Abstract

**Purpose:** In the event of a crisis caused by North Korea’s nuclear development, tasks of crisis management leadership to protect national interests and prevent the escalation of the crisis are critical issues in national security. This study theoretically analyzes and evaluates crisis management leadership of South Korean Lee Myung-bak government during North Korea’s second nuclear test in 2009 and Moon Jae-in government during North Korea’s sixth nuclear test in 2017. Based on this, it seeks to theoretically analyze and evaluate tasks of crisis management leadership shown by both governments, and to derive policy implications for successful crisis management leadership.

**Method:** A case study method is conducted to analyze the security crisis cases triggered by the North Korean nuclear tests and to examine leadership tasks of crisis management of South Korean governments during the two nuclear tests. Arjen Boin and Paul ’t Hart define crisis management leadership as strategic tasks that encompass all activities related to the crisis management stages. In order to analyze tasks of crisis management leadership, this study utilizes and analyzes three factors suggested by Arjen Boin, Paul ’t Hart, Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius: sense making (crisis perception), decision making and coordinating, and mean making (crisis communication).

**Results:** The Lee Myung-bak and Moon Jae-in governments recognized nuclear tests were serious provocations threatening the security of the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia and the international community. However, there were no early warnings for the two nuclear tests. Immediately after the nuclear tests, both governments promptly held the NSC meeting and employed political, diplomatic, and military countermeasures, while strengthening the ROK-U.S. combined defense posture. They provided prompt information on the crisis situation to the public, and delivered a resolute statement to North Korea to convey South Korea’s resolution. Efforts were made to secure support for South Korea’s policy toward North Korea, focusing on the international community including the U.S., Japan and the United Nations.

**Conclusion:** In order to carry out successful leadership tasks of crisis management, crisis managers must accurately grasp the evolving nature of the crisis and the NSC must be established in advance as an institutional crisis management system for effective crisis decision-making, and the NSC must be actively operated. Moreover, it is necessary to carry out active crisis communication activities to mobilize national power and draw support from the people at the domestic level, and to strengthen support and cooperation from allies and the international community at the international level. In a crisis situation where the instability and vulnerability of the country increases, the multi-dimensional tasks of crisis management leadership should be carried out by mobilizing all capabilities at the diplomatic, security, military, and intelligence dimensions.

**[Keywords]** South Korea, Crisis Management Leadership, North Korea, Second Nuclear Test, Sixth Nuclear Test

1. Introduction
North Korea’s development of nuclear weapons is a serious challenge that threatens the security of the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia, and the international community and undermines the foundation of an international non-proliferation regime. The North Korean nuclear issue, which was triggered by North Korea’s declaration of withdrawal from the ‘Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)’ on March 12, 1993, made progress after the ‘1994 U.S.-North Korean Agreed Framework’, when North Korea’s plutonium nuclear facilities were frozen for several years. However, in 2002, due to North Korea’s suspicion of developing a nuclear enriched uranium and lifting the freeze on its plutonium nuclear facilities, the ‘Geneva Agreement’ was abandoned after eight years, and the North Korean nuclear crisis was heightened again.

In an attempt to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue through dialogue, the six-party talks were launched in 2003 in which South Korea, North Korea, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia participated. Through this, the ‘9/19 Joint Statement’ in 2005, the ‘2/13 Agreement’ in 2007, and the ‘10/3 Agreement’ were made, and the North Korean nuclear issue was expected to be solved. However, the six-party talks have not been held since December 2008 due to differences in views on the verification of nuclear materials and nuclear facilities.

Despite this process, North Korea pursued the construction of a ‘strong and prosperous nation’ through nuclear armament, and conducted the first nuclear test on October 9, 2006, and the second nuclear test on May 25, 2009. After that, North Korea conducted its third nuclear test on February 12, 2013, and on March 9, 2013 it declared ‘permanent the status of a nuclear state’. In spite of several warnings from the international community in 2016, North Korea conducted the fourth nuclear test on January 6, 2016 and the fifth nuclear test on September 9, 2016 to advance nuclear technology. On September 3, 2017, North Korea conducted its sixth nuclear test and announced the complete success of the test of hydrogen munitions for ICBM-class ballistic missiles, which raised tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

As the security environment on the Korean Peninsula deteriorated due to the North Korean nuclear issue, the atmosphere of dialogue began in 2018. In the Moon Jae-in government, the first inter-Korean summit was held on April 27, 2018 and the second inter-Korean summit on May 26, 2018. In addition, on June 12, 2018, the first U.S.-North Korea summit in Singapore was held, providing an opportunity for a diplomatic solution to the North Korean nuclear issue. The leaders of the South Korea, North Korea and the U.S. stipulated their commitment to complete denuclearization of North Korea through the ‘April 27th Panmunjom Declaration’ and the ‘June 12th U.S.-North Korea Summit Joint Statement’. However, although the 2nd U.S.-North Korea Summit was held in Hanoi on February 27-28, 2019, the two countries could not reach an agreement on the North Korean nuclear issue[1].

