Since the end of the Cold War, the concept of security has become increasingly ambiguous and elusive. The once-dominant "Realist" conception that views the military protection of a sovereign state's political freedom and territorial integrity as the utmost security concern has come under increasing intellectual and empirical challenge in recent years. Not only has the end of the bipolar military confrontation diluted the acuteness of traditional security concerns, but also the process of economic, social, and ecological globalization has increasingly redirected our attention to nonmilitary security issues.

For South Korea, however, the enduring military threat from North Korea manifested by the tense confrontation along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) still remains the primary existential security problem. Other security concerns can in no way overshadow or replace it. Nevertheless, global transformations are also precipitating profound changes to the security discourses and perceptions in South Korea. The rapidly unfolding process of globalization with its expanding transnational networks has been gradually reshaping South Korea's security environment. Although military security continues to serve as the top national security priority, South Koreans have begun to pay increasing attention to the emerging issues of economic, social, and ecological security. In short, South Korea now faces a more complex security environment in which old and new security challenges are delicately intertwined (Moon and Lee 1995).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the newly emerging
dimensions of South Korean security. The first part presents an analytical framework by which the new security concerns can be categorized and assessed. The second part examines more closely the set of issues related to economic security. The third addresses the ecological dimensions of national security in South Korea, focusing on population dynamics, food, energy, and the environment. The fourth examines the threat posed to South Korea's security by such societal concerns as drug trafficking, organized crime, and terrorism. The concluding part offers some broad policy implications.

THE NEW SECURITY AGENDA: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

It is fair to say that there has been little scholarly treatment of the new security agenda in South Korea. Lee Min-yong (1991) and Joo Su-ki (1995) are rare exceptions. Academic discourse on security concerns is still heavily influenced, if not dominated, by the Realist school of international relations, which places primary emphasis on military security (Morgenthau 1979; Waltz 1979).

It is increasingly acknowledged, however, that this way of conceptualizing national security is too narrow and even misleading. As table 1 illustrates, five types of national security concerns can be identified, all of which are heavily influenced by contextual factors (Alagappa 1998; Azar and Moon 1988; Buzan 1983; Wolters 1962). Depending on how they order their national values, nation-states can define their security priorities in different ways. Thus, in the absence of outstanding external military threats, economic issues can be more vital than military ones. In the post–cold war era, economic prosperity, stability, employment, and welfare are indeed receiving more emphasis as new security concerns for many countries. Apart from the waning concern with military threats, intensified borderless international economic competition has made countries less confident about assuming long-term economic security. Even hegemonic powers such as the United States are exposed to these economic undercurrents. Complex interpenetrations of macroeconomic policies and volatile international financial and capital markets, unruly movements of multinational corporations, and rampant rollercoaster effects of international commodity markets malign protectionism; also, outright sanctions and embargoes have gradually demolished the insular
Table 1. Multiple Dimensions of National Security: A Comparative Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Threat Type</th>
<th>Threat Source</th>
<th>Policy Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>political/territorial integrity</td>
<td>military attacks, border conflicts</td>
<td>nation-state</td>
<td>military self-help/alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>prosperity, stability, welfare</td>
<td>embargo, sanctions, protectionism, international economic instabilities</td>
<td>international systems, nation-states, MNCs, international organizations</td>
<td>increased competitiveness, regionalism, self-reliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological</td>
<td>organic survival</td>
<td>food and energy crisis, environmental degradation</td>
<td>international systems, nation-states</td>
<td>technical fix, paradigm shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communal</td>
<td>communal harmony/sovereignty</td>
<td>secessionist movements, social instability</td>
<td>ethnic-communal groups</td>
<td>power sharing, recognition of identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>social stability</td>
<td>drug trafficking, organized crime, terrorism</td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>international cooperation, domestic coping mechanism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

nature of national economics, threatening the foundation of economic security (Sandholtz et al. 1992; Dicken 1992). More importantly, the settlement of the Uruguay Round and the launching of the World Trade Organization (WTO) add to the new international economic landscape by further removing artificial barriers to market competition. Sustaining prosperity in this new economic environment has become as challenging as coping with military insecurity.

Ecological security is concerned with threats to the physical or organic survival of a national population. Such threats usually result from imbalances among population growth, consumption patterns, and the carrying capacity of national or global ecological systems (Brown 1977; Pirages 1978). Ecological security issues typically derive from two interrelated concerns: resource scarcity and environmental degradation. Resource scarcity can have several implications for national security. First, it can directly threaten the organic and political survival of the nation-state. As the recent experiences of several sub-Saharan states demonstrate, an ecological catastrophe followed by a large-scale exodus of refugees places immense strain on national governments and the integrity of the state. Though no contemporary cases exist, history is littered with examples of national populations becoming extinguished by ecological disasters. Second, resource scarcity can lead to military conflicts. Population
growth and increasing consumption needs have in the past driven 
nation-states to engage in aggressive military actions and even colonial 
expansion (Choucri and North 1975; Ashley 1980). The rise of European 
colonial powers in the nineteenth century, the Nazi policy of Lebens-
raum (living space), and the Japanese drive to create the Greater East 
Asia Coprosperity Sphere are relevant examples. Finally, disputes over 
resources can also escalate into overt military conflicts. The Iraqi in-
vasion of Kuwait, protracted conflicts over water resources along the 
Jordan River, and heightened tension over the undersea resources of 
the South China Sea are all examples of this danger.

