

KOREA (SOUTH)

Japan's surrender in 1945 left thousands of Japanese soldiers on the Korean peninsula to fend for themselves. Such a large number of armed and leaderless men represented a significant threat to safety of the local population. Consequently, the United States and Soviet Union agreed to jointly occupy the former Japanese colony to disarm and repatriate them. With this accomplished, the establishment of a unified government for Korea appeared the next logical step. When a UN supervised general election was attempted in 1947, the Soviets simply refused to allow UN representatives into areas under their occupation. Therefore, the election was held only in the South. Once seated, the newly elected "Korean National Assembly" set themselves to drawing up a constitution and electing Syngman Rhee as president of the "Republic of Korea" (ROK), which was officially founded on August 15, 1948. In North Korea, the Communists announced the formation of the "Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea" on September 9, claiming they were the sole legitimate Korean government. The fact that nobody elected them was considered no more than a trivial detail. In December, the Soviet Union announced the completion of its military withdrawal from North Korea. The United States completed its withdrawal in mid-1949, giving the DPRK the opportunity it was waiting for.

The ROK Army: 1950

The new "Army of the Korean Republic" (Tae-han Min-guk Yuk-Kun) began as no more than a national constabulary, totaling only 15,000 men. The US, realizing that this force would be practically helpless against the Chinese trained and Soviet equipped "Korean Peoples' Army" (KPA), instituted a massive military aid program, backed up by over five hundred American military advisors. By the time the KPA crossed the "38th Parallel", the South Korean army had grown to just under 100,000 men, organized into eight infantry divisions, an armored cavalry regiment, and the Korean Marine Corps (actually a four-battalion brigade).

Each Korean infantry division should have consisted of nine infantry battalions in three regiments and an artillery battalion of fifteen howitzers, as well as the necessary divisional service, supply, and communications assets. Each battalion was supposed to have three infantry companies and a support company, containing mortars and heavy machineguns. This organization was an ideal that existed only on paper. Actual numbers of men and weapons in South Korean divisions were a good deal less impressive.

Regiments often had only two battalions and divisions only two regiments. Fully half of all divisions were still at less than their authorized strength, even two weeks after the war started. There were, for instance, only three artillery battalions in the entire army. There were also no heavy support weapons, not even mines! There had been little or no training at all, never mind "combat" training. The officer corps had little or no experience as combat commanders. The average Korean recruit looked on military service as an inevitable and unavoidable hardship.

South to the Naktong

On June 25th, 1950, the "Korean People's Army" (KPA) leaped across the 38th parallel and swept south toward Seoul, meeting little serious resistance. Seoul, South Korea's capital, was abandoned by the ROK high command so hurriedly that the troops defending it weren't notified. The Han River bridges were blown up in their faces and the retreat became a rout!

Meanwhile, a United Nations resolution to defend South Korea was passed, primarily due to the absence of the Soviet delegation. General Douglas MacArthur was placed in charge of the "United Nations Command" (UNC). American forces, specifically the 24th and 25th Infantry Divisions, were hastily dispatched from garrison duty in occupied Japan directly into the path of a roaring North Korean tidal wave. At Osan, a few miles southwest of Seoul, "Task Force Smith", attempted to stem that tidal wave. This force, made up of two companies of the 24th Division and some supporting units, was literally swept away by five thousand troops from the KPA 4th Division supported by Soviet T-34/85 tanks. The KPA's pursuit of the tattered remnants of the now demoralized ROK forces and their American allies became a long, terrifying nightmare reaching its thunderous climax at the "Pusan Perimeter"

After thirty days of mauling by the KPA, there was practically no ROK army left. Once inside the "Pusan Perimeter", three of the eight original ROK divisions were disbanded; though one (the 7th) was later reformed. The North Koreans flung themselves at the Pusan defenses with reckless courage, but never quite broke through UN lines. They had failed to achieve the quick victory they had hoped for and were now completely exhausted. In the end, it was a combination of factors that brought about the allied victory at Pusan. There was the skillful use of interior lines by LTG Walton A. Walker (CinC 8th Army). There was the massive air offensive against KPA lines of supply and the liberal fire support provided by UN naval forces. There was the timely arrival of fresh reinforcements and the desperate courage of individual ROK and Allied soldiers. And, of course, there was a considerable dose of victory's most essential ingredient, "Luck!"

