war. This was an event in which the U.S. table tennis team received an invitation to visit China while they were in Nagoya, Japan in 1971 for the 31st World Table Tennis Championships. This led to Nixon’s visit to China in 1972 and the ultimate normalization of U.S.-China relations.

Finally, the characteristics of the Winter Olympics in itself is noteworthy. Hosting the Winter Olympics is prestigious, in that the winter sporting facilities are very costly. Moreover, the costs of training athletes is expensive, which partly explains

60 “1971 Year in Review, Foreign Policy: Red China and Russia,” UPI Year in Review 1970-1979. United Press International. Retrieved Apr 24, 2013.

61 International Olympic Committee. FACTSHEET THE OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES. June 5, 2018. Accessed November 28, 2018. <https://www.olympic.org/documents/games-pyeongchang-2018-olympic-winter-games>.

62 Chris Larson, “South Korean Sports Diplomacy and Soft Power,” *International Journal of Foreign Studies* 9, no. 1 (2016): 93-116.

why most states that reap great results in the Winter Olympics are from developed nations. On top of everything, the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games was a great success. According to the International Olympic Committee's official report, the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics lasted from February 9th to the 25th and a total of 2,833 athletes, 22,400 volunteers, 2,853 written and photographic press, and 10,898 broadcasters took part in the event.⁶³ Four new medal events were included, which were the curling mixed doubles, speed skating mass start, alpine skiing team event, and snowboard big air. The event also set a record in terms of participation, "with more National Olympic Committees (NOCs) taking part and more female athletes competing than ever before."⁶⁴ The report further states that "the historic moment of these Games was when the athletes of the two Koreans marched together as one team at the opening ceremony,"⁶⁵ which emphasizes how much the international community found North Korea's participation meaningful and significant. In addition, the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games recorded the highest level of Olympic partnerships with the top 13 partners being Coca-Cola, Alibaba, ATOS, Bridgestone, DOW, GE, Samsung, Toyota, Visa, P&G, Panasonic, Omega, and Intel.⁶⁶ There also were a range of domestic partnerships such as McDonald's, KT, The North Face, Korean Air, POSCO, Hyundai and Kia Motors, and KEPCO.⁶⁷ Therefore, taking part in such a successful international event could not have hurt North Korea's chances in any way.

North Korea took part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games due to domestic reasons and for its own benefit. Considering the recent events between South Korea and North Korea, it seems obvious that the trend that began with the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games will continue. After the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, there were summits between South Korea and North Korea followed by a summit between the United States and North Korea. Afterward, talks on the topic such as denuclearization and the official end of the Korean War continued as well. There also are some material results, such as North Korea bombing the 10 guard posts (GP) as promised and planning to build a road through the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Finally, there is high anticipation of a North Korea and U.S. high-level meeting in 2019.

The statistics and measurements in terms of South Korea's public diplomacy and soft power indicate how South Korea has an evident influence in exerting its soft power. Moreover, the South Korean government may have special policy

63 International Olympic Committee. FACTSHEET THE OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES. June 5, 2018. Accessed November 28, 2018. <https://www.olympic.org/documents/games-pyeongchang-2018-olympic-winter-games>.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid.

66 International Olympic Committee. IOC MARKETING REPORT OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES PYEONGCHANG 2018. July 25, 2018. Accessed November 28, 2018. <https://www.olympic.org/documents/games-pyeongchang-2018-olympic-winter-games>.

67 Ibid.

focus on promoting public diplomacy. However, it is not clear how South Korea's public diplomacy affected North Korea's decision to participate in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. Even if public diplomacy efforts had some influence in North Korea, this would have been before the years of 2015 and 2016. Unlike traditional diplomatic channels, public diplomacy requires a certain amount of time to achieve tangible results. Likewise, it is unlikely that South Korea influenced North Korea to take part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games with its public diplomacy efforts.

Conclusion

The sudden declaration of North Korea to take part in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games was unexpected. Some claimed that it was due to the successful public diplomacy efforts by South Korea while others claimed that it was due to North Korea's strategic determination. In order to weigh these two perspectives, academic articles, government documents, and history were analyzed. Based on various systems of measurement, South Korea seems to be influential in terms of its public diplomacy and exerting its soft power. Moreover, government documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea indicate the policy focus on public diplomacy and sports diplomacy. Documents from the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of South Korea further illustrates the emphasis and importance of the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics to the administration. There also were sufficient reasons as to why South Korea wanted to engage North Korea in the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics. However, due to the sanctions imposed and the lack of infrastructure, it is difficult for South Korea's public diplomacy efforts to be sufficiently influential. Furthermore, data from the Ministry of Unification also indicate how there were almost no communication and exchange between South Korea and North Korea, especially after Kim Jong-un succeeded his father. In addition, North Korea's successful and intense nuclear tests and the narratives of Kim Jong-un's New Year Speech imply that North Korea had strong internal reasons for taking part in the Winter Games. North Korea's decision to participate is especially striking when compared to the past international sporting events hosted by South Korea. The success of the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games and the effectiveness of sports diplomacy seems to have influenced North Korea's decision-making process. In conclusion, although South Korea has its merits and influence with its public diplomacy, in the specific case of North Korea and the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games, North Korea seems to have had more internal motivations and reasons for participating in the international sporting event.

In order to be more effective in exerting sports diplomacy, there are some policy suggestions. First, North Korea and South Korea should try to form a unified team and go further than simply participating in the same sporting events. Secondly, they should expand the sports exchange from professionals to sports exchange at the university-level. The government should also expand the age groups as well as the number of sports. Nonetheless, the South Korean government should communicate actively with the public to create a consensus in terms of forming a unified team.

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Opposition such as degrading the performance of the South Korean athletes and realistic issues such as training and facilities should be directly addressed to counter opposition and to increase the general performance of the unified team. Thirdly, mechanisms should be established so that politics do not hinder, or halt sports diplomacy. An organization responsible for such matters will facilitate sports exchange. Finally, the government should seek creative ways to expand sports diplomacy into generating economic interest such as producing sport related products at the Kaesong Industrial Complex. The South Korean government could also cooperate in sharing their directors and facilities with North Korean athletes. The International Olympic Committee Code of Ethics states in its preamble that “the Olympic parties undertake to disseminate the culture of ethics and integrity within their respective areas of competence and to serve as role models.”⁶⁸ North Korea and South Korea ought to adhere to such measures and achieve peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula.

68 International Olympic Committee. IOC Code of Ethics. 2016. Accessed November 29, 2018.