Environmental degradation can be just as harmful as resource 
scarcity. There is now growing global concern over the depletion of the 
ozone layer, the accumulation of greenhouse gases, and the incidence of 
acid rain. Besides affecting the quality of life of a state’s citizens, such 
environmental degradation threatens the sustainability of the entire 
regional and global system (Myers 1989).

Communal security concerns are usually most pronounced in coun-
tries of diverse ethnic or religious composition. Scholarly treatment of 
these concerns as security problems is relatively new not only because 
of the prevalence of the Realist paradigm that postulates the state as a 
unitary actor, but also because of the widely shared thesis that moderni-
ization brings about the eventual integration of diverse ethnic groups 
into a unified national population through industrialization and sociali-
zation (Azar and Moon 1988, chap. 4). Both views have proved to be erro-
neous. In today’s international politics, communal groups have emerged 
as important independent actors almost comparable to nation-states. 
Moreover, modernization and industrialization have not resolved the 
problems associated with ethnic and communal fragmentation. The re-
cent resurgence of ethnic conflicts is testimony to this (Gurr 1993).

There are two ways of understanding threats to communal security. 
To a sovereign state, actions by communal groups such as secessionist or 
separatist movements can constitute direct threats to its national secu-
rity since such actions can lead to the disintegration of its political and 
territorial integrity. Even if such outcomes are not realized, the violent 
process of ethnic fragmentation can imperil national security by foment-
ing widespread social and political instability. Communal groups also 
have legitimate security concerns. Denial of their identity, failure to ac-
commodate their communal grievances, and systemic repression and
intimidation are seen as threats to their own security. Trying to satisfy the different demands of state security and communal security can lead to a vicious cycle of protracted conflict and cultivate a sense of perpetual insecurity (Azar 1990). Communal conflicts in Lebanon, former Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere epitomize such security dilemmas.

Finally, such societal security concerns as drugs, organized crime, and terrorism have traditionally been classified as domestic law-and-order issues. But the traditional view is being seriously challenged as the magnitude and intensity of these problems grow and as their increasingly transnational character becomes more evident. The proliferation of global drug-trafficking groups, transnational criminal syndicates, and international terrorist networks has blurred the long-standing demarcation between domestic safety and national security. As a consequence, monitoring and managing these societal security concerns is becoming more difficult. The drug problem in the United States, the influence of the Russian mafia organizations, and the pervasive terrorism in Algeria illustrate how societal problems become issues of national security.

The general typology of national security concerns presented here can serve as a useful analytical guide to the understanding of security discourses and practices in South Korea. As noted above, military security concerns are still dominant in South Korea. As long as North Korea poses a substantial military threat, no other concern will supersede it. Nevertheless, the end of the cold war, the accelerating globalization process, and the advent of democracy in South Korea have led to alternative thinking about security matters (Moon and Lee 1995; Moon 1998). The following discussion presents a comprehensive overview of how South Korea’s central decision-makers and general public conceive of and cope with the newly emerging security agenda.

**ECONOMIC INSECURITIES: COPING WITH GLOBALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION**

South Korea has been touted as one of the most successful developing countries. Despite poor resource endowment, the legacy of Japanese colonialism, the destruction of the Korean War, and a pathological dependence on American aid, South Korea has evolved into the twelfth largest economy in the world and the newest member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). South Korea’s
economic transformation can be attributed to several factors: a timely transition to an export-led economic development strategy, the availability of rich human resources, its geopolitical setting and American patronage, and the role of the developmental state (Amsden 1989; Haggard and Moon 1993).

Becoming a member of the OECD, albeit an amazing achievement, paradoxically marks the beginning of a perilous new stage in South Korea’s economic development. Indeed, success has bred new challenges and constraints that threaten its economic prosperity and, ultimately, security. South Korea’s success to date owes much to its having opened itself up economically to the world, but it is precisely this very process that has become a source of threats to its economic prosperity and security. President Kim Young Sam has succinctly summed up the challenge of globalization and further opening in this statement: “Globalization and international competition are no longer simply rhetorical. They are an unavoidable cold reality. Those countries which overcome challenges of international competition will remain main actors of world history, but those who fail will jeopardize their own national survival. . . . In the age of globalization and opening, enhancing international competitiveness becomes the most vital national concern” (Kim Young Sam 1994).

This sentiment has not been confined to the political leadership. A growing number of scholars have begun to pay attention to the importance of economic security in the age of globalization (Chung 1992; Kwak 1993; Kim Hyung-kuk 1994; Kim Jae-kwon 1996). Moreover, in a 1996 public opinion survey 52.3 percent of respondents identified enhancing international competitiveness as the No. 1 security concern, while only 14.6 percent identified military self-help through improved military power as the primary security issue (Mok 1996).

