

# Public Diplomacy and South Korea's Strategies

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· **Key words** : South Korea, foreign policy, public diplomacy, soft power

## ABSTRACT

In the age of globalization, public diplomacy has emerged as a significant style of diplomacy. Yet studies so far have failed to offer South Korea a basic framework for establishing strategies for concrete and successful public diplomacy. This article examines the relevant discourse and the positive factors that could contribute to South Korea's public diplomacy. The article also analyzes the meaning of these factors in the nation's formulation of strategies, and makes suggestions for developing specific ideas into actual policies.

## I . Introduction

The growth of state-of-the-art communications in the twenty-first century enables individuals to acquire information easily on topics of international relations related to one's nation. In the post-Cold World era, the opinions of individuals and interest groups, including NGOs, on matters of foreign policy have become key elements in the decision-making process of foreign policy. This change in diplomatic paradigms reveals two facts: first, the actuality of multidimensional diplomacy through individuals, civil society, and specialist groups; and second, the expansion of subjects of diplomatic constituencies. In other words, the importance of domestic constituencies in the decision-making process of a country's foreign policies has expanded, and in this context, the power of diplomacy can be produced not only through persuasion or coercion based on traditional methods but also through the sharing of attractiveness of information, thus suggesting the necessity of public diplomacy. Particularly, amid the changes of diplomatic paradigms, one nation can influence other nations not by restricting the influence of public opinion but by making the best use of public opinion. Currently, a dominating trend of foreign policy is the proactive style of diplomacy that attempts to achieve the national interests by exerting influence not only on one's own citizens but also on those of other nations.<sup>1)</sup> Public diplomacy has emerged as a practice of foreign policy amid the changes of global diplomatic paradigms.

Diplomacy in a traditional sense is intergovernmental dialogue—government leaders communicating with each other at the highest levels. Public diplomacy, on the other hand, focuses on the ways one country communicates with the citizens of another country. It refers to “soft power” diplomacy,<sup>2)</sup> the means and efforts to capture the hearts and minds of the people of other nations and achieve diplomatic objectives that otherwise could not have been accomplished by using “hard power.” Scholarly interest in public diplomacy is increasing.<sup>3)</sup> However, studies so far have failed to

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1) Mark Leonard, *Public Diplomacy* (London: Foreign Policy Center, 2002).

2) Joseph Nye Jr. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), p. x, pp. 5-11.

3) See, for example, *ibid.*; Jozef Batora, “Public Diplomacy in Small and Medium-Sized States: Norway and Canada,” discussion papers in *Diplomacy* 97 (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, 2005); Jan Mellissen, *New Public*

offer South Korea a basic framework for establishing strategies for concrete and successful public diplomacy. The South Korean government lacks a consistent conception of or concrete strategy for public diplomacy with which it can publicize the existence of South Korea and propagate the positive images of the nation to other nations. So far, the government has pushed ahead with public diplomacy in a narrow sense, seeing it in terms of cultural diplomacy. But cultural diplomacy is largely dominated by cultural contents, which the government tends to rely on the private sector to produce. Hence, in the South Korean case, while the government is supposed to initiate public diplomacy, its strategy is vulnerable to the circumstances of the private sector. South Korea has a limited amount of contents related to cultural diplomacy. South Korea is devoid of not only a strategy for constructing a solid image of the nation but also a grand vision and plan. Thus, it is hard to expect that ideas based on its current strategy could develop into actual policies.

South Korea must examine its previous policies in the area of public diplomacy in order to develop future strategies in a way that are concrete and applicable to actual policies. This article examines the discourse on public diplomacy and analyzes the positive factors that could contribute to the establishment of South Korea's public diplomacy policies. Furthermore, it suggests strategies for turning relevant and specific ideas into concrete policies.

## **II . Public Diplomacy: Definitions and Discourse**

Diplomacy in the global world is changing. In the era of globalization, intergovernmental closed-door diplomacy alone no longer can guarantee satisfactory benefits to nations. That does not mean that closed-door diplomacy is ineffective; but such diplomacy is no longer persuasive. There is more emphasis on the significance of interdependence in the age of globalization. People's power has expanded in the wake of democratization and the development of information. Public attitudes and opinion now

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*Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Joseph Nye Jr., "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power," *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616-1 (2008).