In terms of South Korea’s security, North Korea’s nuclear tests and continued nuclear development on the Korean Peninsula are the most serious crisis. In the event of a crisis caused by North Korea’s nuclear development, tasks of crisis management leadership to protect national interests and prevent the escalation of the crisis are critical issues in national security. In particular, in a crisis situation in which bilateral competition and shared danger are mixed, the crisis management leadership of national leaders is put to the test and its true value is revealed. The success and failure of crisis management leadership are important variables that affect the protection of national interests and the legitimacy and credibility of the regime. In the event of a crisis, policy makers should accurately recognize and evaluate the crisis situation. Moreover, a crisis management system such as the ‘National Security Council (NSC)’, which is suitable for the characteristics of the national security environment and policy-making process, should be established in advance and actively operated. Crisis communication activities must be carried out to draw support from the public, unity of national power, and support from the international community.

Against this background, this study aims to examine the behaviors of crisis management of South Korean Lee Myung-bak government during North Korea's second nuclear test in 2009 and Moon Jae-in government during North Korea’s sixth nuclear test in 2017. Based on this, it seeks to theoretically analyze and evaluate tasks of crisis management leadership shown by both governments, and to de-
rive policy implications for successful crisis management leadership. To this end, a case study method is conducted to analyze the security crisis triggered by the North Korean nuclear test and to examine leadership tasks of crisis management of South Korean governments during two nuclear tests. In order to analyze tasks of crisis management leadership, this study utilizes and analyzes three factors suggested by Arjen Boin, Paul ‘t Hart, Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius: ‘sense making’ (crisis perception), ‘decision making and coordinating’, and ‘mean making’ (crisis communication) [2].

2. Crisis Management Leadership: Theoretical Review and Analytical Framework

Renowned scholars of research on crisis management leadership, such as Arjen Boin and Paul ‘t Hart define crisis management “leadership as a set of strategic tasks that encompasses all activities associated with the stages of crisis management” [3]. They also define crisis management leadership as “overall direction of crisis responses and the political process surrounding these responses” [2]. They argue that tasks of crisis management leadership encompasses ‘sense making’ (crisis perception), ‘decision making and coordinating’, and ‘mean making’ (crisis communication) [2].

First, appropriate and proactive responses to a particular crisis depends on a prompt and accurate ‘sense making’ of the crisis situation. To this end, early warning to recognize crisis signals in advance, identifying the nature, characteristics, and development patterns of the crisis situation, and determining the impact should be carried out quickly and accurately. The task of ‘sense making’ is “collecting and processing information that will help crisis managers to detect an emerging crisis and understand the significance of what is going on during a crisis” [2]. It is important for policy makers to grasp and evaluate the crisis situation and to accurately recognize the crisis situation to judge the development process of the crisis event.

Second, in the event of a crisis, ‘decision making and coordinating’ should be made to find a strategic countermeasure in consideration of political, diplomatic, and military factors based on a previously established crisis management system such as the NSC. Policy decisions are required to seek countermeasures to maximize the interests of the country while minimizing threats from hostile states and forces, while not expanding disputes or developing war. The supreme policy maker should play a central role in the process of setting crisis objectives, reviewing, evaluating, and selecting countermeasures against diplomatic and military crises, and determined countermeasures must be effectively implemented [4]. The task of ‘decision making and coordinating’ is “making critical calls on strategic dilemmas and orchestrating a coherent response to implement those decisions” [2]. In terms of crisis decision-making, policy decisions through inter-ministerial coordination and political judgment should be made in situations where intelligence and resources are insufficient in a crisis situation where uncertainty is mixed [3].

