

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In this era when every state wants to take control and be a part of the center of the global economy, there are several states that unwilling to make those a risks. A lot of states want to build their endurance to grow their military sector, such as building and growing their weapons, economic sector for example, about export and import products, relations with other countries about politics, cooperation, and the profit that the states can achieved, also lot other different sectors that can affect the state to be a better entity.

How a state performs its diplomacy and its bilateral or multilateral relations usually can be deducted from whether they are a developed or developing country. Finding the most accurate way to compare industrialized and developing nations is challenging. There are a number of additional measures that can be used to gauge a country's progress, even though gross domestic product is one of the most popular figures for doing so. Although some of them could be more accurate than others, none of them are necessarily bad to employ. The fact that most nations are enormous, intricate, and difficult to classify adds to the difficulty. Because of this, certain nations display traits that can be seen in both industrialized and developing countries (United Nations, 2020).

On 68th meeting that held on July 2nd, 2021, The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reclassified South Korea as a developed economy. This is the first time the UN agency has upgraded a member state's development status since its establishment in 1964 (hyung, 2021). South Korea, one of the most active members of the Group of 77, has formally ceased to be part of the developing world since its entry into the Paris-based the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development on 1996 (Group of 77, 1997). The

Republic of Korea has achieved remarkable success in combining rapid economic growth with significant poverty reduction. Korea has contributed significantly to the International Development Association, the World Bank's fund that assists the world's poorest countries, since 1977. One of the main development partners of the World Bank Group is Korea. Korea today provides a development experience that acts as an inspiration to many developing nations in terms of fostering sustainable development, offering enhanced infrastructure and services to improve people's lives, and making the transition to a thriving knowledge economy. In December 2020, it was agreed that the WBG of Korea Office would become a global center of innovation and technology for sustainable development. Through this global hub, the WBG of Korea Office will help developing countries adopt innovative, solution of technology-enabled development and support green growth innovations for sustainable development (The World Bank, 2021).

South Korea already expands its politic influences in many different countries and region such as Southeast Asia, like Indonesia with their diplomatic relations (Pasha & Paksi, 2022). Also in Oceania with Australia, about relationship like trading, renewable energy, arms and defence development, and infrastructure (Corben, 2019). South Korea trying to be the global country makes a lot of effort to have relations as many as possible with different countries there is Solomon Island one of the country in Oceania.

The Solomon Islands is a country located in the southwest Pacific Ocean and consists of a double chain of volcanic islands and coral atolls in Melanesia. The country covers most the Mountains Solomon, except for Buka and Bougainville, two islands in the far northwest which form the autonomous region Papua New Guinea. Once a protectorate of England, the Solomon Islands gained independence as a republic in 1978. Honaria, on the northern coast of Guadalcanal, is the capital and largest city of the Solomon Islands (Douglas & Douglas, 1994). Solomon Islands have a population of 669,823 in 2019 (World Bank Group, 2021). The Solomon Islands are an archipelago of 997 islands south of the equator in the western Pacific Ocean. The total land area is 28,785 square

kilometres and the majority population is Melanesian about 520,000. Most of the rural population is involved in subsistence agriculture and fishery; the economy especially is based on agriculture, forestry, fishery, services and manufacturing (Jeffery T Spickett and Dianne Katscherian, 2014).

This national project is the first large utility-scale renewable energy project for the Solomon Islands to provide benefits such as more affordable electricity and better accessibility to cleaner and more reliable energy sources for communities now and in the future (the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification, 2021). This project was named The Tina River Hydropower Development project.

The Tina River Hydro Development Project (TRHDP) is a National project the Solomon Islands which is managed by the office special project Ministry Mining, Energy and Rural Electrification (MMERE). TRHDP was part of a larger initiative called the Solomon Islands Sustainable Energy Project (SISEP) and aims to bring electricity to Honiara from local renewable sources (water electricity) to serve the capital city with cheaper and more reliably (the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification, 2021).