directly exerted an influence on a nation's ability to realize diplomatic gain. Diplomacy is no more a secret and rhetorical negotiation among the leaders of nations. An increasing number of nations rely on public information for propagating their policies and ideologies in order to change public opinions and persuade publics around the world.<sup>4)</sup> The idea is that, through a bottom-up political mechanism, civil society has the capacity to put pressure on the government's policymaking, and that this will indirectly influence one's national security and prosperity.<sup>5)</sup>

Joseph Nye Jr. explains the necessity of getting beyond the traditional narrow view of the nature of power if one is to understand the foreign policies of a nation.<sup>6)</sup> Nye calls for 'smart power'—an extension of his own theory of soft power. Smart power is a skillful combination of 'hard power' and 'soft power'. By employing smart power, a nation pursues global benefits through hard power elements (e.g., military and economic strength) and soft power strategies.<sup>7)</sup> Nye established a bipartisan Commission on Smart Power under the umbrella of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and in 2007 the commission submitted a report on the concept and its strategic application to U.S. global engagement. The report recommends that the United States create smart power by allowing soft power resources to fill the gap of hard power elements (military and economic power), adding that smart power properly used could gain the United States diplomatic achievements. Five critical areas of smart power are identified,<sup>8)</sup> the third of

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4) Chaesung Chun, "Miguk Busi Haengjeongbu-ui Byeonhwan Oegyo: Jeongbohwa Sidae-ui Jegukjeok Jisik-oegyo-ui Deungjang" [Transformational Diplomacy of the Bush Administration: The Appearance of Imperialistic Knowledge-based Diplomacy in the Age of Information], *National Strategies* 12-4 (2006); Giwoong Jung and Seok-sang Yoon, "Ilbon Gonggong-oegyo-ga Hanguk-e Juneun Hamui: Ilbon Gukje-gyoryugigeum-gwa Ilbon Gukje-hyeopnyeokgigu-reul Jungsim-euro" [The Meaning of Japan's Public Diplomacy on South Korea: Focus on the Japan Foundation and the Japan International Cooperation Agency], *Study of International Issues* (Spring 2009).

5) Amr Hady, *The Need to Communicate: How to Improve U.S. Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World*, Analysis Paper #6, The Brookings Institution (January 2004), p. 1, available at <<http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/28.htm>>.

6) Joseph Nye Jr., *op. cit.*

7) Center for Strategic and International Studies, "CSIS Commission on Smart Power: A Smarter, More Secure America" (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2007), p. 7.

8) They are 1) alliances, partnerships, and institutions; 2) global development; 3) public diplomacy; 4) economic integration; and 5) technology and innovation. For more details, see *Ibid.*

which is public diplomacy. The report suggests that public diplomacy be used as a way of propagating the values and efforts of the United States to the peoples of other nations. For Nye, public diplomacy is aimed at communicating with the citizens, not the government, of a nation.<sup>9)</sup>

The term 'public diplomacy' is believed to have been first used in 1965 when Edmund Gullion, Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and a former diplomat, mentioned it in a speech regarding the establishment of the Edward R. Murrow Center. He defined the term as "the means by which governments, private groups, and individuals influence the attitudes and opinions of other peoples and governments in such a way as to exercise influence on their foreign policy decisions."<sup>10)</sup>

In fact, the concept of public diplomacy dates back to the time of the Woodrow Wilson administration. At that time, the idea of regarding the people of other nations as the goals of diplomacy was first conceptualized after it had been known that not only the diplomatic negotiations among the nations but also the process of persuading the people of the opposite nations could exert a great influence on the relations between the nations. Afterwards, debates and the enforcement of policies on public diplomacy became conceptualized largely in the United States. The concept today has changed somewhat in terms of the goals, methods, and the constituencies. Although many scholars have discussed the issue of public diplomacy, no clear consensus definition exists. According to the United States Information Agency (USIA), which was in charge of U.S. public diplomacy, public diplomacy is defined as one that "seeks to promote the national interest and the national security of the United States through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign publics and broadening dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad."<sup>11)</sup>

Hans Tuch, who actively leads the related debates on public diplomacy in

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9) *Ibid.*

10) "Public diplomacy deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy—(including) the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another . . . [and] the transnational flow of information and ideas." The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, available at <<http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Murrow/Diplomacy>>.