Third, in the process of crisis management, ‘mean making’ (crisis communication) of the national leadership must be developed to create an environment favorable to the national interests and resolve the crisis. Crisis management leaders must present a perspective on the characteristics of the immediate crisis, communicate with political actors, the media, and the public, and inform them the government’s crisis response plans and execution process. In addition, it is necessary to clearly communicate its position, intention, and resolution to hostile countries through crisis communication channels so that there is no misperception [4]. The task of mean making is to “offering a situational definition and narrative that is convincing, helpful, and inspiring to citizens and responders” [2]. In the crisis communication stage, leaders must persuasively communicate the nature of the crisis, development of the situation, vital national interests, and countermeasures to the public and the international community [3].

In this context, in a crisis situation where threats to national security, uncertainty and urgency are inherent, policy makers accurately appraise the threat and understand the characteristics of the crisis. Through the operation of the crisis management system, crisis policy decisions must be made for

3.1. North Korea’s second nuclear test (2009.5.25)

Since the inauguration of the Lee Myung-bak government, North Korea has repeatedly insisted that it intends to strengthen its self-defense nuclear deterrence by mobilizing various media to criticize the South Korean government’s policy toward North Korea and the posture of the ROK-U.S. alliance. North Korea’s allegations were intensified after the UN Security Council issued a chairman’s statement restoring ‘Resolution 1718’ on North Korea’s long-range missile launch. In a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on April 14 that condemned the UN Security Council’s statement, North Korea announced that it would strengthen its self-defense nuclear deterrence, with the refusal of the six-party talks, continuous firing of missiles, and restoration of the disabled nuclear facilities[6].

After that, North Korea conducted its second nuclear test at 09:54 on May 25, 2009 at Punggye-ri, Gilju-gun, North Hamgyeong Province. The second nuclear test was more than five times stronger than the first nuclear test. During the first nuclear test in October 2006, the magnitude of the earthquake was 3.6 and the explosive power was 0.8kt, but the magnitude of the second nuclear test was 4.4, which requires 4.5kt of explosive power to generate it. On May 25th at 11:59, North Korea announced, “as part of measures to strengthen the Republic’s self-defense nuclear deterrent to all sides, it successfully carried out another underground nuclear test. This nuclear test proceeded safely at a new higher level in explosive power and control technology”[7].

3.2. The Lee Myung-bak government’s crisis management behavior

The Lee Myung-bak government’s policy toward North Korea was to promote ‘Mutual Benefit and Common Prosperity’, and pursue a ‘Principled Engagement Policy’ through a grand bargain based on ‘Denuclearization, Openness, and Vision 3,000 initiative’, while strengthening the ROK-U.S. alliance. Based on these policies, perception of North Korea was that the existing ‘vicious cycle (regression/provocation → compensation/support → relationship improvement)’ should be terminated[8].

The Lee Myung-bak government announced in a government statement on May 25, 2009, immediately after the North Korean second nuclear test, that the nuclear test was a serious threat to peace and stability not only on the Korean Peninsula, but also to Northeast Asia and world, and a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime. It was defined as a provocation that cannot be tolerated. It urged North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and all related plans and immediately return to the ‘Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)’ system to faithfully implement international norms as a responsible member of the international community[8].

On May 25, at 13:00, President Lee Myung-bak convened the National Security Council (NSC) meeting to review the crisis situation and countermeasures with the Ministers related Foreign Affairs and Security, and ordered to maintain a strong security posture so that the people would not be disturbed. Meanwhile, at 16:00 on May 25, President Lee held a telephone conference with Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso regarding the second North Korean nuclear test and agreed to work closely with the international community as well as Korea and Japan[9]. The Ministry of Unification
announced, “it has decided not to allow Korean people to visit North Korea for the time being, except for visiting the Kaesong Industrial Complex.” On this day, the Ministry of National Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff(JCS) ordered all forces to strengthen their alert posture to prepare for possible North Korean provocations at the West Sea’s ‘Northern Limit Line(NLL)’ and the ‘Military Demarcation Line(MDL)’ within the DMZ[10].

For 20 minutes from 08:30 on May 26, the day after North Korea’s second nuclear test, President Lee was on the phone with U.S. President Obama. President Lee stressed that the pattern of ‘nuclear test → resume dialogue → compensation → provocation’ should not be repeated, and President Obama reaffirmed the necessity of a strong resolution against North Korea and the U.S. nuclear umbrella guarantee[9]. In May 26, 2009, the ROK government announced its official participation in the ‘Proliferation Security Initiative(PSI)’, immediately after North Korea's second nuclear test, and thus actively participated in international efforts to stop proliferation of ‘Weapons of Mass Destruction(WMD)’[11][12].

