

Discussion

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Two presentations are providing a European view, both of great depth and based on the experience by the European Union to preserve peace and justice. The third presentation is based on the deep experience by an expert from North Africa.

As we can see, we have to solve politically nationalistic claims. Peace as the ideal, it is still the exception and to achieve and maintain peace is a permanent task. It is based on the principle of power projection and the system of “Checks and Balances”.

From my point of view the focus given to the overall situation of “water”, may it be the water of the Oceans and Seas or the potable water, which is needed by all people to survive. The message that the trio: water – people – peace is a humanitarian issue was very impressive and important. Therefore all transboundary agreements are vital. Naming is a powerful tool and the civil society has a saying. Nationalism is a danger for already achieved agreements. Europe`s experience to solve naming disputes is to promote dual names. This together with the concept of “Regions” is offering options for solutions in disputes, which had been successful up to now.

The second presentation dealt with China, using the ambitious “Silk Road” or the “One Road one Belt” initiative for a very informative and enlightening view about Chinas geostrategic plans, which are based on a long term view. In contrast to western views which are mostly based on short and mid - term perspectives, China`s actual perspective is based on long –term plans and is going back to the early Ming Dynasty and sees this time of its history as a justification and motivation for the One Road, one Belt” initiative. This argumentation goes far beyond the European discoverers and is officially linked to the peaceful ambition of the first Chinese fleets operations towards the west. As our thinking is not well-founded on historical aspects and their long –term relevance, it is commendable of this presentation to remind us, not to underestimate this aspect. But it is a concern of all of China`s neighbors and benefiter of their heavy engagement by investing in infrastructure, both ashore and at harbors.

China`s acceptance of the International Law and the rules agreed upon in all IMO regulations are fueling these concerns and a lack of transparency is seen as an additional

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uncertainty or risk. The rivalry between India and China, based on the aspect of power-projection on one hand, and the wish to split the Asian countries by dealing with them only bilaterally is another concern for this region and beyond.

The question, if China is a new Imperialistic Power, which is gaining influence by a well-balanced mixture of economic and military power is an open one, but the concerns about the Chinese agenda are growing. Military objectives are visible, and the Freedom of Navigation is under heavy pressure by China's para-military sea services. One key message to counter this kind of Hybrid - Warfare, was to share information between all Asian Countries and to share Intelligence knowledge as well.

As an expert of the United Nations Group for Geographical Names, the focus of the third presentation was on the impact of political and national claims. The choice of different perspectives is a challenge and the UN Group for Standardization is not well accepted. This is and will be a great concern. The presentation of different examples made this presentation quite unique. The case study about Macedonia, the pragmatic approach to achieve a solution was very encouraging. The conflict in Somalia with Somaliland and Puntland as two Federal States of Somalia are another example for the need of a comprehensive approach and naming is a crucial issue. A landscaping study seems overdue to identify a lot of possible causes for conflict.

In conclusion all three excellent contributions pointed out, that nationalism is the great and present danger for all naming processes. Peace and Justice are based upon a well system of checks and balances. The trio: Water- People -Peace is relevant for future naming processes. Europe's way to solve naming disputes can be considered for other disputes as well. China's role as a growing power is based on a combination of economic and military dominance. Naming of Oceans and sea areas can play an important role. History is thought in different dimensions like the early Ming Dynasty when China became a maritime power. The power struggle between India and China deserve permanent awareness. National and political claims in particular regions of Africa need a better understanding and the choice of perspectives is important. Case studies in certain parts are very helpful for our understanding and can offer solutions for other naming disputes as well.