11) Public Diplomacy Alumni Association, available at <<http://publicdiplomacy.org/pages/index.php?page=about-public-diplomacy>>.

academic circles, defines public diplomacy as “a process of the communications with the public of foreign countries to promote a nation’s goals and policies and to promote the understanding of its thoughts and ideals as well as systems and culture.”<sup>12)</sup> Paul Sharp defines public diplomacy as “a process of forming a direct relation with the people of other nations in order to enhance the interests of the people and to promote their values (represented by state/government).”<sup>13)</sup>

Dramatic changes in the international environment in the twenty-first century accentuate the importance of public diplomacy. The public’s ability to access information and express their opinions on foreign policy has intensified thanks to the development of information technologies. Having been boosted by democratization and the spread of information, the power of the people has been strengthened and expanded, and globalization has further facilitated the exchanges among private constituencies by making the relations among the nations closer than ever. This has shattered the previous concept that public diplomacy is just the diplomatic activities of government alone. Public diplomacy, which propagates the government’s policies, values, and cultures to foreign publics based on a nation’s soft power, has begun to seek horizontal and two-way mutual exchanges through diversified diplomatic constituencies and the new media. Hence, in this new environment, public diplomacy can be defined as ‘a process used by the government or private constituencies of a nation to promote the national interest by propagating the nation’s cultures, ideology, values and systems as well as the national goals through the horizontal and interactive mutual exchanges with the governments and the private constituencies of the opposite nations.’

### **III. The Role of Public Diplomacy and Its Classifications**

The role of public diplomacy in a nation can be understood as follows. First, it should help to promote the image of a respective nation. Second, it should help the nation form a long-sustaining relation with other nations based on

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12) Jan Mellissen, *op. cit.*

13) *Ibid.*

the accumulation of confidence among nations. Third, and above all, it should promote understanding and justification of the policies carried out by a nation. Public diplomacy plays the role of creating a diplomatic environment and conditions in a way that the policies carried out by the government are better applied to actual situations. With the changes in diplomatic environment, diplomatic policies and strategies demanded by the public are also changing. Besides, thanks to the rise in the power of the people, an increasing number of nations are becoming aware of the importance of public diplomacy and are developing it into actual policies. Public diplomacy is a growing topic of scholarly discussion and academic research, especially its importance, role, and classifications.

Nye maintains that, in contemporary times, public diplomacy using soft power resources is a prerequisite element in accomplishing the goals of a nation's diplomatic policies and a means to helping a nation maintain its power in international society. Nye categorizes the three dimensions of public diplomacy that, he claims, help a nation accomplish its goals through diplomatic activities: daily communication; strategic communication; and the sustainable relationship among individuals through academic activities, exchanges, training, seminars and diverse media channels.<sup>14)</sup> Daily communication refers to the communication that offers information on explaining the background of decision-making both at home and abroad and is therefore the most immediate dimension. In terms of interaction, it focuses on the dimension of offering information one-sidedly, so both domestic and foreign journalism become the target of this type of public diplomacy. Strategic communication is used to develop a series of simple themes like political campaigns or advertisements, to plan a specific policy as a symbolic event for a particular topic and establishes a foundation for the development of specific policies. This kind of communication can be neither one-sided nor interactive, and carries out the role of propagating information on national policies and constructing images by taking the form of daily communications. It is classified as the pattern of public diplomacy aimed at constructing a national image. The third dimension involves human exchange programs including, first, the policies that offers scholarships and enables the talented people to join an academic training through a student exchange program, and

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14) Joseph Nye Jr., *op. cit.* (2008).

second, seminars or academic conferences aimed at facilitating exchanges among political leaders or specialists. This dimension includes not only the one-sided propagation of information by using diverse media channels but also the activities of pursuing interactive communication and expanding the communication channels between the performers and receivers of public diplomacy through such media as the World Wide Web and social network service (SNS). The communication through services or global assistance activities is included in the type of public diplomacy that consolidates a long-term alliance among nations.

These three types help a nation to construct the image of itself that it desires by making use of its soft power resources. It is important that the three types of public diplomacy activities are used evenly in order for a nation to get national benefits through successful public diplomacy strategies. For public diplomacy activities to yield successful results, a nation must carefully watch the change of diplomatic situations and maintain a long-term relationship through sustainable exchange programs rather than fragmentary public relations focused on its national image. One-sided public diplomacy activities that do not consider the situations of the opposite nations' publics and their interpretations will not bear successful fruits; in a worst case scenario, one's national image could suffer a downgrading. Therefore, public diplomacy should endeavor to understand other nations based on sustainable and long-term exchanges and listen to what the other nations are saying rather just one-sidedly try to convey messages.

