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FEATURES BEYOND A SINGLE SOVEREIGNTY: FEATURES COMMON TO  
TWO OR MORE NATIONS

- Historical Consideration and Position  
on the Wronafulness of the Reference to  
the Sea situated between Korea and Japan  
as the "Sea of Japan"

Paper submitted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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The Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) would like once again to bring the attention of the Seventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names to the wrongful reference of the sea situated between Korea and Japan as "the Sea of Japan" and wishes to reiterate the historical and topographical considerations of the issue and the position of the Government of the DPRK.

## 1. Historical and Topographical Considerations

Since the ancient times, Korea had called the sea situated between Korea and Japan as "the East Sea."

Korean historical records and monumental has clearly proved this facts, which is able to be found in the stone monument at the King Kwanggaeto's Tomb erected in 414, in the "*Samguksagi* (the Chronicle of the Three Kingdoms--Koguryo, Paekje and Silla)" of 1145, in the "*Samgukyusa* (Anecdotal History of the Three Kingdoms)" compiled in 1432, and in the "*Sinjungdongguk Yojisungram* (New Enlarged Geographical Guide of the Eastern Nation-Korea)" written in 1530.

Since the 17th century, the sea had been referred to by geographers in Europe as "the Sea of Korea," "the East Sea," and "the Oriental Sea".

However, the sea had been called definitely "the Sea of Korea" from the early 18th century through the mid-19th century. This fact is also proved by some historical evidences.

The "*Carte des Indes et de la Chine*," made in 1705 by prominent French geographer Guillaume de Lisle under the patronage of the Royal Academy of Sciences, named the sea "the Sea of Korea," and this name continued to appear on the subsequent maps.

Typical are the "*Carte de l'Asie*" drawn by Robert de Vaugondy in 1751, the "*Carte des Iles du Japon et Pays Voisins*" made by Jacque Nicolas Bellin in 1752, the "*Carte de l'Asie*" made by Jean Janvier in 1760, Britain's "*ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*" of 1771 and 1778 editions, "*The Map of the empire of Japan*" printed in Britain in 1794, the "*Carte de L'Asie*" made by J.A. de Zauche in 1800, and the "*Carte de l'Asie*" made by Felix de Lamarche in 1811.

Even in the maps printed in Japan at that time, the sea was also clearly named the "Sea of Korea", such as the "*Map of Asia*" drawn by Katsuragawa in 1784, the revised edition of the "*World Atlas*" by Takahashi in 1810, the "*New World Atlas*" by Kisaku in 1847, and the "*Map of the Great Empire of Korea*" published in 1908 by the "Japan-Korea Printing Company", whose share was held by

Japan.

On the other hand, in naming any sea from the topographical point of view due consideration should be given to the universally established practice, under which most of seas are named after the seaboard continent or peninsular, not after any vicinal island belonging to a country.

It was only before and during the Japanese colonial rule over Korea that "the Sea of Korea" or "the East Sea" was renamed " the Sea of Japan." Considering the fact that the Japanese colonialists had forced the Korean people even to change their Korean surnames and forenames into Japanese, it must have been simply a push-over for them to rename "the Sea of Korea" or "the East Sea" as "the Sea of Japan."

Over half a century has elapsed since the defeat of Japanese militarism and the termination of its colonial rule over Korea.

At a present juncture when Japan's liquidation of its past has come to the fore, renaming the misnamed "Sea of Japan" constitutes part of its liquidation of the past, because the name of the "Sea of Japan" is a leftover of the Japanese colonial rule which had imposed all sorts of misfortunes and sufferings upon the Korean people.

Now, with the wrongful reference of the sea as "the Sea of Japan" having been brought to light, renaming the sea comes up as an urgent issue, the solution of which brooks no further delay.

Regrettably, on the several occasions including last Sixth United Nations Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names, Japanese authorities have categorically declined to discuss the issue, claiming that the name of "the Sea of Japan" has been internationally "recognized."

The name of the "Sea of Japan" has never been recognized at any international conference or by any international convention. Therefore, the allegation about the international "recognition" of "the Sea of Japan" is utterly preposterous and it is nothing but a sophistry

Any attempt to preserve the leftovers of the old era of colonial rule constitutes an insult to and derision of the Korean people and further more, an intolerable violation of a sovereignty of the DPRK. it also run counter to the ideal of decolonization advocated by the United Nations. Our people will never tolerate this.

## 2. Consistent Position on the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The issue of renaming the so-called "Sea of Japan" has been raised at a number of regional conferences. Particularly, the delegations from the north and the south of Korea to the Sixth United Nations Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names which was held in New York from 25 August to 3 September, 1992 disclosed the wrongful reference of the sea as "the Sea of Japan," and strongly underscored the need to rename the sea. In this regard, the Conference suggested that the relevant parties consult over this issue for a negotiated settlement.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea urges the Japanese authorities to immediately change the name of "the Sea of Japan" as part of its liquidation of the past and, at present stage, respond to the proposed negotiations between the relevant parties for the just solution of this issue, as suggested by the 6th United Nations Conference.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expresses its expectation that the United Nations and its member nations will cooperate in facilitating an early start of the negotiations between the relevant parties for the expeditious solution of this issue, which will contribute to the promotion of the security and peace in Asia as well as the reconciliation among the countries in the region.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue, as in the past so as also in the future, to exert every effort on its part for a fair solution of the issue of renaming the sea situated between Korea and Japan in conformity with the interests of the countries in this region and for the sound development of the international standardization on Geographical names.