In general, three external challenges or threats to economic security have been identified. The first derives from growing foreign pressure for South Korea to liberalize its economy. For all its outward-looking orientation, South Korea had relied on a defensive economic policy suffused with mercantilist practices (Wade 1990). Since late 1983, however, the United States has exerted enormous pressures on South Korea to open its domestic markets in order to correct its trade imbalances. Out of fear of American retaliation, South Korea began opening up its domestic markets to a considerable degree. In tandem with American bilateral pressures, South Korea has also encountered extensive multilateral pressures
within the framework of the Uruguay Round negotiations. Despite intense domestic political opposition, the Kim Young Sam government accommodated the settlement of the Uruguay Round by pledging to open all sectors of the domestic market. Even the rice market, which was considered sacrosanct for domestic political and cultural reasons, was liberalized. Moreover, OECD membership has fostered the liberalization of South Korea’s foreign exchange, financial, and capital markets. Overall, economic liberalization has made it extremely difficult for the South Korean government to engage in strategic management of the national economy and to insulate it from external influences and pressures.

The second type of external economic threat involves stiffened competition with China, other East Asian newly industrializing countries (NICs), and the newly emerging second-generation NICs of Southeast Asia. By being latecomers, China and the second-generation NICs enjoy many advantages and are beating out South Korea in many international markets where they compete. Meanwhile, the technological superiority and subtle protectionist moves of the advanced industrialized countries have hindered South Korea from “leapfrogging” its new competitors. The most viable way to avoid being “sandwiched” economically is to enhance its overall productivity through technological innovation. This, however, has lagged in South Korea, while other structural adjustments have not been thorough enough to manage the new economic milieu effectively. Cutthroat international competition, therefore, has contributed to a growing sense of economic insecurity in the minds of Koreans.

Finally, South Korea’s economic openness has increased its exposure to systemic changes, with no better illustration than the economic collapse of 1979–1980. South Korea’s adoption of an ambitious heavy-chemical industrialization program in the 1970s with extensive overseas financing ended in a major economic disaster in 1979 and 1980. Growth rates plunged to minus 5.2 percent, balance of payments deficits rose to US$5.5 billion, and foreign debts amounted to US$34 billion. Inflation soared to nearly 30 percent. Domestic factors such as macroeconomic mismanagement and political instability that followed the assassination of President Park Chung-hee are partly blamed for the economic downturn. But more critical were the external causes. High interest rates in international financial markets and the second “oil shock” dealt a critical blow to the South Korean economy, which relies heavily on imported energy and international borrowing.
Economic conditions since November 1997 seem much worse than those of the late 1970s. The South Korean economy, once touted as a model for Third World economic development, was on the verge of bankruptcy but was rescued by a US$57 billion bail-out plan arranged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on December 3, 1997. South Korea’s financial crisis was initially triggered by several factors: worsening current account balance deficits, which rose from US$4.5 billion in 1992 to US$22 billion in 1996; a rapid depletion of foreign reserve assets held by the Bank of Korea; the mounting foreign debt of US$157 billion; and a sharp surge in outflow of foreign capital in the wake of domestic economic mismanagement and a declining international credit rating. The crisis has virtually placed the South Korean economy under IMF economic trusteeship, severely undermining South Korea’s economic sovereignty. In addition to enduring economic hardship associated with the conditions of the IMF plan, the South Korean economy is forecast to experience the worst economic downturn yet in 1998: a negative economic growth rate, a double-digit inflation rate, unprecedented corporate bankruptcies, over 1.5 million unemployed, and depreciation of the Korean currency by more than 60 percent. The current economic difficulties can be explained partly by such domestic factors as high production costs (including wages), inefficient industrial and corporate structures, a backward financial and banking sector, flagging technological innovation, and new government regulations and policy mismanagement. But South Korea’s economic opening to the world and the resultant fierce market competition as well as the penetration of speculative foreign capital are equally responsible (Mo and Moon forthcoming).

South Koreans are now realizing that an open economy is no guarantee of continued prosperity and stability, but could actually undermine their economic security. The South Korean government is desperate to reverse the trend by realigning its domestic economic structure, e.g., by passing labor laws favoring management, through extensive deregulation, and by industrial restructuring. It has also been working hard to create a more favorable external economic environment with new initiatives to promote regional economic cooperation, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. Nevertheless, South Korea’s feeling of economic insecurity, which has not been helped by the recent economic downturn and the severe balance of payments crisis, is growing more acute.
ECOLOGICAL INSECURITIES: COPING WITH RESOURCE SCARCITIES

In recent years, the South Korean government and people have become more concerned about the country’s ecological capacity to sustain its present rate of development (Lee 1990a; Chung 1992). This concern stems from several interrelated problems.

Population Dynamics and Migration

Much of this concern derives from South Korea’s large population relative to its geographical size, which makes it ecologically more vulnerable. By 1995, its population had reached 44 million, with a population density of 437 persons per square kilometer, one of the highest in the world (National Statistics Agency [NSA] 1996, 31–34). Such high population density has driven the South Korean government to pursue an aggressive birth control policy, so far with successful results. Since the early 1980s, the annual rate of population growth has been kept below the 1 percent level, or commensurate with other advanced industrialized countries. The successful control of population growth, however, has not lessened South Korea’s ecological insecurities. Even the current population severely strains South Korea’s ecological carrying capacity.