Nicholas J. Cull also categorized public diplomacy into five approaches and lists nations accordingly. They are listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and international news broadcasting.<sup>15)</sup> According to Cull, many nations tend to emphasize a particular type of public diplomacy among the five approaches. However, Cull states that the ideal type of public diplomacy seeks a reasonable equilibrium among the five approaches and lets each approach receive space and funds so as to contribute to the whole.

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15) Nicolas J. Cull, "Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories," *ANNALS of the American Academy* 616-1 (2008).

## **IV. Strategies of Public Diplomacy: The Korean Case**

In South Korea, debates emphasize the need for a strategy for constructing South Korea's public diplomacy and the specific execution of policies. In the twenty-first century, information technologies have enabled the general citizens of a nation to gather together their opinions on their nation's foreign policies and give a broader response. The democratization of political systems in many countries has led to the establishment of more legitimate and justifiable political systems. Globalization accompanied by the development of science and technology has enabled the voices of the people to be reflected in the policies of other nations. Now, time-honored passive diplomacy or closed-door diplomacy cannot promote understanding among citizens. The diplomatic environment has changed, and those advanced nations that have perceived this change have benefitted by proactively changing their policies.

Traditionally, the international society was vaguely aware of the existence of South Korea. It was not until the outbreak of the Korea War that Korea—having been called “the Land of the Morning Calm” and “an East Asian nation that properly observes proprieties”—clearly manifested itself in the international community. With the war, South Korea stepped into the international society with the image of being one of the most impoverished nations in Asia, caught in a civil war resulting from the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. South Korea could not easily shed this negative image until it reappeared as ‘the Miracle on the Han’ and host of the 1988 Seoul Olympics, becoming seen as an economic leader in Asia thanks to its rapid economic development. Although South Korea became known as one of the Four Asian Dragons<sup>16)</sup> through its rapid economic development, it had a global position of selecting passive and noncreative diplomatic policies in Northeast Asia—the battleground of major powers—compared with active and aggressive diplomatic policies of powerful nations.

But the world witnessed great changes in the international society in the twenty-first century. The terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001 were a clear reminder that an extremist group with no firm territorial base could throw the world's lone superpower into chaos. The 9/11 terrorist attacks showed us that closed-door diplomacy among the nations' leaders

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16) The others being Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan.

could no more serve as the sole means to acquiring diplomatic outcomes. The diplomacy of legitimacy, which people can agree with and which can persuade publics, has increasingly been in the spotlight. It was once more reaffirmed that the national image as perceived by the peoples of the world is highly important. Discussions concluded that a country's national image determines a nation's international status and consolidates its influence in the international society. Cracks in diplomatic policies were identified. Several studies began to show that it is hard to overcome the standard of power of powerful nations, such as military and economic might; but soft power, which could produce a synergy effect when used along with hard power, can influence international society according to the use of strategies.<sup>17)</sup>

South Korea should have an eye on this fact. Public diplomacy—usually based on persuasion, influence, and images—can help South Korea grow from being a small and weak country vulnerable to the shocks emanating from the changes in the international society, into a nation that can lead those changes in the future. The importance of public diplomacy using soft power and its possible benefits for South Korea has been emphasized many times. South Korea should be free from being influenced by the agenda set by the major powers and set its own diplomatic goals and discuss diversified policies and creative diplomatic strategies. Despite this necessity, however, actual diplomatic changes have yet to be seen.

In order to make actual diplomatic changes visible and to acquire diplomatic benefits, South Korea should set up a well-organized goal for its public diplomacy and construct effective strategies. South Korea should consider its position in the international society and calculate its relations with its neighbors and the benefits it can acquire through these relations.<sup>18)</sup> South Korea should publicize its existence in the international society. Every nation has agonized over the problem of its own existence in the international society. Located between the major powers of China and Japan, South Korea has always sought to remove itself from the shadows of

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17) Joseph Nye Jr., *op. cit.*

18) Ki-jung Kim, "Hanguk Gonggong-oegyoi Hyeonhwang-gwa Gwaje" [The Current Situation and Tasks of South Korea's Public Diplomacy], in *Hanguk Gonggong-oegyoi Hwalseong-hwa Bangan* [Suggestions for Revitalizing South Korea's Public Diplomacy], The Tenth Korea Forum of the Institute of Korean Studies (Seoul: Institute of Korean Studies, 2010).

