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**Features beyond a single sovereignty:  
Features common to two or more nations**

**Report on the Progress of Consultations  
on the Inscription of “Sea of Japan”**

Submitted by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea\*\*

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\*\* Prepared by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

## Abstract

The report summarizes the course of consultations held between the DPRK and the ROK with regard to the inscription of “Sea of Japan” on the recommendation of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

In addition, it makes public the shared recognition that the inscription of “Sea of Japan” should be corrected on all accounts and the position of the DPRK that it is willing to hold consultations between the countries concerned during the current Conference.

## **Report on the Progress of Consultations on the Inscription of “Sea of Japan”**

The question of correcting the inscription of “Sea of Japan” has not yet been resolved up to now since its submission to the Sixth Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

The Government of the DPRK makes public the work report on performing the recommendation of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names that the countries concerned should participate together in consultations on the inscription of “Sea of Japan” in question and then submit the results to the Ninth Conference.

The DPRK National Committee of Geographical Names performed the work of arranging the consultations of the countries concerned. For a certain reason, however, the historians and the geographers of only the DPRK and the ROK held a scientific discussion in Pyongyang, the capital city of the DPRK, on February 25, 2004, without the participation of those from Japan.

At the discussion the injustice of the inscription of “Sea of Japan” was proved deeply in the historical and geographical manner and the steadfast opinion was shared that the other name should be inscribed instead of the name “Sea of Japan”.

To our regret, we cannot make sense of the Japanese opinion because of its absence.

With respect to the inscription of “Sea of Japan”, the DPRK clarifies its position as follows:

First, such a legacy of the colonial period as the inscription of “Sea of Japan” made by Japan of its own authority with no deference to equality and justice should not be allowed to exist any longer.

The name “Sea of Japan” had originated from the Japanese recognition of the sea to its east as its sea, had been called as such even in the period of Meiji

(beginning from 1868) and also had been inscribed that way in the maps drawn by the Japanese scholars.

For this reason, those maps had used the name “the Sea of Korea” for the sea area between Korea and Japan.

From around 1861, Japan, in response to the world-wide trend, began to inscribe in its maps the name Pacific Ocean for the sea east of Japan and removed the name “Sea of Japan” from its east to the west, which led to the inscription of “Sea of Japan” in place of the name “the Sea of Korea” in some maps drawn by Japanese scholars.

Until the 21 year (1888) in the period of Meiji, the name of the sea area between Korea and Japan had been inscribed as “the Sea of Korea” in most of the maps published in Japan.

The material evidence of this fact is presented in the paper submitted by the DPRK concerning the correction of the inscription of “Sea of Japan”.

From 1905 when Japan started occupying Korea, the inscription of “Sea of Japan” in place of “the Sea of Korea” began to prevail in the maps published in Japan.

With the Japanese colonial rule of Korea getting intensified, the inscription of “the Sea of Korea” went out of sight entirely.

Therefore, allowing even now the inscription of “Sea of Japan”, the legacy of the colonial period, is absolutely abnormal, and, accordingly, the inscription must be replaced fairly. In view of the fact that Japan had removed the name “Sea of Japan” from its east to the west and had changed at its will the already-fixed name, we expect that Japan would agree with sincerity to replacing the name “Sea of Japan” abominable to Koreans as a desirable one.

Secondly, in consideration of the fact that it is difficult for the countries concerned to sit together at one table for discussion to replace the sea name in question, we hope that the consultations of the countries concerned is held through the mediation of the Conference Secretariat during the current Conference.