

中华人民共和国海事局

MARITIME SAFETY ADMINISTRATION OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

中国 北京建国门内大街 11 号

11 Jianguomennei Ave. Beijing, China

31 January 2012

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS,
Chair of S-23 Working Group
President of International Hydrographic Bureau
4 Quai Antoine 1er
B.P.445 MC 98011 MONACO CEDEX
Principality of MONACO
Fax: +377 93 10 81 40

Comments by China on IHO S-23 WG Letters dated on 22nd December 2011, 23rd December 2011 and 19th January 2012

Dear Vice Admiral MARATOS,

With reference to S-23 WG Letters dated on 22nd December, 23rd December 2011 and 19th January 2012, China would like to reaffirm the following points.

1. In terms of the labeling of Taiwan Island, China would like to reiterate our position. Firstly, the sovereignty of any country should be fully respected by IHO and all WG member States. Taiwan Island, as an integral part of China's territory, should be labeled exactly in the same way as the other Chinese islands, this has nothing to do with the names and limits of oceans and seas. Moreover, in accordance with Resolution 4 of the 1st UNCSGN, 1967 and Resolution 8 of the 3rd UNCSGN, 1977, the geographical names must follow the local principles, and the Romanization name of a Chinese island should consist of the island's Chinese Phonetic Alphabet (Pinyin) name and the word "Dao". Therefore, we strongly request that Taiwan Island be labeled as "Taiwan Dao".

China holds the view that there is no reason for any party, neither WG nor WG member State, to disrespect a sovereign state's right on naming its territory, and China will not accept labeling "Taiwan" differently from labeling other Chinese islands.

2. With regard to the name of "Beibu Gulf", China could not accept the WG's levity on the issue, and insists that the bilateral agreement on the name between the two exclusive coastal states (China and Vietnam) be fully respected. Our reasons are as follows.

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a. The name "Beibu Gulf/Bac Bo Gulf" has been accepted by China and Vietnam bilaterally, which could be fully certified by the UN Certificate of registration (No. 52787) dated on 17 October 2005.

b. It has been decided in the Annex A to S-23 WG Letter 03/2011 that the name "Beibu Gulf" is tentatively used as the only name of the sea area, which is made by the consensus of WG.

c. We have noted that Vietnam has lodged an official application for IHO membership. But the naming of "Beibu Gulf" is irrelevant with whether Vietnam is an IHO member State or not.

In conclusion, China insists that the name "Beibu Gulf" be the exclusive name of that sea area, and will consider to accept the name "Beibu Gulf/Bac Bo Gulf". Under no circumstances will China accept the name "the Gulf of Tonkin".

3. China requests that the word "No support for change", which is the comment to the proposal "To amend to Taiwan Dao the name of this island" in Table B of Annex B to S-23 WG Letter 01/2012, be replaced by "No Consensus on this proposal", based on the fact that some member States explicitly support China's Proposal at Singapore meeting.

4. China highly appreciates the commitment by the WG Chair Group for revision of S-23 publication, and hopes that the Chair Group can further move forward this issues on the basis of consulting WG member States, especially coastal States, complying with the RoPs of the WG and following the principles of impartiality and transparency.

Yours sincerely,



Captain Chen Aiping

Executive Director-General

Maritime Safety Administration

The People's Republic of China