its more powerful neighbors and be recognized for its own value. Diplomatically, South Korea can receive a positive response and instill its own image only when its existence is perceived in the international society. South Korea should not just set its diplomatic goal as a way of promoting its image. For South Korea, public diplomacy that is swayed by the neighboring powers in the Northeast Asian region cannot perform its role properly.<sup>19)</sup> Therefore, South Korea should shed the perception that it is sandwiched between the major powers of Northeast Asia and instead should look to the wider world stage. Like the case of China, South Korea should strengthen its public diplomacy by targeting the developing and underdeveloped nations. South Korea should share its experience of having risen from poverty to become one of the top fifteen advanced nations in terms of gross domestic product (GDP). By sharing its know-how on economic growth and development, South Korea should become a nation that other nations want to share experience with, a nation that other nations want to emulate. It is important for South Korea to instill a positive image of itself on the developing and underdeveloped countries as a nation coexisting in the international society, and to make actual breakthroughs in the solving of problems overseas like the procurement of resources and in the setting of international agenda.

South Korea should construct a cooperative network under the supervision of the government, similar to what China and Norway have done, when it comes to the actual policymaking of public diplomacy and related organizations. China and Norway have been evaluated highly for their formulation and performance of state-led public diplomacy. In China and Norway, both the government and the private constituencies cooperate together in the execution of policies—from setting up policy goals to the implementation of strategies. Under the supervision of the the central government, the private constituencies have gathered power.

However, the two nations have pursued different models. In China, nongovernmental constituencies cannot perform their roles freely. For example, the state-run newspaper bureau continuously watches and sensors

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19) Hyun-seok Yu, "Hanguk-ui Gonggong-oegyoo Ganghwa-reul Wihan Sopheuteu Pawo Jeollyak" [Soft Power Strategies for Strengthening South Korea's Public Diplomacy], in *Hanguk Gonggong-oegyoo-ui Hwalseong-hwa Bangan* [Suggestions for Revitalizing South Korea's Public Diplomacy], The Tenth Korea Forum of the Institute of Korean Studies (Seoul: Institute of Korean Studies, 2010).

the activities of nongovernmental constituencies. Nongovernmental constituencies do not have the freedom to express their opinions freely. China has been criticized for its centralized public diplomacy goals, strategies, and policies due to the government's top-down style. On the other hand, Norway has formed a cooperative network between the government and the private sector, although public diplomacy is led by the central government. The nation has a network of cooperative relations where the government maintains cooperative relations with the people in the private sector—a contrast to the vertical, top-down arrangement in China. The network includes individual constituencies in the private sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and businesses and related ministries (with the exception of the ministry of foreign affairs). They decide the state policies and strategies after active discussions within the network. Although there are a number of interest groups, Norway raises the efficiency of diplomatic policies by propagating a single message and image to the world.<sup>20)</sup> At the heart of the network is the ministry of foreign affairs, or the government, which organizes concrete strategies and executes them by proactively perceiving the situations in the network and supervising the major discussions. It maintains a horizontal network with the interested groups rather than enforcing uniform or vertical relations. Norway can deal with diversified channels of discussions and at the same time effectively deal with the state-centered discussions while seeking the understanding of private constituencies. By pursuing sustainable public diplomacy with simplified messages and images based on the agreement of domestic constituencies, Norway achieves its public diplomacy goals in the long run.

South Korea should also look to map out follow-up strategies. The so-called Korean Wave (*hallyu*) has been attracting the attention of the world. It serves as a soft power resource for South Korea. Expectations for the Korean Wave's potential in the domain of public diplomacy are high, but so are the worries associated with this soft power resource. Dramas and show programs produced by broadcasting media, as well as movies, and K-pop idols—which have been introduced as high-profit business items by such private constituencies as broadcasting stations, entertainment companies, drama and film producers—are, after all, related to the economic profit of the private

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20) Jozef Batora, *op. cit.*

constituencies. If and when South Korea's images are constructed through them, the image of South Korea will change based on whether such contents are good and not bad. Another worry is the recent negativity toward the Korean Wave stirring in China and Japan. However, the power of the Korean Wave is still strong. Its boundary continues to expand as K-pop singers make inroads into Europe and the United States. The results of the Korean Wave should not be measured simply in terms of economic benefits. The upshot of the Korean Wave is visibility South Korea has gained internationally after being literally invisible to the world, longing lingering in the shadows of its larger regional neighbors, China and Japan. South Korea has been able to publicize its image through K-pop idol singers, TV dramas, and Korean movies.

The Korean Wave is not the only thing that has made South Korea better known to the world. South Korea's service activities and international assistance, its involvement in the G20, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the World Expo, and the Winter and Summer Olympics have boosted its image.