The Tina River Hydropower development project was examined in detail by the Energy Mission of the World Bank in February 2006. During a table review this mission was carried out for three projects in the river valley: Ngalimbiu, Nuhu and Choha. The analysis of this source shows that the main tributary river Ngalimbiu, Tina, seems to have the best potential for electricity generation of water power. Based on the results of these desk studies, the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) commissioned a pre-feasibility study of the Tina River hydropower development. The World Bank funded pre-feasibility study started in May 2007 and the final report submitted to the World Bank in November 2007. The pre-feasibility study confirmed that a stretch of the Tina River nine kilometres long has been identified by the World Bank which has planned development of electric power plant water power to supply Honiara and other

potential consumer in the area (the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification, 2021).

The Tina River Hydro Power Development Project was supported by a number of partners from around the world. They all played crucial roles; from donors to construction partners, lenders to technical advisors, to help deliver the project objectives, more affordable and cleaner electricity to the people of the Solomon Islands (the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification, 2021). Among them there was South Korean companies such as Korea Water Resources Corporation or K-Water that cooperate in the field of construction partners.

On September 30th, 2019, The Korea Water Resources Corporation or K-water signed a contract to construct a hydroelectric power facility on the Tina River in the Solomon Islands (Kim Jae Heun, 2019).

Distance from South Korea to Solomon Islands

Distance from South Korea to Solomon Islands is 6,080 kilometers. This air travel distance is equal to 3,778 miles.

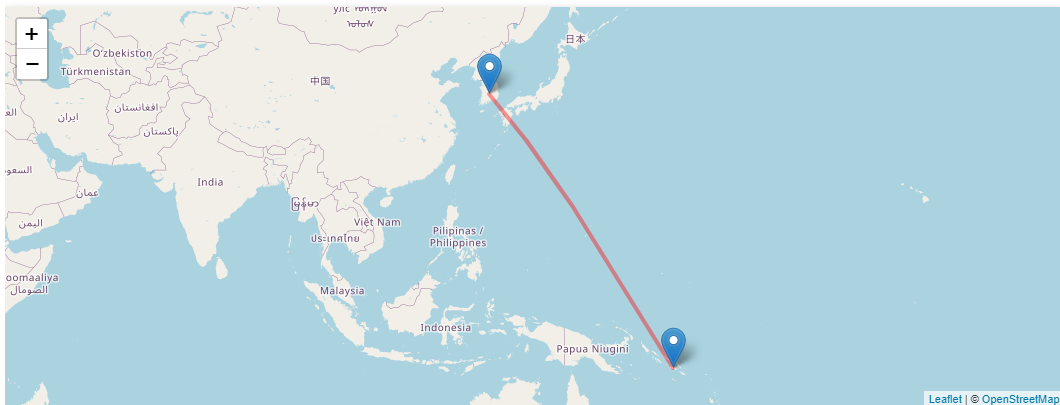


Figure 1: Distance from South Korea to Solomon Islands

This is the distance between South Korea and Solomon Islands through air travel, the shortest distance being 6,080 km or 3,778 miles. The long journey from South Korea to Solomon Islands using an airplane which an average speed of 560 miles can accumulated to 6.75 hours until arrival. This thesis will be explaining more about the South Korean Strategy in Solomon Islands through TRHD Project.

B. Research Question

According to the background above, the research question for this thesis is: *Why are South Korea willing to cooperate with Solomon Islands on Tina River Hydropower Development Project?*

C. Theoretical Framework

1. Neo-Realism Theory

The Theory of Neorealism was first introduced by Kenneth Neal Waltz under the name of “structural realism”. The term neo-realism was later popularized by Richard K. Ashley in his book "The Poverty of Neorealism" (Ashley, 1994). According to Waltz, “structure is defined by the ordering principle of the international system, which is anarchy, and the distribution of capabilities across units, which are states” (Baylis, Smith, & Owens, 2008, p. 127). Instead of viewing the system as a state that exists separately within a scope of anarchy, neo-realism seeks to examine the power of the international system over countries and the influence of the individuals within a country. Apart from that, neo-realism defines the interests of the state in terms of power and wealth (Riddle, 2009).