(For more on the Battle of Pusan, see the section on North Korea.)

North to the Yalu

On September 15th, The Korean Marine Corps (KMC), together with the US 1st Marine Division landed at Inchon, on South Korea's West Coast, not far from Seoul. All four KMC battalions took part in this operation, which involved some of the most ferocious fighting of the war. Their performance was beyond all expectations and earned for them the lasting respect of their USMC comrades. The landing, deep in the North Korean rear, came as a complete surprise and, combined with the 8th Army's breakout from Pusan, spelled disaster for the KPA. By mid-October, UN forces were nearing the Yalu River and the Manchurian border. The KPA, having sustained over 300,000 casualties, was effectively out of the war.

A Whole New War

The "People's Republic of China" (PRC) had been watching events in Korea with interest during its early stages when North Korean victory seemed certain. That interest turned to dismay as the shattered remnants of the Korean Peoples' Army staggered northward, hotly pursued by the UNC. When North Korean soldiers took refuge on the Chinese side of the Yalu, General MacArthur urged that The UNC invade Manchuria, that the US "unleash" Chiang Kai Shek, he even mentioned seven use of atomic weapons. President Truman was speechless with fury. Five months later, MacArthur was out!

In truth, the Chinese were in no hurry to get involved. Decades of civil war had left the country in tatters. A new war with the UN was the last thing they wanted. It appears in retrospect that their first intention was to convince the UN that they were serious about defending their territory and that any incursion into China by troops of the UNC would mean certain war. To this end, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) crossed the Yalu secretly on October 14th, 1950. The units involved were labeled "People's Volunteers" allowing the PRC to deny responsibility for their actions if this became necessary.

MacArthur had been advised of their presence and was aware of their determination to act aggressively against him if provoked. He failed to take them seriously. The Chinese struck on November 24th, 1950. General Peng Te Huai launched the

"November Offensive" with approximately 200,000 men organized into six armies. This force was increased by a further 70,000 men a few weeks later. The ROK 2nd Corps took the first blows east of the Chongchon River. The South Koreans seemed paralyzed with fear, and their whole force seemed to dissolve. This left the men of the US 2nd Division in the lurch with their right flank hanging in the air. It was time to move. They didn't get far. Next day, they stumbled into a PLA ambush near Kunu-ri. They lost most of their artillery and 4,000 casualties before they escaped.* On December 5th, Walker committed the Turkish Brigade, the British 29th Brigade, and the 1st Cavalry Division to shore up his exposed right. He then ordered 8th Army to fall back to the next defensible position, the "38th Parallel".

**(The full story of this tragic episode is told in the book, The River and the Gauntlet by S.L.A. Marshal. Time Books, 1953)*

Meanwhile, the men of the 1st Marine Division found themselves surrounded on November 27th, by 120,000 Chinese of the 20th, 26th, and 27th Armies at a place called the "Chosin Reservoir". They were then notified that they, and the rest of X Corps, would be withdrawn by sea out of the port of Hungnam. Realizing that he would be in serious trouble if he failed to deliver his command for transport as ordered, Major General Oliver Smith proceeded to do the impossible. First, he drove back repeated Chinese assaults and turned his division around. Then, for thirteen days, he marched his Marines through sixty miles of snow covered mountains in sub-zero cold to keep his appointment with the navy. On the way, 1st MarDiv slaughtered a large number of Chinese bent on preventing this. By diverting most of the Chinese effort against his division, Smith made the escape of the rest of X Corps a good deal less difficult. Part of the 7th Division was caught at Chosin with the Marines and had to march out with them. Everyone else made it to Hungnam easily. By December 15th, both X Corps and the ROK I Corps were safely back in Pusan, bringing out nearly 100,000 North Korean civilians with the presence of mind to escape when the opportunity presented itself.

Despite considerable combat experience and improved equipment, the ROK Army couldn't seem to get over a paralyzing fear of the Chinese. Again and again, at the Chongchon, in the Chinese "New Year" offensive, and both their first and second spring offensives, South Korean formations simply fell apart when the PLA attacked, leaving wide gaps in the line. It was only during the summer stalemate, when time could finally be found to reorganize and retrain the South Koreans, that they began to improve. The final Chinese offensive of the war, in July 1953, told the story. After a short period of panic, ROK forces rallied and organized a series of savage counterattacks, driving the Chinese back to their starting point. The ROK soldier had conquered his fears, for good!