This should be viewed as a preliminary outcome. People of the world are increasingly becoming more aware of South Korea. Their interest in the country is growing. South Korea should transform such curiosity into positive images of itself. Interest is increasing because of the Korean Wave; hence, it is necessary for South Korea to provide a field for transforming that interest into practical knowledge. In other words, follow-up measures are important.

The government has so far put much emphasis on making people aware of South Korea by politically and systematically supporting the Korean Wave. Considering this burgeoning awareness, South Korea should take measures through its diplomatic missions and cultural centers in pertinent countries. For example, South Korea can expand the King Sejong Institute and reactivate cultural exchanges by following the goals of its public diplomacy. It can promote the dissemination of knowledge about South Korea by distributing relevant books to the libraries of foreign nations. It can operate related homepages on the Internet. South Korea must actively publicize its values, culture, and policies through appropriate channels. Considering that the collection of materials on South Korea can be activated through the Internet, information should be conveyed using the languages of other relevant nations. Informing foreigners about geographical facts of the country is not enough; South Korea should more effectively introduce the nation's

contemporary culture and publicize its current events. Accessibility needs to be improved for the peoples of foreign countries. South Korea should not simply offer basic information but explain what is going on, and do such explaining in the pertinent other nations.

## **V. Policy Options for Strengthening and Differentiating Public Diplomacy**

Specific strategies for strengthening and differentiating South Korea's public diplomacy can be divided into four categories, which are described and discussed below.

### *1. Network*

First, South Korea should establish a network among the major organizations involved in its public diplomacy, ones that can expand communications with domestic constituencies and cope more effectively with the rapidly changing international environment. Public diplomacy is not something the government can perform just by actively implementing policies. Public diplomacy is more than just public relations by the government. In the twenty-first century, the participation of the private sector in carrying out the nation's public diplomacy initiatives and in promoting an understanding of the nation's policies becomes more urgent than ever.

Public diplomacy requires the sustainable construction of not only a nation's image and behavior both at home and abroad, but also should provide insight into the nation's policies. It involves cooperation among the private sector interest groups in mapping out diplomatic strategies. To carrying out its initiatives, constant interaction among actors in the network is required, rather than intermittent cooperation between the government and the private sector. A nation must avoid the sporadic and confusing delivery of messages so to guarantee that the receivers of the simple messages can reassess the existing images and construct new images. When a certain diplomatic goal is established, methods of how to emphasize the images of the nation need to be discussed. It is necessary that the government carry out the goals proactively and positively by serving as the hub of the network, leading the interactive

discussions among the interest groups.

Many government ministries and organizations simultaneously perform the country's public diplomacy. This includes the cultural diplomacy-centered public diplomacy initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the cultural exchanges by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and the official development assistance (ODA) by the Ministry of Knowledge Economy. Other agencies include the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), the Korea Foundation (KF), and the Overseas Koreans Foundations under the umbrella of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Public diplomacy initiatives should convey one simple message; yet in the past they often have been mixed, with unidentifiable messages. Such initiatives are perceived by other nations as superficial, and end up being disposable one-shot attempts at promoting a specific image of the nation. As is the case of Norway, South Korea needs an agency that can carry out a single policy. Currently, the Presidential Council on Nation Branding and the Korea Foundation (KF) are in charge of policy planning and the policy execution, respectively. Furthermore, South Korea must coordinate its public diplomacy-related initiatives—a task which has been carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, and the Ministry of Strategy and Science—and integrate them into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is important as a hub of the communication channels among the government ministries. The ministry should set up the diplomacy goals, change the strategies, and combine the government ministries and private interest groups into one network and manage and organize the network. The network should incorporate not only the government agencies but also the research of the expert groups and scholars in charge of overseas exchanges in the culture and art sectors as well as the public diplomacy forums. South Korea has to guarantee consistency in its initiatives through network-based activities by constructing interagency networks so that consistent messages and images can be projected regardless of changes in government.