Two concerns in particular stand out: the current pattern of internal migration, and the potential problem of refugees from North Korea. The internal migration problem has arisen as a result of rapid industrialization and urbanization. In 1995, 47.4 percent of the national population was concentrated in six major cities. Seoul and its immediate vicinity alone accounted for 42.8 percent of the entire national population in 1995 (NSA 1996, 37). Such a skewed concentration of population in Seoul is troublesome not only because of the urban congestion and deteriorating quality of life it causes but also for military reasons. Being located only 40 km from the DMZ, the Seoul metropolitan area is extremely vulnerable to a North Korean military attack. Given that Seoul is the national center for political, economic, social, and cultural activities, its paralysis would instantly cripple the entire nation. For both reasons, the South Korean government has been pushing hard to diffuse its population by introducing a variety of incentives and even punitive measures. Yet, there are no signs of significant improvement.

So far, the number of refugees from North Korea—less than one
thousand all together over the past three decades—do not present a serious national security concern. Only three hundred North Korean refugees have been able to flee to the South since 1990 (Joongang Daily, 12 March 1996). A combination of tight political controls in the North and formidable physical barriers along the border have made it virtually impossible for North Koreans to defect to the South in large numbers. Although more than seven thousand North Korean refugees are reported to have crossed into China and are now waiting to defect to South Korea (News Plus, 11 April 1996), this will not be easy. As long as the Kim Jong Il regime stays in power and maintains its firm grip over the North Korean population, the flow of refugees from the North will be limited and will not pose any serious threat to South Korea.

However, a sudden collapse of the Kim Jong Il regime followed by a mass exodus from the North could cause a serious security dilemma. The South Korean government estimates that more than two million North Korean refugees might rush to the South within one or two months following the demise of the Kim Jong Il regime. An inflow of two to three million North Korean refugees within such a short span would place an immense strain on South Korea and cause considerable social, economic, and political instability. In anticipation of such developments, the government has recently formed a task force to prepare for such an eventuality, while the National Unification Board has also begun several initiatives, including the construction of a new housing facility to accommodate a sudden influx of refugees. The civilian sector has also been active. For example, the Korean Red Cross has devised its own contingency plan to handle North Korean refugees (Hankuk Ilbo, 7 December 1996). Compared with West Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall, South Korea is not well prepared for such contingencies, and the refugee issue therefore could emerge as a central national security concern during the transition period of Korean national unification.

Food Security

South Korea used to be an agrarian society, in which the agricultural sector represented a major portion (over 70 percent) of the gross domestic product as late as the 1950s. Since the 1960s, however, agriculture’s share has steadily shrunk owing to an export-led industrialization strategy. By the 1990s, the agricultural sector accounted for less than 10 percent of GDP, a decline that has generated considerable public debate. While
mainstream economists have favored the agricultural sector’s relative decline because of the logic of comparative advantage, the general public has been opposed to it, not only for sentimental reasons but also to ensure food security.

Food security policy in South Korea focuses primarily on ensuring that supply matches demand. As table 2 indicates, South Korea produced just over 7 million tons of grain in 1980, but only 5.8 million tons in 1995. Over the same period, however, grain consumption rose: in 1980, South Koreans consumed 12.6 million tons, and almost double that in 1995. Predictably, the gap between grain production and consumption has necessitated a sharp increase in importation: South Korea imported 5.0 million tons of grain in 1980 and 14.4 million tons in 1995, almost a threefold increase within fifteen years. Interestingly, much of this increase trend can be attributed to imports of livestock feed, reflecting South Koreans’ changing diet. Consequently, self-sufficiency in grain has declined considerably: this ratio was 28.5 percent in 1995, down from 56.0 percent in 1980, raising concerns about food security.

Several factors explain these trends. While rapid industrialization has impoverished the rural sector, urban migration has also considerably reduced the size of the rural population. At present, the rural sector accounts for less than 10 percent of the national population. However, the agricultural sector has been able to enjoy some protection through subsidization because of political support and the willingness of the general public to bear the related social costs. This has not been true in every case. During the Uruguay Round negotiations, for example, President Kim faced a tough choice between compliance with the mandates of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and protection of the domestic rice market. Despite formidable political opposition, Kim decided to
open up South Korea’s rice markets in order to facilitate settlement of the Uruguay Round. He justified his decision in the following manner:

I and my government worked hard to protect the rice market. But our insistence on it could have risked international isolation. We could have lost everything unless we agreed on opening the rice market. I had numerous agonizing nights over how I should define our national interests. Protecting the rice market through the denial of the GATT system could turn us into an international orphan. . . . I decided to comply with the GATT mandate. Because of poor resource endowment, South Korea does not have any other choice but to promote economic growth and national wealth through free trade. (Kim Young Sam 1994)

Kim’s statement served as a turning point in making the promotion of free trade a higher priority than food security. Central decision-makers also believe that free trade, not protectionism and subsidization, is the ultimate solution to food insecurity. To them, protectionism and subsidization of the domestic agricultural sector are self-defeating policy choices. In short, in the current food security debate faith in the free market has prevailed over self-sufficiency.