The Half-Century Truce

Battles had raged the length and breadth of Korea, devastating the countryside, ruining crops, killing livestock, and destroying factories. Hundreds of thousands of people had been killed or wounded as well. The effort to rebuild this shattered nation was enormous, and only accomplished after many years and a considerable infusion of US aid. And, though the fighting officially stopped in 1953, the war has never truly ended. The "38th Parallel" is still an embattled frontier, separating families, crippling commerce, and standing as a living monument to the gross stupidity of Marxist ideology. Under the rule of Presidents Syngman Rhee (1948-60), Park Chung Hee (1963-79), and Chun Doo Hwan (1980-87), South Korea experienced rapid economic growth while political stability was maintained. True, South Korean governments were generally authoritarian, especially during the period of military domination between 1961 and 1987. The South Korean standard of living steadily rose during these years. It had become one of the most dynamic export-oriented economies in the world. With prosperity came the emergence of a large middle class and a general rise in educational standards. This, in turn, led to growing demand for democratic reform. South Korea's first direct presidential election was held in December 1987. Roh Tae Woo was elected and served from 1988-93. The enactment of Korea's first program for general political reform came during Roh's presidency and met with widespread popular support.

"More Flags"

In September of 1963, The first South Korean troops arrived in Vietnam as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "More Flags" program. Over the course of the war, 312,853 ROK soldiers "rotated" through Vietnam serving alongside US and other Allied troops. This force, at its peak in 1969-70, exceeded 50,000 men. It, therefore, represented the largest allied contingent of that war, second in numbers only to the US. Equipped and organized on a US pattern, the South Koreans performed their duties with high professional standards and great valor. True, the US provided all financial support necessary for the South Korean effort, including the men's paychecks. By definition, this made them mercenaries. But this fact should not be used as an excuse to belittle their contribution to the war effort. They protected the important stretch of "Highway 1" between Qui Nhon and Phan Rang, an area that saw fierce fighting, and their claim to have maintained a nearly ten to one kill ratio over their opponents has been independently verified.

Over the years, the role of South Korea in Vietnam has been a touchy subject. The "More Flags" program has been characterized as nothing more than an attempt by a "racist" US regime to use Asian mercenaries to fight Asian freedom fighters. A like situation exists for those Filipino and Thai troops who served in Vietnam under the same program. Whatever your view of the political machinations involved, the performance of these soldiers in the field is worthy of respect.

FOREIGN WEAPONS

40mm L/60 - UK, All other foreign weapons - US

TABLES OF ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT "ROK" INFANTRY DIVISION: 1950

Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 00, Class: Militia/Conscripts, Base Determination Factor: 20%

Command Center:	1xTL1 Infantry(C) GHQ/Truck, 0-1xJeep/50cal.[R]
Infantry Company:	3xTL1 Infantry(C), 1xTL1 Infantry Support(B)
Infantry Support Company:	2xTL1 Infantry Support(B), 1x81mm M1 Mortar(3)
Marine Company:	3xTL1 Infantry(C), 2xTL1 Infantry Support(B)
Anti-Tank Battery:	1x57mm ATG/Truck
Engineer Company:	3xTL1 Engineer(B)
Cavalry Company:	3xM-8 "Greyhound"[R], 3xJeep/50cal.[R]
<u>OR</u> :	3xM-8 "Greyhound"[R], 3xM3 Halftrack[R]
Infantry Battalion:	1xTL1 Infantry(C) HQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 0-1xInfantry Support Company
Marine Battalion:	1xTL1 Infantry(C) HQ, 3xMarine Company, 1x81mm M1 Mortar(3)

Engineer Battalion: 2xEngineer Company
Artillery Battalion: 3x105mm M2A1(2)/Truck
OR: 3x75mm M116 "Pack" Howitzer(3)/Truck

Infantry Regiment: 1xCommand Center, 2-3xInfantry Battalion

3xInfantry Division: 3xInfantry Regiment, 1xAnti-Tank Battery, 1xEngineer Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion
5xSecond Echelon Infantry Div: 2xInfantry Regiment, 0-1xAnti-Tank Battery, 0-1xEngineer Battalion, 0-1xArtillery Battalion