Even though the needs of most countries are the same, the way to fulfill the needs is different from one state to other states. Therefore, distrust and anxiety in the international system are brought on by the relative discrepancies in a country's capacity to meet its needs. the worries that other nations with the required resources will grow more powerful, causing globalization to proceed unevenly and the distribution of power within the international order to become unequal. Furthermore, while neo-realists see globalization as a challenge, they still see politics as international and states as main players in the international political arena,

supporting Waltz theory. Their main concern about globalization is the unequal distribution of power, which leads to inequality and conflict (Riddle, 2009).

Through this theory it can be explained that South Korea, now one of the developed countries, is seeking to develop its global and regional influence. The theory is suitable to explain the reasons why South Korea willing to cooperated with Solomon Islands on the Tina River Hydropower Development Project because of the South Korean regional strategy that is the signature initiative and aspiration to seek greater strategic autonomy by assuming greater international responsibility and role commensurate with its status and capabilities in global society.

2. The Concept of National Interest

The Concept of National Interest can be defined as the claims, objectives, goals, demands, and interests which a nation always tries to preserve, protect, defend and secure in relations with other nations. According to the Vernon Van Dyke, national interest is the values, desire and interest which states seek to protect or achieve in relations to each other. It means desires on the part of sovereign states (Dinesh, National Interest: Meaning, Components and Methods, 2023).

According to Morgenthau there are two components that must be known for describing national interest that nations seek to secure vital and non-vital components. The vital components of the national interests that a foreign policy seeks to secure are survival or identity. He sub-divides identity into three parts: physical identity, political identity, and cultural identity. Physical identity includes territorial identity. Political identity means politico-economic system and cultural identity stands for historical values that are upheld by a nation as part of its cultural heritage. The non-

vital components are those parts of national interest which are determined either by circumstances or by the necessity of securing the vital components. These are determined by a host of factors—the decision-makers, public opinion, party politics, sectional or group interests and political and moral folkways (Dinesh, National Interest: Meaning, Components and Methods, 2023). All this makes it essential for every nation to formulate its foreign policy and to conduct its relations with other nations on the basis of its national interests, as interpreted and defined in harmony with the common interests of the humankind. The aim of foreign policy is to secure the defined goals of national interest by the use of the national power.

In the process of cooperation between South Korean with Solomon Islands, the national interest concept can explain best why South Korea agreed to help build Tina River Hydropower Development Project through the concept of National Interest because South Korea want to expand and influence its political interest.

3. The Concept of Geo-Politics

Classical geopolitics and contemporary geopolitics its critique leads to three pillars for a geopolitical approach to international relations – an approach focussed on the physical reality that states face. In this sense, geographical conditions are understood as location, physical geography and man-made structures in geographical space (Scholvin, 2014). Firstly, geographical conditions are rather a set of obstacles and opportunities, meaning a structure that is independent of agency examining the geographical context will still lead to sound results because geographical conditions often constitute a without which not for social processes. Second, geographical conditions are the fundament of suitable explanations for general patterns and long-term processes. Cohen arguing

that ‘geopolitical analysis does not predict the timing of event, that force radical change in the geopolitical map’. It concentrates on ‘conditions that are likely to bring about geopolitical change’ (Cohen, 1988). Geopolitics is not about predicting events. Third, in order to show that geographical conditions matter and in what way, it is helpful to trace processes and to establish causal mechanisms, concentrating on the role of geographical conditions therein. Non-geographical intervening factors have to be recognised. Technology appears to be the most important intervening factor. Another major intervening factor is politics. The resource-driven conflicts that Klare predicts are not only influenced by the capacity of resource-scare countries to substitute the resources they lack, meaning by technological progress. The scramble for resources, including the probability of violent conflicts over resources, also depends on the political environment in which decisions on resources are taken.