However, despite the government’s decision to liberalize agricultural markets, the game is not yet over. Farmers, in alliance with such citizen groups as the Korean Catholic Farmer’s Movement, the Korean Christian Farmer’s Federation, and the Citizen’s Coalition for Economic Justice, have been arguing for greater food security. In fact, they have successfully exploited such concerns and made it a major election campaign issue. Several scholars have also engaged in public campaigns to spread the message of food security (Im 1994; Sung 1996). The conflict between free traders and proponents of food security is likely to continue, therefore, for some time.*

Energy Security

Having suffered from two major oil crises in the 1970s, the South Korean government has paid keen attention to the question of energy security. South Korea is vulnerable on at least two accounts. First, it is

*The recent food crisis in North Korea and its implications for South Korean national security have renewed public interest in food security. But the urgency of food security is still not widely recognized, and the issue remains marginal in national security discourse and practice.
poorly endowed with energy resources: South Korea does not have any significant sources of energy other than coal. Second, its socioeconomic structure has become increasingly energy-intensive not only because of its emphasis on heavy-chemical industries but also because of increasing energy consumption due to rising living standards. Table 3 presents an overall profile of South Korea’s energy security.

Much like food security, energy security can be measured by the degree of self-sufficiency. As table 3 illustrates, energy self-sufficiency in South Korea has gradually declined. In 1987, reliance on imported energy resources was 80.0 percent; by 1994 it had risen to 96.4 percent. The decline in energy self-sufficiency is due in part to increased energy demands and to changing patterns of energy consumption. Ironically, although South Korea has good coal reserves, the demand for coal has rapidly decreased from 19.1 percent of total energy consumption in 1987 to 2.6 percent in 1994. Environmental concerns as well as rising living standards have made South Koreans favor cleaner forms of energy such as oil and natural gas. Therefore, since South Korea does not produce any oil, dependence on imported oil has sharply increased from 43.7 percent in 1987 to 62.9 percent in 1994. Much the same applies to natural gas and soft coal. In 1994, imported natural gas and soft coal (bituminous) accounted for 5.6 percent and 16.9 percent of total energy supplies, respectively, while nuclear energy represented only 10.7 percent. As a result, the foreign exchange burden of energy imports has been quite considerable, which

Table 3. Basic Energy Indicators in South Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary energy consum-</strong></td>
<td><strong>tion (rate of increase)</strong></td>
<td>TOE* (%</td>
<td>(10.4)</td>
<td>(14.1)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(9.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final energy consum-</strong></td>
<td><strong>ption</strong></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>55,187</td>
<td>75,931</td>
<td>94,623</td>
<td>104,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(rate of increase)</strong></td>
<td>TOE (%)</td>
<td>(9.2)</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(12.9)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(7.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Energy/GNP elasticity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per capita energy con-</strong></td>
<td><strong>sumption</strong></td>
<td>TOE/per</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Import dependence</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliance on oil</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Share of coal</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Energy import costs (rate</strong></td>
<td><strong>of increase)</strong></td>
<td>$ million</td>
<td>6,209</td>
<td>10,926</td>
<td>14,476</td>
<td>15,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(19.9)</td>
<td>(45.1)</td>
<td>(63.3)</td>
<td>(4.6)</td>
<td>(0.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*TOE: ton energy equivalent.
has undermined South Korea's overall balance of payments position. In 1987, the total value of energy imports was US$6.2 billion, a figure that had more than doubled by 1992 and had reached US$15.3 billion in 1994.

One primary concern regarding South Korea's dependence on foreign energy sources is the geopolitical concentration of these sources. In 1980, for example, 98.9 percent of South Korea's imported oil came from the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait accounting for 88.2 percent of this. This high concentration of dependency on Middle Eastern oil has been reduced by diversifying the sources of supply, especially into Southeast Asia. As of 1994, more than twenty-two countries supplied oil to South Korea, with the result that dependency on Middle Eastern oil was reduced to 76.6 percent. At present, Saudi Arabia's share does not exceed 30 percent (Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy 1995, 758). Nevertheless, South Korea is still exposed to major fluctuations in international oil markets, acute political instabilities or military conflicts in oil-exporting nations, and threats to the main sea lines of communication.

To cope with actual and potential threats to energy security, the South Korean government has explored a variety of policy options. But such efforts have met with limited success. For instance, efforts to expand nuclear energy sources to alleviate the dependence on imported energy sources have been refused by the public on safety grounds. A persistent failure to locate safe dumping sites for nuclear waste has also hindered the nuclear energy option. Meanwhile, the development of alternative renewable energy sources has been dismal. These accounted for only 0.7 percent of total energy supplies in 1994. As a result, securing a stable supply of foreign energy, including oil, is likely to become an increasingly important goal for South Korea (Lee 1990b; Kim Kyung-min 1996).

**Environmental Security**

The prioritization of economic growth over equality, welfare, and the environment characterized the dominant social paradigm during the period of rapid economic development in the 1960s and 1970s. Blind obsession with developmentalism has severely damaged the environment, in particular. During the developmental era, South Korea often served as a haven for polluting industries from foreign countries, notably Japan. Environmental degradation, along with urban congestion, was the inevitable outcome. Since the democratic reforms of 1987, however, important
changes have taken place. The most pronounced has been the proliferation of environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Armed with a "green" ideology, technical expertise, and broad grass-roots support, they have exerted tremendous political pressures on the government. The National Federation for Environmental Movements (Hwankyung Undong Yonhap) and Green Korea have emerged as the most powerful public interest groups in South Korea. The private sector has also become more environmentally conscious. More importantly, transnational coalitions of environmental groups have begun to form in South Korea. Such NGOs as the Green Cross and Greenpeace have cultivated intimate connections with domestic environmental activist groups and have been wielding enormous power and influence. As a result of this growing social consensus and political pressure, the South Korean government has begun to pay closer attention to environmental issues as a critical social and national security agenda (Noh 1995; Kwon et al. 1996; Suh 1995).