In response to the second nuclear test, the Lee Myung-bak government strongly criticized North Korea’s nuclear test, and diplomatically cooperated with the international community and allies to emphasize the principle of denuclearization. In addition, the ROK government led international sanctions by leading the active adoption of ‘UN Security Council Resolution 1874’ on June 12, 2009, with the content of strengthened sanctions against North Korea[8].

4. North Korea’s Sixth Nuclear Test and the Moon Jae-in Government’s Crisis Management Behavior

4.1. North Korea’s sixth nuclear test (2017.9.3)

Even after the inauguration of the Moon Jae-in government in May 2017, North Korea continued to engage in military provocations against South Korea. From the launch of the Hwaseong-12 type ‘Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile(IRBM)’ on May 14, 2017, to the launch of a Hwaseong-12 type missile in the Sunan area of Pyongyang until August 29, it launched 9 missiles[13][14]. Under these circumstances, North Korea’s sixth nuclear test was conducted on September 3, 2017 at 12:29 at Punggye-ri, Gilju-gun, North Hamgyeong Province. The sixth nuclear test was calculated as an earthquake scale of 5.7 with an explosive power of about 50,000 tons of TNT. It was the most powerful of all nuclear tests[15][16].

At 15:30 on September 3, North Korea claimed that it had achieved ‘complete success’ in the ‘Intercontinental Ballistic Missile(ICBM)’ equipped hydrogen munition test through a major reports by the Korean Central News Agency, the Central Broadcasting Station and Pyongyang Broadcasting Station. On September 3, the Nuclear Weapons Research Institute stated in a statement, “it was conducted to review and confirm the accuracy and reliability of the newly researched and introduced power control technology and internal structure design plan for the production of hydrogen munitions to be mounted on the ICBM combat unit(warhead). This success was a very significant opportunity to achieve the goal of the completion stage of the completion of the national nuclear armed forces”[6].

4.2. The Moon Jae-in government’s crisis management behavior

The Moon Jae-in government’s policy on the Korean Peninsula was set as the three main objectives: ① resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue and establishment of permanent peace, ② development of sustainable inter-Korean relations, ③ realization of a new economic community on the Korean Peninsula. The four major strategies to achieve this are: ① taking a step-by-step and comprehensive approach, ② tackling the issues of inter-Korean relations and North Korean nuclear threat simultaneously, ③ ensuring sustainability through institutionalization, ④ laying the founda-
On September 3, 2017, immediately after the sixth North Korean nuclear test, the NSC plenary meeting held at 13:30 presided over by President Moon Jae-in evaluated the situation related to the nuclear test and discussed countermeasures. The meeting was attended by the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Unification, the Minister of Defense, the Director of the National Intelligence Service, the Minister of the Interior and Safety, the Chief of the Office of the President, the Head of the National Security Office, and the 1st and 2nd Deputy Heads of the National Security Office. President Moon instructed to establish the strongest countermeasures with the international community for subsequent provocations such as the launch of an ICBM-class missile. The NSC meeting also decided to seek all diplomatic measures, including forcing North Korea to abandon its nuclear and missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible way, and pursuing a resolution of the UN Security Council to completely isolate North Korea. The Head of National Security Office discussed countermeasures through phone calls with U.S. National Security Advisor two times before and after the NSC meeting, and to discuss strong cooperation measures through the phone calls between the presidents of South Korea and the U.S. as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, the ROK Ministry of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) convened a crisis action team immediately after seismic waves were detected in North Korea. The JCS instructed all forces to raise their surveillance and alertness postures against North Korea, and announced that they are closely monitoring the movements of the North Korean military under ROK-U.S. cooperation. At 17:30 on September 3, the head of the Joint Operations Division of the JCS also issued a warning statement against North Korea, “the ROK-US alliance, which is working closely more than ever before, has sufficient capacity to punish North Korean provocations and we would show action by the allied forces response”. The Ministry of Unification also held an emergency meeting presided over by Minister to discuss countermeasures. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also shared intelligence with the U.S., Japan, and China, and released a government statement through a spokesperson saying, “it is an obvious violation of the resolution of the UN Security Council and strongly condemn the North Korean nuclear test, and it is never tolerated”.

On September 12, through the Korean Central News Agency and the Rodong Sinmun, North Korea claimed that “the reliance on foreign powers is a path of disastrous destruction and the inter-Korean relations has deteriorated further” in response to the South Korean government’s convocation of the NSC against the sixth nuclear test, strengthening cooperation in sanctions and pressure against North Korea, and condemning the ROK National Assembly.

