

Agenda Item 7(a): National and international standardization of geographical names: Names collection, office treatment, national authorities, features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation

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[First intervention]

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Also I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to you for your interest for this interesting working paper, and at the same time I would like to thank the distinguished delegate from Japan for his enlightening comment.

Respectfully, however, I can't countenance the substance of his statement. I shall be very brief. I can't repeat the position which I stated very clearly on Monday, so I shall be very brief. So a number of questions have been raised, but I don't think I can cover them entirely, but first of all I would like to remind you to bring to your kind attention the fact that the ECOSOC resolution itself talks about the retention of the mandate of the UNCSGN and UNGEGN after their respective discontinuance and then they have been merged, right now we have this new UNGEGN. So which means we do maintain the mandate. What has been done in the UNCSGN can be done by this body. That is clearly understood. For example, how we can identify what is the mandate of which particular body, I think the best way we can look at this maybe, say, resolution or agenda items. The agenda items are there, so I can't see any difference at all between in the past and right now. That is one answer.

The second question that was raised by the distinguished delegate from Japan was about the applicability of the UNCSGN resolution III/20 to land features. I'm not a linguist, but

according to the Oxford dictionary, “geography” is defined as the study of physical features of the earth. Secondly, both IHO resolutions A.4.2.6 also known as 1/1972 and UNCSTGN resolution III/20, both of them refer to a given geographical feature. The only difference between the two is whether it is stated with or without modifiers, namely which we can find in IHO resolutions which include the modifiers “such as”, “for example” a bay, strait, channel, or archipelago.

I don’t think the distinguished delegate from Japan is suggesting that this fact is not there. So in my view, geographical features can certainly be interpreted as including features other than land features. Of course it speaks for itself. That is clear.

And about the United Nations Secretariat’s practice. If I’m not mistaken what the distinguished delegate from Japan referred to was the internal practice of the United Nations secretariat. But what is clear here is that that is not at all the policy of the United Nations. ***Not***, emphasis added, has to be. Not secretariat. There are several organs of the United Nations. One of the organs of the United Nations is the secretariat led by the United Nations Secretary General. So we can’t equate the practice of secretariat with that of the United Nations secretariat and that of the United Nations, and the secretariat itself emphasized that such and such practice cannot constitute the policy of the United Nations. That has been clearly stated.

And then regarding the proposal made by the distinguished delegate of Japan to exclude this sub-item from the agenda item respectfully I can’t agree with his suggestion.

And then just lastly I want to point out about how widely the use of the East Sea can be found in world atlases and some other publications, of course subject to interpretation. I don’t want go into much detail about what he referred to as propaganda. But I do pay a lot of respect for the willingness of mapping agencies and publishing companies to use or adopt the name East Sea right now. So I don’t want to go into much detail. But I shall be very brief.

With your indulgence I want to stop. Thank you very much.

[Second intervention]

Thank you very much indeed Mr. Chair. Not 3 minutes, I’ll try to be less than 1 minute. So I can’t repeat what I said Monday. In particular, regarding non-applicability of the relevant

resolutions to the so called high sea issues, I mean, I clearly stated about how it was composed. Whatever I explained, I don't need to repeat. And then your idea of course, my delegation is to a large extent in your good hands. However, the idea of just adding what will be submitted by one of the delegations to the podium, and then suddenly allowing it to become part of the proceedings is not something my delegation actually wishes to go along with, unless you can provide any other compelling or pressing necessity.

Thank you very much indeed.