In 1996, Kim Young Sam declared himself an "environmental president" and pledged to implement tougher environmental regulations (Ministry of Environment [MOE] 1996). In response to this high-level commitment, the Agency for National Security Planning (formerly the Korean CIA), the top national security institution in South Korea, began collecting information on national environmental conditions using its extensive networks as well as the latest monitoring equipment, including airplanes. It has also been extending assistance to the enforcement of environmental protection laws (Moon 1996). This transition is ironic, considering that the agency was once a repressive state security apparatus intent on cracking down on environmental activists but now champions their cause.

Threats to South Korea's environmental security have both internal and external origins, with the former appearing more critical than the latter. Rapid industrialization, the exponential growth in the number of automobiles, pervasive environmental exploitation, and entrenched attitudes favoring growth over the environment have all taken their toll. Thus in the case of water pollution, the amount of domestic waste water has increased 2.5 times, from 8.7 million tons in 1980 to 22.6 million tons in 1994. From the industrial sector, it rose 3.7 times during the same period (MOE 1996, 168–170). This increased dumping of sewage has resulted in severe contamination of four major rivers—the Han, Nakdong, Youngsan, and Keum—on which 80 percent of the entire Korean
population relies for water supplies. According to a recent survey, none of these four rivers meets the minimal environmental standards of 3.0 for both biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and chemical oxygen demand (COD) set by the Ministry of Environment. The Han River, the primary source of water for the Seoul metropolitan area, exceeded the minimum BOD standard by 4.7 times (Joongang Daily, 29 November 1996).

Air pollution is also severe, especially in the major cities, where the primary source of air pollutants is the transportation sector, accounting for 47.5 percent of all pollutants in 1994. The industrial sector was the second largest (29.5 percent), followed by power generation (14.2 percent) and heating (8.8 percent). Whereas the transportation and heating sectors were largely responsible for the emission of carbon monoxide, the industrial sector was accountable for the bulk of dust and sulfur dioxide. The transportation sector, in contrast, was also a principal source of nitrogen dioxide and hydrocarbon emissions (MOE 1996, 101).

Compared with the 1970s and 1980s, air pollution has been better managed in the 1990s owing to tough environmental protection measures. Seoul and Pusan far exceeded the environmental standard of 0.03 ppm for emissions of sulfur dioxide before 1990. In the case of Seoul, emissions of sulfur dioxide were 0.094 ppm in 1980 but gradually decreased to 0.062 ppm in 1988 and 0.017 ppm in 1995. This trend can be attributed to the government regulation that has since 1990 made obligatory the use of oil with a low sulfur content (MOE 1996, 100–101). Dust (TSP, or total suspended particles) used to be another major source of air pollution in South Korea. Dust itself is not a source of serious environmental concerns, but when combined with sulfur dioxide and/or yellow sand dust blown from China it can severely impair public health. As a result, this too has been brought under control. Environmental damage from acid rain, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, and carbon monoxide has varied by region and type. Seoul, Pusan, and Ulsan still suffer from acid rain, with pH levels exceeding the environmental standard of pH 5.6. As well, most major cities have shown increases in nitrogen dioxide and ozone (MOE 1996, 106–107).

One of the most serious environmental concerns is the disposal of solid wastes. While solid waste disposal from households has declined from 78,021 tons per day in 1989 to 58,118 tons per day in 1994, industrial wastes have sharply increased, from 48,058 tons per day in 1992 to 85,229 tons per day in 1994. Toxic wastes have also increased over the same
period (MOE 1996, 276–278). In addition, agricultural wastes have become problematic, threatening yet another major environmental hazard. For example, from 1975 to 1995 the use of herbicides and pesticides rose by more than three times, from 8,619 tons to 26,676 tons. Inputs of chemical fertilizers have also risen, from 886,000 tons in 1975 to 954,000 tons in 1995. Agricultural wastes, along with livestock wastes, are considered to be a major source of water pollution because they emit cadmium and other toxic pollutants into the water system (Joongang Daily, 29 November 1996).

In contrast, external sources of pollution have not been as pronounced as internally derived ones. The South Korean government and environmental activists identify three actual and potential sources. The first is China. China affects South Korea’s environment in three ways: first, the dumping of solid wastes into the Yellow Sea, which negatively impacts the ecosystem of South Korea’s western coast; second, the seasonal transmission of polluted yellow sand dusts; and third, the increasing industrial acid rain from China’s northeastern provinces. In addition, despite the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, China’s potential nuclear tests and resultant nuclear fallout could also pose a threat to South Korea’s environmental security. The second source of concern is North Korea. Unlike China, North Korea can be categorized as a potential threat. Like most former socialist countries, North Korea suffers acute environmental degradation. Since North and South Korea belong to the same ecosystem, environmental degradation in North Korea such as deforestation could negatively affect the South. Finally, Russia is also considered as a potential source of pollution because of its previous attempts to dump nuclear waste in the East Sea.