Available Support Units: (One or more of these units or parts thereof, may appear in a particular action at your discretion.)
Marine Regiment: 1xCommand Center, 4xMarine Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion
Cavalry Regiment: 1xTL1 Infantry(C) HQ/Truck, 3xCavalry Company

"ROK" INFANTRY DIVISION: 1951+

Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 50, Class: Conscripts, Base Determination Factor: 30%

Command Center: 1xTL1 Infantry(C) HQ/Truck, 1xJeep/50cal.[R]
Infantry Company: 3xTL1 Infantry(B), 1xTL1 Infantry Support(A)
Infantry Support Company: 3xTL1 Infantry Support(A), 1x81mm M1 Mortar(3)/Truck
Tank Company: 4xM24
OR: 4xM4A3E8
Anti-Tank Company: 1x3" ATG/Truck
Engineer Company: 3xTL1 Engineer(A)
Security Company: 3xTL1 Infantry (D), 1xTL1 Infantry Support(B)
Recon Company: 3xM-8 "Greyhound"[R], 3xJeep/50cal.[R]
Anti-Aircraft Company: 3x40mm/L60 "Bofors"/Truck, 2xM-16 MGMC
Infantry Battalion: 1xTL1 Infantry(C) HQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 1xSupport Co, 1xTL1 Infantry (R)/Jeep
Engineer Battalion: 3xEngineer Company
Artillery Battalion: 3x105mm M2A1(3)/Truck
Heavy Artillery Battalion: 3x155mm M114(2)/Truck
Anti-Aircraft Battalion: 3xAnti-Aircraft Company

Infantry Regiment: 1xCommand Center, 3xInfantry Battalion, 1xAnti-Tank Company, 1x4.2" M1 Mortar(3)/Truck
Artillery Regiment: 3xArtillery Battalion, 1xHeavy Artillery Battalion

Infantry Division: 3xInfantry Regiment, 1xArtillery Regiment, 1xAnti-Tank Company, 1xEngineer Battalion, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battalion

Available Support Units: (One or more of these units or parts thereof, may appear in a particular action at your discretion.)
Pioneer Battalion: 12xTL1 Infantry (F)
Security Battalion: 3xSecurity Company
Tank Battalion: 3xTank Company
Corps Artillery: 3xArtillery Battalion
Corps Heavy Artillery: 2xHeavy Artillery Battalion

Notes: 1) The South Korean "Base Determination Factor" should be adjusted down when opposing Chinese Communist troops.
2) ROK Marines should be rated as "Professionals".

"ROK" COMBAT FORCES: VIETNAM 2/25/65-3/16/73

Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 70, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 40%

Infantry Company: 3xTL1 Infantry(A), 1xTL1 Infantry Support(A)
Support Company: 1xTL1 Infantry(R), 2x106mm M40 RcR/Jeep, 1xTL1 Infantry Support(A),
1x81mm M29 Mortar(2)
Engineer Company: 3xTL1 Engineer(A)
Recon Company: 3xTL1 Infantry(R)
Cavalry Squadron: 3xTL1 Infantry (R)/Truck, 1xJeep/.50cal[R]

Infantry Battalion: 1xTL1 Infantry(A) HQ, 3xInfantry Company, 1xSupport Company
Artillery Battalion: 3x105mm M2A1(3)/Truck
Heavy Artillery Battalion: 3x155mm M114(3)/Truck
Cavalry Regiment: 1xTL1 Infantry(A) HQ, 3xCavalry Squadron, 1xSupport Company

Infantry Brigade: 1xTL1 Infantry(A) GHQ/Truck, 3-4xInfantry Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion, 1xRecon Company
2nd Marine Brigade: 1xTL1 Infantry(A) GHQ/Truck, 3-4xInfantry Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion, 1xRecon Company, 1xEngineer Company

Notes: 1) ROK divisions never operated in Vietnam, as such. ROK brigades may use any support available to US forces.
2) The ROK 2nd Marine Brigade consisted of three infantry battalions before 1967, four battalions from then on.

3) From 1967, all ROK "Tech Level 1" units should be converted to "Tech Level 2" units.

