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SEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF  
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New York, 13-22 January 1998  
Item 17(d) of the provisional agenda\*

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES: INTERNATIONAL NAMES MEETINGS,  
CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS

International Names Meeting in the  
Republic of Korea

Paper submitted by the Republic of Korea

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Oceanographic Point of View”

1. Ki-Suk Lee (Professor, Seoul National University, Korea)  
“Historical Recognition of the East Sea (Oriental Ocean) Before and After the Age of Discover”

• **Annual Meeting of the Society for East Sea on 9 November 1994**

Naftali Kadmon (Professor, Hebrew University, Israel)  
“The National Standardization of Geographical Names”

• **The International Seminar on the Geographical Name of East Sea Hosted by The Society for East Sea on 24 May – 25 May 1995**

- 1 Song di Wu (Professor, Institute of Historical Geography, Fudan University, China)  
“The Geographical Names for the Sea of Japan in Chinese Historical Documents”
- 2 Sang Tae Yee (Senior Researcher, National History Compilation Committee, Korea)  
“The Geographical Name of ‘Tonghae (East Sea)’ in the Korean Historical Document”
- 3 Alexei Postnikov (Professor, Institute of the History of Science and Technology, Russia)  
“The History of Russian Names for Seas, with the Special Reference on the Development of the Korean (Japanese) Sea Presentation on Maps (Seventeenth through Nineteenth Centuries)”
- 4 Jong-Chul Soh (Professor, Hankyong University of Foreign Studies, Korea)  
“The Naming of East Sea - Sea of Japan in old European Maps”
- 5 Hiroo Aoyama (Professor Niigata University, Japan)  
“The Name of Nihon Kai (the Sea of Japan) on old Maps”
- 6 Cai Chen (Professor Northeast Normal University, China),  
Hu Sen An (Professor, Yanbian University, China)  
“Our View on the Origin of the Geographical Name of the Sea of Japan (East Sea)”
- 7 Vladimir Kusov (Professor, Moscow State University, Russia)  
“Korea on Russian Maps of 17th-19th Century”
- 8 Bo-Kyung Yang (Researcher, Kyujanggak Archives, Seoul National University, Korea)  
“The Name of the Sea between Korea and Japan (East Sea) on the old Maps”
9. Guo Jin Xi (Professor, Institute of Geography Chinese Academy of Sciences, China)  
“Nationalities in the Eastern Part of Northeast China in History and Changes in the Name of the Sea of Japan”

• **The International Workshop on the Geographical Name of East Sea Hosted by The Society for East Sea on 5 June – 7 June 1996**

1. Xiangming Du (Honorary Director, Research Institute of Toponymy, National Bureau of Surveying and Mapping, China)  
“Preliminary Study on the Name of Sea of Japan”
2. Peter Baklanov (Director, Pacific Geographical Institute, Far Eastern Branch, Russian

Academy of Sciences, Russia)

"Economic-geographical and Geopolitical Preconditions of Integrative Relations Development between Regions in the Basin of the Modern Sea of Japan and the Problems of its Name"

3. Sangbok D. Hahn (Director, Oceanography Division, National Fisheries Research and Development Agency, Korea)

"Orient Sea for Acceptable Single Name"

4. Sergei Ganzei (Deputy Director, Pacific Geographical Institute, Far Eastern Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia)

"Russian Geographical Investigations of Seas of North-Eastern Asia in XVII~XVIII Centuries"

5. Sung-Hyun Paek (Professor, Myong Ji Educational Foundation, Korea)

"The Significance of the 18th Century's French Maps in the Naming of East Sea"

6. Shuren Yuan (Professor, Vice Dean, The Centre of Northeast Asia Study, Northeast Normal University, China), Yanjun Huang (Candidate Ph. D., Northeast Normal University, China)

"Our Opinion on the Geographical Name of the Sea of Japan (East Sea)"

#### ● **Annual Meeting of the Society for East Sea on 15 November 1996**

Assad Abdo (Professor, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia)

"The Geographical Names: Arabian Gulf"

#### ● **The International Seminar on the Standardization of Geographical Names: Special Emphasis Concerning the East Sea**

**Hosted by The Society for East Sea on 11 June 12 June 1997**

1. Peter E. Raper (Chair, The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names)

"The United Nations and Standardization of Geographical Names."