South Korea has deployed a wide range of measures to cope with these internal and external threats to environmental security. These include institutional reforms to strengthen environmental regulation and enforcement mechanisms, the introduction and diffusion of environmentally friendly technology and management practices in the private sector, widespread public campaigns for environmental integrity, and the promotion of regional and international cooperation on environmental affairs. Although the overall situation has improved as public awareness of environmental issues has intensified, not least because of environmental NGOs’ increasing activism and vigilance, South Korea is far from resolving its environmental problems. Environmental insecurity
is likely to continue unless fundamental economic and societal realignments are undertaken.

BEYOND DOMESTIC SAFETY: EMERGING COMMUNAL AND SOCIETAL CONCERNS

South Korea is homogeneous in its communal composition. An identical national lineage, shared history, and a common language and cultural heritage have cultivated a strong sense of national identity among Koreans. Thus, communal fragmentation has never been a subject of concern in traditional discourses on national security. However, on closer examination two potential concerns reveal themselves. One is related to the inter-Korean rivalry over identity and legitimacy, and the other stems from regional cleavages in the South. South Koreans have generally dismissed the clash over identity and ideology as a transitional phenomenon that can be ultimately resolved by national reunification. But as both the German and Yemeni cases illustrate, the prolonged development of two very different Korean identities could turn out to be a major destabilizing force impeding national integration in the post-unification era. In the South, regional fragmentation is also considered a domestic political issue rather than a national security concern threatening political and territorial integrity. But protracted regional rivalry could easily escalate into overt confrontation with profound national security implications (Kim Hyung-kuk 1994; Hong 1996; Korea Sociological Association 1990).

While communal security concerns are less salient, societal security issues are attracting increasing public attention. The principal reason is that South Korea’s enhanced exposure to the outside world and its expanded international economic, social, and cultural interactions have made such transnational problems as drug trafficking, organized crime, and terrorism more visible than before, provoking new security concerns as a consequence (National Police Headquarters 1995, 288).

*International Drug Trafficking*

During Japanese colonial rule and in the aftermath of the Korean War, drug use was quite common in Korea. But following the South Korean government’s imposition of strict controls and tough law enforcement, it was gradually wiped out. Certainly in comparison with other countries, illegal drug use has not been a source of significant public concern.
Recently, however, the number of drug offenders has increased: in 1996 alone, 6,189 drug offenders were arrested. More alarming is the changing occupational composition of drug offenders. In the past, only very limited segments of society, e.g., the unemployed, farmers, and employees of the entertainment industry, engaged in drug use, but more lately businesspeople, students, and even housewives have joined the rank and file of drug users. The composition of drugs has also become more diversified. Traditionally, Korean drug users consumed marijuana, opium, and philophone, all of which are homemade. But recently the use of smuggled drugs, such as cocaine and heroin, has been growing (National Police Headquarters 1995, 291; Hankuk Ilbo, 3 December 1996).

The South Korean government is concerned about international drug trafficking on two accounts. One is the role of North Korea, and the other relates to the operations of international drug trafficking syndicates. As a way of managing its worsening foreign exchange crisis, North Korea is reported to have engaged in the production and distribution of opium and counterfeit currencies as well as in the overseas sales of weapons, including missiles. The North is known to have set up large areas for cultivation of opium poppy in its northern mountainous provinces (Yangkangdo, Jakangdo, and Hamkyungdo) and has smuggled out its products to China and other countries often by using diplomatic immunity (Chosen Daily, 16 April and 10 July 1996). In early 1996, several South Koreans and Chinese were arrested for attempting to smuggle North Korean opium through China. Seoul’s national security authorities interpret such moves not just in terms of drug trafficking but also as evidence of the North’s covert efforts to undermine South Korea’s security.

The domestic penetration of international drug rings has also become more visible in recent years. On December 2, 1996, the national police arrested forty-one Korean and sixteen foreign drug traffickers who worked for a major international drug ring. It was later discovered that the drug ring has its distribution networks in five countries (China and Hong Kong, Japan, Nigeria, the Philippines, and the United States). In early 1996, three drug smugglers were arrested entering Seoul and were later discovered to be members of the notorious Chinese Triad criminal organizations. The national police also arrested thirteen South Koreans who were engaged in the production and distribution of philophone for Japanese yakuza organized crime syndicates (Hankuk Ilbo, 3 December 1996). South Korea’s growing affluence and its increasing societal
openness have evidently made it a major new target for international drug rings.

_Transnational Organized Crime_

Criminal organizations have long been active in Korean society. They have engaged in extortion, racketeering, and other illicit activities, though drug trafficking, prostitution, and illegal arms deals were generally considered taboo. Organized crime has also been closely intertwined with domestic politics. During the First Republic, the ruling Liberal Party extensively relied on gangster organizations to repress domestic political opposition. In general, however, the Korean organizations formed few links with foreign counterparts. There were some connections with Japanese yakuza organizations, but the extent of their associations was minimal. Since the early 1980s, however, the overall picture has gradually changed. The scope of criminal activities has widened, and there are now signs of transnational networking with foreign criminal organizations (Chosen Daily, 16 October 1996). Moreover, the penetration of foreign criminal organizations into South Korea has become a new source of concern.