5. The Analysis of South Korean Government’s Crisis Management Leadership

Based on the analysis of the crisis management behaviors of the Lee Myung-bak government during the second nuclear test and the Moon Jae-in government during the sixth nuclear test in North Korea, tasks of the ROK government’s crisis management leadership are analyzed and evaluated in three aspects: sense making (crisis perception), decision making and coordinating, and meaning making (crisis communication).

5.1. Sense making (crisis perception)

In the event of a crisis situation, the issue of crisis perception and whether the signals and occurrences of the crisis have been predicted and identified in advance are important variables in crisis management. Unpredictable, sudden, and rapidly changing crisis situations can develop into situations where control becomes difficult if they are not properly and clearly understood. Therefore, in order to perform an effective sense making task, it is required to determine the changing crisis situation through intelligence collection, sharing, and dissemination based on the operation of an early warning system, to identify the development of the situation, to analyze potential results,
and to raise the need for specific intelligence[22][23].

Regarding sense making(crisis perception), at the time of North Korea’s second and sixth nuclear tests, the Lee Myung-bak government and the Moon Jae-in government equally recognized that North Korea’s nuclear developments were significant challenges to the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia, and international peace and stability. However, the difference was that although the Moon Jae-in government issued a warning statement to North Korea about the sixth nuclear test, it recognized that the North Korea’s ‘Intercontinental Ballistic Missile(ICBM)’ had not yet reached the completion stage, and that it did not cross the ‘red line’ which refers to the threshold that one country can endure as much as possible with the ban set not to cross the other country[7].

With respect to the detection of crisis signals, it was equally difficult for South Korea to identify signals of North Korea’s second and sixth nuclear tests, and early warnings were not implemented. Therefore, it is desirable to identify signals of nuclear crisis in advance and promptly implement early warnings through reinforcement of activities for ‘imagery intelligence(IMINT)’ by intelligence agencies. It also presents a lesson that it is important to judge and share accurate intelligence about North Korea’s strategic intentions and military challenges on the Korean Peninsula, where numerous local provocations are occurring, and to strengthen and cooperate with intelligence agencies and the military’s early warning system.

5.2. Decision making and coordinating

Crisis policy decisions are usually made by the highest level leadership of the country. Crisis management leaders must harmoniously coordinate the application process of crisis response measures, carefully consider policy decisions, and ensure that policy decisions and enforcement are carried out through appropriate procedures. Meanwhile, in a crisis situation, intense cooperation among a variety of organizations is required at the vertical and horizontal level. Therefore, crisis management leaders must identify, observe, and evaluate vertical and horizontal cooperation, and if problems arise in cooperation, they must promote active cooperation or intervene in the cooperation process[21][24].

In addition, formal policy-making organizations such as the NSC, which have been systematically established to respond to crises, enable timely and proactive responses. Depending on the crisis, small informal policy-making groups are sometimes used. For successful crisis management, not only the effective establishment and operation of a crisis management system that serves as a ‘command center’, but also the policy-making process and dynamics within the crisis management system are significant factors[2][25].

According to the case analysis, the Lee Myung-bak government and the Moon Jae-in government promptly held meetings of the NSC immediately after North Korea’s second and sixth nuclear tests to assess crisis situations and discuss countermeasures with foreign affairs and security officials. Following the directives of the NSC, security related ministries including the Blue House, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Unification swiftly executed countermeasures against North Korea to strengthen the ROK-U.S. combined defense posture along with political, diplomatic and military measures.

In particular, under the Lee Myung-bak government, the ROK-US Combined Forces Command(CFC) raised its surveillance condition from WATCHCON 3 to WATCHCON 2 after the second nuclear test. Moreover, it decided to participated in the PSI for non-proliferation of WMD, a move which the North has repeatedly warned would be construed as a declaration of war. It cooperated with the international community led by United Nations to derive strong international sanctions against North Korea.

As for comparing aspects of crisis management strategy, the Lee Myung-bak government employed coercive bargaining measures against North Korea, while the Moon Jae-in government, which adopted a moderate policy toward North Korea, responded to the crisis from a crisis control perspective. In this connection, in the context of a security crisis in which shared danger and bilateral com-
petition are inherent, policy makers have to make very difficult policy decisions because they fall into the fundamental dilemma of crisis management between avoidance of unwanted crisis escalation and protection of national interests. Therefore, for successful crisis management, it is important to set crisis objectives suitable for a specific crisis situation and to implement crisis control and coercive bargaining measures complementary manner. Moreover, a proper combination and balanced application of political, diplomatic, and military measures are required.