2. Adam Kerr (Director, International Hydrographic Bureau)

"The International Hydrographic Organization and its involvement with Geographical Names"

3. Jong-Chul Soh (Professor, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea)

"The Naming of East Sea-Sea of Japan in Antique Maps from the Viewpoints of Cognitive Linguistics"

4. Shiguang Zhu (Professor, Shaanxi Teachers University, China)

"On the Transformation of the Geographical Name in the Area of the Sea of Japan (The East Sea) from a Perspective of Historical Documents"

5. Shibuya Takeshi (Emeritus Professor, Niigata University, Japan)

"Our Step and Our Intention of the Japan Sea Rim"

6. Naftai Kadmon (Emeritus Professor of Cartography and Toponymy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)

"Standardization of Terrestrial and Maritime Names vs. their Use as a Political Instrument"

7. Duck-Soon Im (Professor, Chungbuk National University, Korea)

"The Locational Characters and Significances of East Sea (Sea of Japan) and its

- Coastal States' Tasks"
8. Sangbok D. Hahn (Director, Oceanography Division, National Fisheries Research and Development Agency, Korea)  
"Name of Sea is being used by Korean since BC37"
  9. Helen Kerfoot (Vice Chair UNGEGN)  
"Aspect of 100 Years of Geographical Names Standardization in Canada"
  10. Ningyi Yang (Professor, Beijing Normal University, China)  
"Some Issues of the Standardization and History of Geographical Names on East Sea and Sea of Japan"
  11. Alexei S. Naumov (Faculty of Geography Moscow State University)  
"Russia and the Seas : Economic-Geographical Essay with Special Reference to Eastern Seas Discovery, Perception and Use"
  12. Hong-Ju Nah (Counselor, The Korea Container Terminal Authority)  
"A 'time for Action to Change the Current Name of "Sea of Japan"

### 3. The Historical Precedent for the "East Sea"

The following facts on the historical precedent of the "East Sea" summarized from national and international seminars held in Seoul, Korea, between 1992 and 1997. The summary provides the historical background of the naming "East Sea" and how Korea's East Sea has been recognized by neighboring countries and other western countries in the past.

#### (1) Name of "East Sea" in Korean Writings & Ancient Maps

Historically, Korea has used the name "East Sea" in writings since 59 B.C. Examples can be found in numerous records including the Monument of King Kwanggaeto(411), *Samkook saki*(History of the Kingdoms, 1145) and *Samkook yusa*(Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, 1284). Moreover, the still extant "Atlas of Eight Provinces" in the *Shinjŕng tongkuk yŕji sungram*(a revised edition of the Augmented Survey of the Geography of Korea, 1530) uses the term "East Sea". In addition, a 16th century *Tongguk chido*(Map of Korea) uses the term "*Tong chŕ taehae*",(Great Sea of the Lower East). A Map of Youngnam(the southeastern region of the peninsula) which was made in the 1740's and a Map of Korea which was officially created in the mid-18th century also use the name, "East Sea". Hence, there is much evidence that "East Sea" has been used for centuries.

Reference to the "East Sea" was also constant in numerous maps created after 18th century. Many geography textbooks published and used before the annexation of Korea by Japan in the early 20th century made reference to the "East Sea", "Sea of Chosun" or "Sea of Korea". However, already by the early 20th century, there were some textbooks which made reference to "Sea of

Japan". Every textbook published after 1910 refers to the East Sea as the "Sea of Japan".