In a similar vein, the size and organization of the diplomatic sector should be expanded for the construction of networks among the public diplomacy policy-related organizations.<sup>21)</sup> Looking at South Korea's diplomatic corps, manpower stands at around 1,600 diplomats, which is hundreds less than, for

example, Denmark, whose population is only about 11 percent that of South Korea's. The lack of manpower continues due to an imbalance in personnel placement. The nation's budget for diplomacy remains at 0.83 percent of the general accounts budget. Of this, the budget for public diplomacy is set at 3,584 million KRW, some 1.9 percent of the whole budget for diplomacy, while the costs for foreign policy research and education amount to 4.5 percent of the total budget. With personnel and budget being small in scale, South Korea will have difficulties managing the public diplomacy organizations and acting as a hub. If and when it has to assume the role of a hub, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade should increase its manpower and evenly rearrange the related businesses scattered around the diplomatic offices overseas into a bureau of international organizations, a bureau of cultural diplomacy, and a bureau of development and cooperation. Public diplomacy does not need to take a larger portion of the budget, but budget should be reassessed at least to the level so that the composite diplomacy can be carried out.

## 2. *Consensus*

Second, civil society needs to be aware of the necessity of public diplomacy to the nation's diplomatic policy. Prior to that, South Korea needs a national consensus over public diplomacy. As mentioned above, national consensus is needed to carrying out the policies relevant to the country's public diplomacy. The role of the government cannot be limited at a time when public diplomacy is being emphasized. People around the whole world are interacting with each other through the Internet, travel and tourism, studying abroad, employment, and immigration. Accordingly, various aspects of South Korea are shown to the peoples of other nations through the global network of journalism. Government, NGOs, public organizations, regional organizations, individual businesses, and individuals in the private sector all play a role in the nation's public diplomacy in this global era. Consensus should be reached on the goals and strategies of public diplomacy and on the

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21) Hyun-seok Yu, "Hanguk-ui Dongasia Seumateu Pawo Oegyo Jeollyak" [South Korea's Smart Power Strategies for East Asia], in Yun Young Cho (ed.), *Hanguk-ui Seumateu Pawo Jeollyak* [South Korea's Smart Power Strategies] (Seoul: Hanul Publishing, 2009).

detailed messages to be sent in order to allow these actors to better inform the peoples of other nations and if South Korea is to achieve its public diplomacy goals through interactive communications.

In order to promote a national consensus, domestic constituencies must come to understand the necessity of public diplomacy. In other words, public diplomacy should be an aspect of public affairs domestically. South Korea cannot simply rely on the reactions of other nations as a “feedback” mechanism. Communications at the private-sector level need to be promoted to guarantee public diplomacy in a real sense; if such communication is not promoted, public diplomacy will remain one-dimensional—that is, intergovernmental dialogue and one-way explanations (of culture, values, and policies) given to the peoples of other nations by the government of a nation. Even if the entire population of a nation understands the necessity of public diplomacy, without the participation of the public, it is doubtful whether the relevant strategies of a government will bear fruit.

National images and values not accepted by a domestic public are unlikely to be easily recognized by the peoples of other nations. For example, suppose that South Korea wants to construct its national image as “a nation of mediating peace in Northeast Asia” or “a nation preserving the peace” and maps out public diplomacy strategies based on this. However, if the majority of South Koreans feel insecure due to a threatening North Korea (i.e., a nuclear armed, belligerent North Korea that conducts intermittent espionage operations in and armed provocations against South Korea), then publicizing the aforementioned national image will backfire, as it will be regarded as an artificial construct. Therefore, public diplomacy strategies should be fully based on strategies that achieve a consensus among the public. A national image based on such domestic consensus is required for the success of public diplomacy initiatives.

### *3. Regional Approach*

Third, it is necessary to construct strategies that are region-specific. South Korea should take a planned, step-by-step approach by 1) classifying the regions into Asia, the Americas, Oceania, Europe, and Africa; and 2) considering the cultural backgrounds of the respective regions and the images of South Korea that the peoples of these regions hold. In this global

information era, people worldwide can easily access information on other nations via the Internet. Considering this, South Korea has to discuss what universal and inclusive policies it should map out through the Internet. In other words, South Korea has to consider not only the geopolitical or physical classifications of the regions, but also the domain of the Internet that crosses time and space. South Korea could apply actual policies to the respective regions and cultural blocs, but at the same time must expect synergy effects of the policies. Thus, the most suggestive and inclusive policies should be for the Internet.

The so-called Korean Wave has been blowing across the Asian continent. Korean TV miniseries, K-pop music, and movies have been arousing public interest in various countries. The Korean Wave should not end in facilitating cultural exchanges by arousing public interest in Korea but should go further to develop public interest in the Korean language and culture and develop a pro-Korean fan base abroad. In this respect, the King Sejong Institute (*Sejonghakhadang*) brand should be developed as the brand most suitable for the business of Korean language education. Another initiative should be to share South Korea's experience of rapid economic development with countries who seek to learn from it, and offer technological transfer to those interested countries, making Korea's experience a model for their economic growth.