"ROK" INFANTRY DIVISION: 1988+

Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 80, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 40%

Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(A)/Truck, 1x81mm M29 Mortar(1+)/Truck, 1x90mm M67 RcR/Jeep
Support Company: 2xJeep/.50 cal[R], 2x106mm M40 RcR/Jeep, 1x4.2" M84 Mortar(2)/Truck,
1x.50 cal/Quad M55 or 1xM167 "Vulcan"/Truck
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer/Truck
Cavalry Troop: 2xM48A5[R], 2xM113 (CAV)[R], 1x81mm M29 Mortar(1+)/M113
Tank Company: 4xM-48A5
Anti-Tank Company: 3xJeep/TOWII

Infantry Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 1xSupport Company
Tank Battalion: 1xM48A5 (HQ), 1x4.2" M106(2), 2xJeep/.50 cal[R]
Cavalry Squadron: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/M577, 1x3xCavalry Troop
Artillery Battalion: 3x105mm M2A1(3)/Truck, 3x105mm KH178(3)/Truck
Heavy Artillery Battalion: 3x155mm M114A1(3)/Truck, 3x105mm KH179(3)/Truck
Anti-Aircraft Battalion: 3x40mm/L60 "Bofors"/Truck

Infantry Regiment: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) GHQ/M577, 3xInfantry Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion, 1xEngineer Company

Infantry Division: 3xInfantry Regiment, 1xTank Battalion, 1xCavalry Squadron, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battalion, 1xHeavy Artillery Battalion, 1xAnti-Tank Company

Notes: 1) South Korean artillery may substitute K532/BV-206 prime movers for truck transport.
2) One stand per Infantry Regiment may contain an attached "Redeye" or "Stinger" team (MP).

"ROK" MECHANIZED DIVISION: 1988+

Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 80, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 40%

Mechanized Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(A)/KIFV, 1x81mm/KIFV(1+), 1x90mm M67 RcR/Jeep
Motorized Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(A)/KM-900, 1x81mm M29 Mortar(1+)/KM-900, 1x90mm M67 RcR/Jeep
Support Company: 2xJeep/.50 cal[R], 1x106mm M40 RcR/Jeep, 1x4.2"/KIFV(2), 1x20mm/KIFV or M167 SP "Vulcan"
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer/M113
Cavalry Troop: 2xM48A5[R], 2xM113 (CAV)[R], 1x81mm M29 Mortar(1+)/M113
Tank Company: 4xM48A5 or Type 88
Anti-Tank Company: 3xKIFV/TOWII
Attack Helicopter Squadron: 8xHughes/MD500 AT

Mechanized Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/M577, 3xMechanized Company, 1xSupport Company
Tank Battalion: 1xM48A5 or Type 88 (HQ), 1x4.2" M106(2), 2xJeep/.50 cal[R]
Cavalry Squadron: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/M577, 1x3xCavalry Troop
Engineer Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/M577, 3xEngineer Company
Artillery Battalion: 3x155mm M109A2(3)
Heavy Artillery Battalion: 3x175mm M107(3)
Anti-Aircraft Battalion: 3x40mm/L70 "Bofors"/Truck

Mechanized Division: 3xTL3 Infantry(A) GHQ/M577, 3xMotorized Battalion, 3xMechanized Battalion, 3xTank Battalion, 1xCavalry Squadron, 3xArtillery Battalion, 1xHeavy Artillery Battalion, 1xEngineer Battalion, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battalion. 3xAnti-Tank Company

Available Support Units: (One or more of these units or parts thereof, may appear in a particular action at your discretion.)
Attack Helicopter Squadron: 8xHughes/MD500 AT

Notes: 1) South Korea's two Mechanized Divisions consist of the components above. These are divided among 3x"Brigade" GHQs.
2) The KM-900 is a wheeled APC often mistaken for the BRDM-2.
3) One stand per Motorized or Mechanized Infantry Battalion may contain an attached "Javelin" or "Stinger" team (MP).