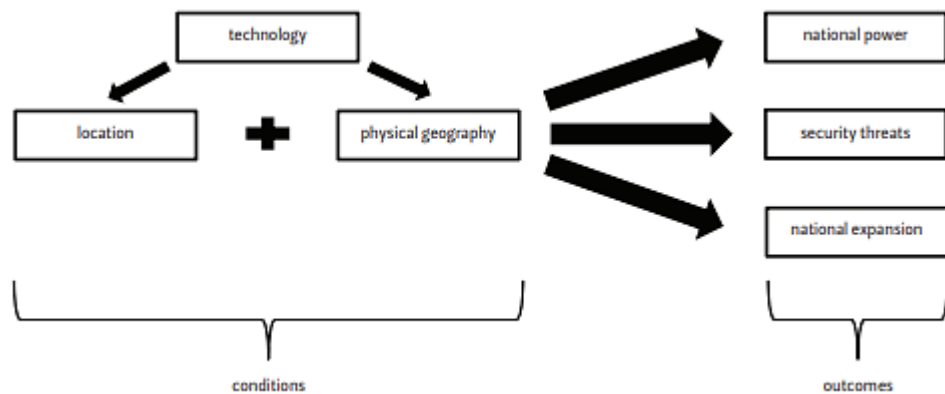


Figure 2: Scientific principles of classical geopolitics. By Soren Scholvin

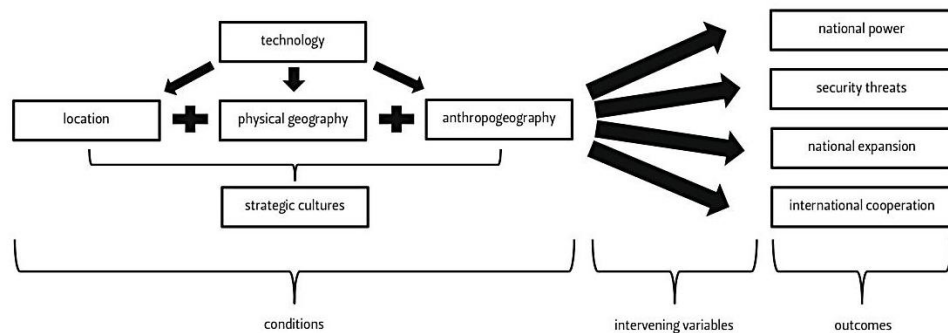


Figure 3: Scientific principles of contemporary geopolitics. By Soren Scholvin

Through the concept of geopolitics above it can be explain best with the contemporary one, that South Korea willing to expand and influence its political by having a relation with Solomon Islands on Tina River Hydropower Development Project using the technology, the physical geography and location, national power, national expansion, and international cooperation.

D. Hypothesis

Based on the discussion and theoretical framework, the answer to the research question is as follows: The South Korean government willing to cooperate with Solomon Islands on Tina River Hydropower Development Project because through this collaboration, South Korea can expect to expand its regional and global influences in several sectors, such as increase its political sector on global worlds.

A. Research Methodology

In this research, the author will use the qualitative method. This method will help to explain the research based on obtaining data in the form of facts. Qualitative method is collecting information based on literature review such as books,

journals, report, news, and articles. Through this research, the author will focus more on the South Korea's willing to cooperate with Solomon Islands on the Tina River Hydropower Development Project. Data collection will be used for the author to answers the research question with connecting it with theoretical frameworks.

B. Scope of Research

The scope of research for this thesis will be focus on South Korea's willing to have a cooperation with Solomon Islands on the Tina River Hydropower Development Project.

C. Research Outline

Good writing is if it is arranged in an orderly and systematic manner. The systematics of writing this scientific paper will consist of four chapters as follows:

CHAPTER I. Introduction

This chapter provides the background, research question, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research methodology, and scope of research.

CHAPTER II. The Cooperation between South Korea's with Solomon Island on Tina River Hydropower Development Project

This chapter will explain more about South Korea that have cooperation with Solomon Islands on Tina River Hydropower Development Project.

CHAPTER III. The Strategy of South Korean Government from the Cooperation with Solomon Islands to expand its politics

This chapter will explain the strategy of South Korea willing to have cooperation with Solomon Islands on Tina Project to spread its politics in globalization.

CHAPTER IV. Conclusion

This chapter is the closing chapter of the thesis.