Meanwhile, it is desirable direction for the Moon Jae-in government to expand and reorganize the National Security Office and strengthen the overall function of crisis management. However, in order to improve the crisis management system centered on the National Security Office and strengthen the role of the NSC, it is necessary to reorganize the National Security Office into a working division under the NSC and strengthen the NSC’s crisis management capabilities.

5.3. Mean making (crisis communication)

When a crisis occurs, the public wants to know how state leaders recognize the situation and what countermeasures are taken to resolve the crisis. Crisis management leaders must timely and reliably deliver information related to the progress and problems of crisis events, core values to be defended, and countermeasures through the crisis communication process [21][26]. A stable and reliable direct and indirect crisis communication channels are also needed to prevent accidental collisions through misperceptions that may occur during the process of conveying intentions and resolutions to other countries.

In this connection, immediately after North Korea’s second and sixth nuclear tests, the Lee Myung-bak and Moon Jae-in governments delivered resolute statements to North Korea that nuclear test were unacceptable as serious challenges to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. Under the ROK-U.S. combined defense posture, cooperation with the U.S. were reinforced, and intelligence sharing and cooperation with major allies were strengthened.

In terms of mean making (crisis communication), both governments had tried to deliver crisis solutions that were favorable to the national interests while drawing support and cooperation from allies, protecting the national interests that had been violated by North Korea, and preventing the escalation during nuclear crises. In addition, it is evaluated that the Lee Myung-bak and Moon Jae-in governments tried to relieve the public’s security anxieties and promote communications through prompt disclosure of information to the public and strengthening security posture against the North Korean nuclear tests.

6. Conclusion

In the event of a crisis, a threat to the highest security value of the country arises, uncertainty increases, and urgent decisions must be made. In accordance with the rapid changes in the security environment in the 21st century, various threats such as military provocations, asymmetric threats such as nuclear and missile, and non-traditional contingencies are increasing. Faced with these threats, national leaders and key policy makers of major countries are at a critical crossroad to perform their tasks of crisis management leadership.

In particular, on the Korean peninsula, while the unstable security environment in which the North Korean nuclear and missile threats persist, policy makers in the event of a crisis have reviewed many variables to achieve conflicting crisis objectives of minimizing risks and losses while protecting national interests. Crisis decision-making must be made within a limited time and the countermeasures should be quickly implemented.

In order to carry out successful leadership tasks in crisis management, crisis managers must accurately grasp the evolving nature of the crisis, and the NSC must be established in advance as an institutional crisis management system for effective crisis decision-making, and the NSC must be actively operated. Moreover, it is necessary to carry out active crisis communication activities to mobilize
national power and draw support from the people at the domestic level, and to strengthen support and cooperation from allies and the international community at the international level. Leadership tasks in crisis management show a very different pattern from tasks of diplomatic and security policy making routinely performed during peaceful times. In a crisis situation where the instability and vulnerability of the country increases, the multi-dimensional tasks of crisis management leadership should be carried out by mobilizing all capabilities at the diplomatic, security, military, and intelligence dimensions.

The findings of the case studies of South Korean crisis management leadership during North Korea’s two nuclear tests in 2009 and 2017 are as follows. The Lee Myung-bak and Moon Jae-in governments recognized nuclear tests were serious provocations threatening the security of the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia and the international community. However, there were no early warnings for the two nuclear tests. Immediately after the nuclear tests, both governments promptly held the NSC meeting and employed political, diplomatic, and military countermeasures, and while strengthening the ROK-U.S. combined defense posture. In addition, they provided prompt information on the crisis situation to the public, and delivered a resolute statement to North Korea to convey South Korea’s resolution. Efforts were made to secure support for South Korea’s policy toward North Korea, focusing on the international community including the U.S., Japan and the United Nations.

Since the second U.S.-North Korea Summit in Hanoi, Vietnam in February 2019, there has been no tangible results on the North Korean nuclear issue. Based on the implications and lessons learned through empirical research on the leadership tasks in crisis management on the North Korean nuclear issue, efforts should be made to make substantial progress in the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the settlement of permanent peace.

7. References

7.1. Journal articles

7.2. Books


7.3. Additional references


8. Appendix

8.1. Authors contribution

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8.2. Funding agency

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