"ROK" MARINE DIVISION: 1988+

Generation: III, Air Superiority Rating: 80, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 40%

Marine Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(A), 1x81mm M29 Mortar(1+), 1x90mm M67 RcR
Support Company: 2xJeep/.50 cal[R], 2x106mm M40 RcR/Jeep, 1x4.2" M1 Mortar(2)/Truck, 1xM167 "Vulcan"/Truck
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer/Truck
Cavalry Troop: 3xM113 (CAV)[R], 1x81mm M29 Mortar(1+)/M113
Tank Company: 3xM-47 or M48
Anti-Tank Company: 3xJeep/TOWII
Amphibious Tractor Company: 3xLVTP7 or LVTP7A1

Marine Infantry Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 1xSupport Company
Tank Battalion: 1xM47 or M48 (HQ), 1x4.2" M106(2), 2xJeep/.50 cal[R]
Cavalry Squadron: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) HQ/M577, 1x3xCavalry Troop
Artillery Battalion: 3x105mm M2A1(3)/Truck, 3x105mm "KH178"(3)/Truck
Heavy Artillery Battalion: 3x155mm M114A1(3)/Truck, 3x105mm "KH179"(3)/Truck
Anti-Aircraft Battalion: 1x.50 cal/Quad M55/Truck
Amtrac Battalion: 1xLVTP7 (HQ), 4xAmphibious Tractor Company

Marine Brigade: 1xTL3 Infantry(A) GHQ/Truck, 3xMarine Infantry Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion, 1xEngineer Company

Marine Division: 3xMarine Brigade, 1xTank Battalion, 1xCavalry Squadron, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battalion, 1xHeavy Artillery Battalion, 1xAmtrac Battalion, 1xAnti-Tank Company

- Notes:
- 1) South Korean artillery may substitute K532/BV-206 prime movers for truck transport.
 - 2) One stand per Infantry Regiment may contain an attached "Stinger" team (MP).
 - 3) The M-47 tank has been phased out of front line units.

TACTICAL NOTES

The Korean War is another of those conflicts occurring after World War II that has received only cursory attention from wargamers. We are once again surprised by this oversight. In the period between June 1950 and February 1951, both sides were on the offensive and the defensive. Here is an opportunity to explore a full range of scenarios from meeting engagements to rear-guard actions. The battles fought at places like the Pusan Perimeter, the "Bowling Alley", Chipyeong-ni, Pork Chop Hill, and the Chosin Reservoir are only a few of the many classic engagements to be re-fought. The Korean War deserves to be remembered with as much respect for the soldiers who served there as for those who fought in WWII.

During the Korean War, the ROK army showed an admirable capacity to endure both hardship and privation. Their strength and determination, when properly led and trained, were considerable. Their weaknesses were considerable as well, and should be reflected in any scenario you design for them. In addition, ROK troops may be added to any US force in the Korean War, as the two armies often worked in close cooperation. Though it took them a long time to realize their full potential, ROK soldiers can give a good account of themselves.

Today the story is quite different. The ROK army is among the most highly motivated and ruthlessly effective military institutions in the world. Any simulation of a Korean War set in the near future should illustrate the true power of this technologically advanced and grimly professional military machine. Whether you prefer scenarios where the North invades the South, or the South invades the North, pitting the men of the ROK against those of the DPRK should provide many exciting wargaming opportunities.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

President Kim Dae Jung, elected in December 1997, has presided over South Korea's recent severe economic problems. The value of South Korean currency has fallen dramatically, and its stock market has plunged. Bankruptcy has become commonplace for the first time in decades and the republic has faced widespread unemployment, also for the first time in decades. Kim Dae Jung has appealed to the people to accept layoffs and other sacrifices to help bring about a recovery from this crisis, which continues to hang over South Korea's future like a shroud.

In 2000, for the first time since Korea was divided, leaders from the North and South met face-to-face to discuss future relations. Whether these talks will bear fruit is anybody's guess. The fact that the DPRK is willing to talk at all is a positive sign. How much of this is due to ongoing food shortages and internal political maneuvering, and how much is a reflection of a sincere desire for a final settlement of grievances is impossible to tell at this point. North Korea may finally be desperate enough to actually consider compromise.

South Korean armed forces continue to evolve. In 1996, a series of desertions resulting from disciplinary problems, sparked a renewed emphasis on improving morale and the conditions under which soldiers must live and work. Included in this is a new consciousness among military administrators of the increased expectations of South Korean recruits resulting from increases in the level of education enjoyed by the general population. A recent examination has also revealed that a good deal of older equipment remains in the "Republic of Korea Army" (ROKA) inventory. Much of this equipment will require replacement in the next ten years to allow the ROKA to maintain its considerable technological edge over the KPA.