## (2) China, Russia, and Japan's Reference to 'East Sea'

According to Chinese sources, China has known the "East Sea" since the Tang Dynasty however, they called the area just the "Sen" or "Great Sea". With the establishment in 698 of the Kingdom of Palhae by Koreans, the Chinese began calling the East Sea the "Sea of Palhae". China used the term, "East Sea", during the Liao Dynasty (907-1125), the Sung Dynasty (960-1279), the Chin Dynasty (1122-1234), the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), and the Qing (Ch'ing) Dynasty (1644-1912). At times during the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, the Chinese referred to the East Sea as "Ching Hai" which means "Sea of Whales" because there were a lot of whales found there. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Chinese referred to the northeastern area of the East Sea as "East Sea" and the southern area as the "South Sea". Around 1884, during the Qing Dynasty, some scholars and bureaucrats occasionally used the term "Sea of Japan" in some documents. However, the Russia Japan Treaty of 1905 was the first documented use of the term "Sea of Japan" at a government level.

The "Kunyuwanguoditu" was a map printed in Beijing in 1602. It was translated into Chinese of a world map kept by a Jesuit priest, Matteo Ricci, and it refers to the East Sea as the "Sea of Japan". It is the oldest surviving Chinese map known to use the term "Sea of Japan". However, this map does not have much significance because it was a translation of a map made by a foreigner living in China. In addition, it is believed that the production of the map was influenced by information obtained from Japan rather than from Korea. This map did not have much impact on subsequent Chinese maps. The next time the term "Sea of Japan" appeared on a Chinese map was about 1875.

Russian maps of East Asia were all created after 1639 when Russians first arrived in the Pacific coast region. In 1687, Nic Witzén's "Noord en Oost Tartarye" refers to the East Sea as "Oceanus Orientalis". N. Goman's 1725 map uses the term "Eastern Ocean," and in a 1734 map, I. Kirilov refers to the East Sea as "Vostochnoe," meaning "East Sea." The Map of Asia printed by the renowned Petersburg Academy of Science in 1745 also refers to East Sea as "Koreiskoe Mope," or "Sea of Korea." Other famous maps printed in Russia from 1745 to 1791 use the term "Sea of Korea." Adam Johann von Krusenstern (1770-1846), the Russian who explored the East Sea called it the "Sea of Japan" as did the French explorer, La Perouse (1741-1788), who explored the East Sea in 1787. However, the Russians called the East Sea the "Sea of Korea" in their last officially published map of 1844. Thereafter, it appears that the Russian Navy and numerous maps followed the European style in making

geographical references

The term "Sea of Japan" was used after the 18th century in many prestigious maps made in Japan. Until 1870, even Japanese maps referred to East Sea as "Sea of Chosŏn". All of the following maps refer to the East Sea as the "Sea of Chosŏn": Takahasi Kageyasu's 1810 "Sinteibankokuzenzu," Abe Kinin's 1838 "Bankokuzenzu," Sugita Gendan's 1850 "Chigakuseisozu", Matsuda Rokuzan's 1855 "Chikyubankokuzenzu," and the 1870 "Meizikaiteibankokuyochibunzu".

However, all of the maps published in Japan thereafter 1870 refer to the East Sea as "Sea of Japan". From this, it can be inferred that the Japanese government directed, as a matter of policy, that the name "Sea of Japan" be used. Especially, geographical references and names were changed in Matsuda Rokuzan's 1855 map and his "Bankokuzenzu" of 1871. Hasimoto Chyozuki's 1871 "Sinseiyochizenzu" calls the East Sea the "Sea of Japan". From this, we can assume that changes were being made at about this time, because the term "East Sea" was not found in any of the Japanese maps published after 1871. Also, at about this time, references to the "Sea of Japan" began appearing in Chinese maps as well.