The South Korean government has so far identified one of the Hong Kong Triads, the Japanese yakuza, and the Russian mafia as primary foreign criminal organizations. These organizations are known to have made subtle penetrations into South Korea by co-opting local collaborators. Assessing their activities and organizational strength is not easy, but it has been reported that they are now involved in drug trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering, and illegal immigration (Shindonga, September 1995). This is reflected in the increasing frequency of international crimes over the past several years. For example, the South Korean police arrested 321 persons related to 68 international crimes in 1994. As of September 1996, 126 cases of international crime were reported by the police, in which 445 persons were arrested (Chosen Daily, 16 October 1996). Of these, the South Korean government is particularly concerned about the smuggling of drugs and arms, which could emerge as a serious item on the security agenda.

_International Terrorism_

Terrorism is not foreign to South Korea, especially since North Korea has long employed such tactics in its covert actions. In this sense, North
Korea’s terrorist tactics are viewed as an extension of its provocative military posture, making terrorism a core national security concern. North Korea has undertaken various terrorist attacks on South Korean targets even outside of South Korean territory. South Koreans still share a bitter memory of the 1983 Rangoon bombing, as well as of the 1987 midair explosion of a Korean Airlines’ Boeing 727 by North Korean terrorists. The North has also masterminded other terrorist activities including kidnapping, physical intimidation, and attacks against South Korean diplomats and citizens. It is also suspected of having been involved in the assassination of a South Korean diplomat in Vladivostok.

Apart from North Korea’s terrorist attacks, there are other related concerns. As South Koreans are known for their economic wealth as well as their aggressive entrepreneurship, they are increasingly being targeted for kidnapping, extortion, or outright attack by terrorist organizations. South Korean construction workers, for example, are often kidnapped for ransom in the Philippines. A senior executive of a leading South Korean conglomerate was assassinated in Algeria by an unknown Islamic terrorist group. Furthermore, since South Korea began hosting major international events in the late 1980s, these have been accompanied by threats from international terrorist groups. Although they ended without any serious incident, the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games are a case in point. For this reason, there is already concern that the World Cup competition in 2002, jointly hosted with Japan, could become a target for terrorist attacks or sabotage. Overall, while South Korea may not face the kind of terrorist menace that other advanced industrialized countries feel exposed to, there is a growing sense that this may change in the future.

In response to these various threats, the South Korean government has undertaken several decisive and prudent policy initiatives. The Agency for National Security Planning has adopted counter-terrorism and the combating of international organized crime as principal missions by amending the related legal provisions. The agency has also set up two new organizations devoted solely to these societal security concerns: the Bureau of Foreign Affairs and National Security, and the International Crimes Information Center (Agency for National Security Planning 1996). The agency’s direct involvement implies that societal security issues no longer belong to the domain of domestic safety. They are now being considered as major national security issues.
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to examine South Korea’s newly emerging security agenda in as comprehensive a manner as possible. Without question, military security still remains the top security concern. As long as the North Korean military threat persists, it seems highly unlikely for the South to alter its hierarchy of national security values. Yet, central decision-makers are becoming increasingly sensitive to non-traditional security issues. The concern and attention shown to the newly emerging security agenda varies considerably, however. While societal security issues such as international drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, and terrorism have drawn an immediate response from the national security community, new economic, ecological, and communal threats remain secondary.

The uneven attention given to the new security concerns can be attributed to the inertia of traditional threat perceptions among central decision-makers. Societal security concerns are viewed as more important than others because of North Korea’s alleged involvement in or sponsorship of these activities. Thus, central decision-makers tend to regard societal security concerns as an extension of the military confrontation with the North. Despite public grievances and journalistic sensationalism, economic and ecological security issues have not attracted urgent policy attention because they do not generate immediate existential threats. For central decision-makers who have been obsessed with crisis stability, enhancing economic prosperity and security as well as ensuring the organic survival of the national population can hardly constitute “vital” national security concerns. And since much of the discourse on communal security is tantamount to thinking the unthinkable, it is conveniently deleted from the checklist of national security concerns. Equally troublesome is the increasingly blurred demarcation between the new security agenda and the traditional domain of domestic public policy. This has undermined the unity of bureaucratic purpose by fostering jurisdictional feuds among different government agencies. Overall, South Korea is still trapped by the inertia of traditional thinking and practices.

There are two positive developments, however. One is the gradual formation of a new epistemic community that emphasizes the importance of new security issues. As noted above, a new breed of scholars, citizen
groups, journalists, and even some bureaucrats has joined together in spreading the message about the importance of the new security issues, especially environmental ones. This movement is relatively new, but it contains an enormous potential for sensitizing South Koreans about the new security agenda. The other is a major reorientation in South Korea’s foreign policy practices. Departing from the old Realist paradigm, South Korea has become increasingly receptive to new ideas and approaches such as multilateral security cooperation regimes, regional confidence-building measures, comprehensive security, and track two diplomacy. Though limited, the paradigmatic shift in foreign policy making opens new venues for managing and resolving the new security challenges through regional and multilateral cooperation. In this sense, globalization, democratization, and the end of the cold war have had positive effects on how security is discussed and pursued in South Korea.

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