1999 saw the first deliveries of the new 155mm K9 "Thunder" SP howitzer. This weapon is scheduled to replace the ROKA's venerable M-109A2s, and the first order includes sixty-eight units. In appearance, the K9 closely resembles the AS90 "Braveheart" currently in use by the UK. The ROKA has also purchased twenty-nine MLRS launchers from the US, along with a full maintenance, support, and software package. This purchase effectively doubles the number of MLRS units in their arsenal and includes the new extended range missiles which can reach out to 45.5 km. Don't be surprised to see Russian T-80Us and BMP-3s in the current ROK arsenal. Russia has owed South Korea millions in unpaid debts. An agreement was reached during the mid 1990s by which South Korea would take delivery of these weapons as part payment for these debts. Finally, in an effort to increase its amphibious capability, South Korea has ordered approximately eighty-three US AAV7A1s. When these are added to over one hundred existing LVTP7s in their arsenal, South Korea's capacity to strike North Korea's long and vulnerable coastline becomes a serious threat.

The 2nd Infantry Division

The US 2nd Infantry Division is currently located at Tongduchong, 30km from Seoul. This unique unit, established in 1994, combines ROK and US components into a fully integrated formation, including heavy, light, and air-mobile capabilities. It can call on four organic MLRS batteries and two 155mm howitzer battalions for artillery support in combination with a large contingent of attack helicopters, allowing it to engage enemy formations forty to seventy kilometers beyond friendly lines. Its basic structure consists of one US "heavy" brigade with tanks and IFVs and a second US brigade made up of mechanized and light air-mobile assets. These formations are

complemented by the ROK 5th Armored Brigade containing one mechanized and two armored battalions, producing a formidable combined arms team.

2002 SOUTH KOREAN ARSENAL

Vehicles: 550xType 88 K1/K1A1, 900+M-48A2/A3/A5, 250xM-47 (Reserve), 30-40xT-80U Tanks, 1,400xKIFV, 30-40xBMP-3, 500xM-113/M-577, 400xKM-90 APC's, 100+LVTP7 Amtracs, 93xK532/BV-206 Prime Movers, 45xM-8 Armored Cars
AT Weapons: 5,000+TOW ATGMs, 2,500x90mm M67 & 200+106mm M40 RcR, Numerous LAW80 and Panzerfaust-3 ATGLs
Artillery: 3,000x105mm M101/KH178 and 155mm M114/KH179, 48x203mm M115 (Towed), 1000x155mm M109A2, 18+K-9 "Thunder", 100x175mm M107 and 203mm M110 (SP), 5,000x81mm/4.2" Mortars, 58x227mm "MLRS", 156x130mm "Kooryong" MRLs
Anti-Aircraft: 110xHAWK, 90+Nike "Hercules", 100xJavelin/Stinger, 30xMistral AAGMs, 40x40mm "Bofors", 500x20mm M167 "Vulcan" AAGs.
Combat Aircraft: 110xF-4D/E, 160xF-16C/D, 118xF5A/E
Helicopter: 150xHughes MD500, 20xUH-1B "Huey", 120xUH-60P "Blackhawk", 60xAH-1F "Cobra", 12xBo-105, 100xOH-6A, 15xCH-47 "Chinook"
Small Arms: .45 cal M1911A1 & M3A1, 9mm DP51 Pistols, .30 cal M1 Carbine & M1 Garand, 5.56mm M16A1, and K2/K3 Rifles, 7.62mm M60 & FN MAG, .30 cal Browning M1919, and .50 cal Browning M2 Machineguns, 40mm M79 & M203 Grenade Launchers

- Notes:
- 1) The first one hundred (105mm) K1s have been upgraded to (120mm) K1A1s, with more to follow.
 - 2) The first sixty-eight 155mm "Thunder" SPGs are becoming operational, of the five hundred ordered.
 - 3) The KAFV series of armored vehicles has been tested. They can be configured with a wide range of weapons but, thus far, only a few of the twin-30mm SPAA version have been delivered.
 - 4) In addition to the T-80Us and BMP-3s already delivered, a further transfer of weapons worth US\$500 million is being set up to reduce Russia's enormous unpaid debt to South Korea.
 - 5) The K532/Bv-206 is a Finnish tracked/articulated ATV ordered by South Korea for use as an artillery prime mover.

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