Effective public diplomacy initiatives in South Korea directed at resident foreigners from Asian countries are important. According to the statistics of the policy bureau dealing with arrivals and departures of foreigners, the number of foreigners from Asia residing in South Korea reached over 950,000 as of the third quarter of 2011. This is no small number. After sojourning in South Korea, these people could serve as citizen ambassadors when they return to their homelands in Asia. The image of South Korea inscribed in their minds will be highly credible and in a sense could produce more powerful impact than the public relations' communication activities of Koreans. So, it is highly important to inscribe a positive image of South Korea among these Asian sojourners. One of the policy directions should be to promote Korean language education and cultural studies for foreigners sojourning on a mid-to-long-term basis, and to establish apparatus for facilitating positive exchanges with South Korean society.

When it comes to the public diplomacy strategies for the Americas and Oceania, South Korea should map out different plans, taking into

consideration the images that their publics hold of South Korea. Cultural exchange policies should be added to the existing diplomatic strategies of utilizing diplomatic missions overseas. Missions and cultural centers in the Korean sections of major cities and libraries should propagate South Korea better through books. Korean pavilions should be set up to induce interest in South Korea among these publics. Activities of the King Sejong Institute should be revitalized and exchanges of scholars, researchers, public servants and soldiers, among others, should be facilitated. The government should support the activities of the Korea Foundation and other private organizations so that the amount of scholarship for foreigners studying in Korea can be expanded and so that scholarly and various other exchanges can be promoted. The exchange programs, for example, could promote regular interregional academic forums and fieldtrips for military officers. As the state-of-the-art science and technology and industrial technologies are highlighted as soft power resources of South Korea in the Americas and Oceania, South Korea can facilitate the technological exchanges with the regions.

Strategies for public diplomacy toward Europe will not be much different from the strategies for the Americas and Oceania. South Korea should generally focus on cultural exchanges and establish Korean pavilions at libraries, art galleries, and museums; revitalize the activities of the King Sejong Institute; and revitalize exchange programs for professors, researchers, artists and public servants by reinvigorating the activities of diplomatic missions overseas like embassies and cultural centers.

As Africa is less familiar with South Korea, both in terms of its culture and geography, South Korea should focus on publicizing its existence and promote its image. The best way to establish positive images of South Korea in Africa are to share the know-how of economic growth with the impoverished nations in Africa, and arouse a desire in them to follow the footsteps of South Korea by publicizing South Korea's model of economic development. We should adopt public diplomacy strategies through the development and cooperation (e.g., assistance, technological transfer, and the model of economic development) and promote health diplomacy jointly via collaborations with the private sector. Learning Korean should be promoted through the activities of the King Sejong Institute, which should be operated on a small scale with focus on Korean language acquisition, cultural programs, and basic education for the children of poor families. We should

also offer opportunities to Africans for studying abroad in South Korea and through manpower exchanges in the areas of agriculture, medical science, industrial technologies, and culture. This could help establish a positive image of South Korea as a nation that understands the hardships of economic development by itself having overcome the obstacles and risen to become an advanced nation willing to contribute.

#### *4. Interactive Communication*

Finally, South Korea must fully use interactive communication as a major means of its public diplomacy. Although Web-based media emerged in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, we are now witnessing the commercialization and universalization of this new media. The new media makes it possible for people to engage in interactive communication. The new media utilized for public diplomacy enables people in one country to directly communicate with people of other nations, rather than merely publicizing their own values, cultures, and systems. Rather than relying on the direct contacts among the private constituencies, space can be created for communications where the public can view and understand South Korea through the Web. Equipped with smart phones, in the future, we could create a field of communications based on social network service (SNS) that could surpass the interactive characteristics of the Web.

Government agencies are utilizing already social network service (SNS). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade operates its own blog called "*Oegyeo Narae: Diplomacy*" where it regularly posts information on major diplomatic activities and issues on the site domestically. It has already finished its preparations for communications with publics both at home and abroad by using SNS services like Twitter and Facebook. Three of the four advanced nations mentioned above—that is the United States, Norway and Japan, with the exception being China—are strengthening government-level communication with the private sector groups both at home and abroad by using social network services. Unfortunately, some of this SNS use is geared toward propagating information, rather than promoting interactive communication. The government should think more about creating deeper exchanges in order to have more active communications with the public even though it might be difficult to do so considering its position.

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