### (3) "East Sea" in Ancient Western Maps

The map which was created by Godhino de Eredia of Portugal in 1615 was the first European map published in Europe to have called the East Sea as "Mar Coria" (Sea of Korea). Moreover, The East Sea is called "Mare di Corai" (Sea of Korea) in R. Dudley's 1647 "Carta Particolare della Isole de Giapone" which was made in England. The Map of Asia which appears in E. Bowen's World Atlas in 1744 and 1752 also refers to the East Sea as the "Sea of Korea." The Map of the North Pacific published by J.N. Delise of France in 1750 after his exploration of North East Asia also calls the East Sea "Mer De Coree." Furthermore, "Sea of Korea" appears in the first edition of the 1771 *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

All of the aforementioned maps prove that the East Sea was widely known as the "Sea of Korea" during the 17th and 18th centuries.

However, after the East Sea was referred to as the "Sea of Japan" in La Perouse's map of 1797, maps produced thereafter in Europe began to use the term "Sea of Japan" with greater frequency. However, both "Sea of Korea" and "Sea of Japan" co-existed until the first half of the 19th century. It is difficult to find out how "Sea of Japan" replaced "Sea of Korea" in the latter half of the 19th century because a review of all existing ancient maps has not been completed. However, it is believed that such replacement was a reflection of the

easier availability of information about Japan than Korea as Japan's military power expanded and the recognition of Japan had increased in the international community.

#### (4) "Sea of Japan" made Official by International Hydrographic Organization in 1929

In the early 20th century, while Korea was under the colonial rule of Japan, the name East Sea was eradicated from the maps of world. The eradication of references to the East Sea started when a resolution was adopted at the first convention of the International Hydrographic Organization to establish limits of oceans and seas and attach appropriate local names for safe navigation. A Japanese delegation attended the conference, but there was no Korean delegation. According to the resolution, the East Sea was registered by Japan as the "Sea of Japan" in 1923. No other member country raised any objection. Consequently, the 1929 Monaco Conference adopted a resolution to publish Special Publication No. 23 entitled *The Limits of Oceans and Seas* which was based on data collected previously, and to make this publication an internationally accepted document. Thereafter, the mapmakers of the world used the standardized names of places based on this publication, and the name "East Sea" lost its place on world maps. New editions of *The Limits of Oceans and Seas* were published in 1923, 1952, and 1986, and to date, the East Sea remains as the "Sea of Japan".

#### (5) Efforts of Koreans to Reclaim East Sea on World Maps

Historically speaking, East Sea has been used for a long time not only in Korea but also in neighboring countries such as China, Russia, and Japan as well as in Europe. That is, the "East Sea" was the established name of the sea, just as the "North Sea" has been in Europe, rather than being a mere reference about direction. Moreover, it would not be appropriate to allow the term "Sea of Japan" to continue to be used. Think for example, of the Mediterranean Sea which is surrounded by many countries.

In documents written since the early 1970s, many citizens and scholars have pointed out the unreasonableness of naming the East Sea the "Sea of Japan". Shortly after joining the United Nations, during 1992 Sixth U.N. Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Korean Government requested that this incorrect usage be corrected. At that time, the U.N. advised Korea to consult relevant countries. Of course, Japan opposed any change in the name. Thereafter, Korea made public the unreasonableness of using the name "Sea of Japan" at the 1994 New York and 1996 Geneva Meeting of the U.N. Group of Experts on Geographical Names. Korea made public the unreasonableness of using the name "Sea of Japan." In April 1997, Korea requested that "Sea of Japan" be changed to "East Sea" in *The Limits of*

*Oceans and Seas* at the 15th International Hydrographic Conference held in Monaco. Consequently, it is expected that the 1999 edition of *The Limits of Oceans and Seas* will reflect Korea's request.

In addition, the Korean Government continues to contact renowned map publishers, broadcasting companies, newspaper companies and magazine publishers throughout the world and to request that they use the name "East Sea" in lieu of "Sea of Japan." Rand McNally, a U.S. map company, has started to use both "East Sea" and "Sea of Japan" in its most recently published maps.